

# DEATH AND ITS MYSTERY

## BEFORE DEATH

*Proofs of the Existence of the Soul*

BY  
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...

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# **DEATH AND ITS MYSTERY**



# DEATH AND ITS MYSTERY

## I

THE GREATEST OF PROBLEMS—CAN IT ACTUALLY BE  
SOLVED?

To be or not to be.

SHAKESPEARE.

**A**LTHOUGH I am not yet entirely satisfied with it, I have decided to offer to-day, to the attention of thinking men, a work begun more than half a century ago. The method of scientific experiment, which is the only method of value in the search for truth, lays requirements upon us which we cannot and ought not to avoid. The grave problem considered in this treatise is the most complex of all problems and concerns the general construction of the universe as well as of the human being—that microcosm of the great whole. In the days of our youth we begin these endless researches because we are full of confidence and see a long life stretching out before us. But the longest life passes, with its lights and shadows, like a dream. If we may form one wish in the course of this existence, it is to have been in some way of service to the slow but none the less real progress of humanity, that fantastic race, credulous and skeptical, virtuous and criminal, indifferent and curious, good and wicked, as well as incoherent and ignorant as a whole—barely out of the chrysalis wrappings of its animal state.

When the first editions of my book “*La Pluralité des*

Mondes habités" were published (1862-64), a certain number of readers seemed to expect the natural sequel: "La Pluralité des existences de l'âme." If the first problem has been considered solved by my succeeding books ("Astronomie populaire," "La Planète Mars," "Uranie," "Stella," "Rêves étoilés," etc.), the second has remained an open question,<sup>1</sup> and the survival of the soul, either in space or on other worlds or through earthly reincarnations, still confronts us as the most formidable of problems.

A thinking atom, borne on a material atom across the boundless space of the Milky Way, man may well ask himself if he is as insignificant in soul as he is in body, if the law of progress can raise him in an indefinite ascent, and if there is a system of order in the moral world that is harmoniously associated with the order of the physical world.

Is not spirit superior to matter? What is our true nature? What is our future destiny? Are we merely ephemeral flames shining an instant to be forever extinguished? Shall we never see again those whom we have loved and who have gone before us into the Great Beyond? Are such separations eternal? Does everything in us die? If something remains, what becomes of this imponderable element—invisible, intangible, but conscious—which must constitute our lasting personality? Will it endure for long? Will it endure forever?

*To be or not to be?* Such is the great, the eternal question asked by all the philosophers, the thinkers, the seekers of all times and all creeds. Is death an end or a transformation? Do there exist proofs, evidences of the survival of the human being after the destruction of the living organism? Until to-day the subject has remained outside the field of scientific observation. Is it possible to approach it by the principles

<sup>1</sup> Although a distinguished writer, the philosopher André Pezzani, who calls himself my disciple, published in 1865 *La Pluralité des existences de l'âme, conforme à la doctrine de la Pluralité des mondes*.

of *experimentation* to which humanity owes all the progress that has been realized by science? Is the attempt logical? Are we not face to face with the mysteries of an invisible world which is different from that which lies before our senses and which cannot be penetrated by our methods of positive investigation? May we not essay, seek to find whether or not certain facts, if carefully and correctly observed, are susceptible of being scientifically analyzed and accepted as real by the severest criticism? We want no more fine words, no more metaphysics. Facts! Facts!

It is a question of our fate, our destiny, our personal future, our very existence.

It is not cold reason alone that demands an answer; it is not only the mind; it is our longings, our heart also.

It is childish and may appear conceited to bring one's own self upon the scene, but it is sometimes difficult to refrain from doing so; and as I have undertaken these laborious researches primarily in order to answer the questions of sorrowing hearts it seems to me that the most logical preface to this book will be furnished by some of those innumerable confidential communications which have reached me during more than half a century, begging with anguish for the solution of the mystery.

Those who have never lost by death some one deeply loved have never sounded the depths of despair, have never bruised themselves against the closed door of the tomb. We seek, and an impenetrable wall rises inexorably before the terror that confronts us. I have received hundreds of earnest appeals which I should have liked to answer. Should I make these confidences known? I have hesitated a long time. But there are so many of them, they reflect so faithfully the intense desire that exists to reach a solution, that it has now become a matter of general interest and my duty is clear. These expressions of feeling are the natural introduction to this work, for it is they that have decided me to write it. Nevertheless,

I must apologize for reproducing these pages without alteration; for if they reveal the very souls of their sensitive authors, they also express themselves about me in terms of praise which it might well seem immodest on my part to publish. But this is only a personal detail, and consequently insignificant, especially as an astronomer, who realizes that he is an atom before the infinite and eternal universe, is inaccessible to and hermetically sealed against feelings of worldly vanity. Those who know me have considered me so for many long years. My absolute indifference to all honors has abundantly proved this true. Whether I am considered great or insignificant, whether I am praised or criticized, I remain the distant spectator.

The following letter was written me by a distracted mother and has been reproduced literally. It shows how well worth while it would be at least to attempt to relieve suffering humanity. It is more than the science of doctoring the body, it is the science of healing the soul that must be created.

*To Our Great Flammarion*

Reinosa, Spain, March 30, 1907.

MONSIEUR:

I wish I might cling to your knees and kiss your feet while I beseech you to hear me and not to reject my prayer. I cannot, I know not how to express myself. I wish I might arouse your pity, might interest you in my grief, but I should have to see you, to tell you myself of my unhappiness, to paint the horror of what is passing in my soul, and then you could not deny me an immense compassion. What I have had to suffer before I could bring myself to commit this act of daring and indiscretion that resembles madness! Whence came the idea of addressing myself to our illustrious Flammarion, of asking him to console an unknown person who has no other claim upon his kindness than that of a fellow-countrywoman? It is because I am suffering! I have just lost a son, an only son. I am a widow and my only happiness consisted

in this son and one daughter. Monsieur Flammarion, you would have had to know the beloved child I have just lost, to understand. I should have to tell you the story of the thirty-three years of his existence: then you would understand.

When at five years of age he was given up by all the celebrated physicians of Paris and Madrid, because of hip trouble, my poor husband and I sacrificed a brilliant position at Madrid and buried ourselves in a lonely country district in Spain in order to save this little boy who was the object of our devotion. For eight years he was ill and he was left lame! What he cost me in anxiety, care, sorrow, sleepless nights, anguish, and sacrifices it would be impossible to explain. But how dear and lovable he was! Brought up in a little carriage, petted and caressed, he was the most adorable child one could imagine. Oh, that childhood! how I wish I could get it back! At twelve years of age he no longer suffered from his leg, but he could not walk without crutches. What a grief this was to me, who had brought him into the world strong and well made! Later, at seventeen, he walked with only one crutch and a cane. At twenty, he was as handsome a lad as could be seen anywhere. If I dared, I would send you his photograph, so that you might see that my mother's love exaggerates nothing. Every one felt his charm; he had that gift of pleasing which can be neither defined nor explained. Men, women, children, old and young were charmed by I know not what that radiated from his person. Wherever I went with him, I was congratulated on the beauty and goodness of my son. People envied me him. Ah! that was because he was as beautiful as he was good! His soul was all nobility, grandeur, generosity. Intelligent and spiritual, even-tempered and sweet in his disposition as he was, life with him was a heavenly dream, a continual enchantment. You will realize what this meant, Monsieur, when I tell you that at twenty he developed cystitis, which was certainly a return of that first trouble in his leg, and that this cystitis was the beginning of a whole chain of suffering of which only hell could give you any idea. I cannot understand how God, our Creator, can permit the human body to be so martyred. Above all, when this martyrdom is inflicted on a good and innocent being like my son. All the great specialists were consulted again, but alas! none of them was able to cure him. He spent thirteen years

alternating between periods of better and worse, preserving, in the midst of the most atrocious suffering, his sweetness, his goodness and even his gaiety, so as not to sadden others.

For the past four years he has scarcely suffered at all, and last year he was so much better that he believed he was cured. My poor husband had died in 1902. From that time my son had been the head of our little family: mother, sister, and himself. How happy we were!

Although we were obliged to work to supply our needs, life appeared very beautiful to us! My daughter had never wished to marry, so that she might devote herself to her brother, whom she adored. I was so happy in the love I saw that my children bore each other that I no longer feared death for myself, as I knew I should leave them together, not to be separated as long as they lived, living each for the other. And how shall I describe to you the tenderness of my son for his mother, of this mother for her son? Seek in heaven among the angels; seek above, among those worlds to which your gaze penetrates; seek among all the best and sweetest things that love can produce, and you will have only a feeble idea of the filial and the maternal love of these two. I dare not think of it. I dare not remember his eyes, his voice, when he looked at me and said, "Darling Mother!"

Last August it was proposed to him that he should visit a mine (he had acquired a taste for this kind of work and had been occupied with it for some time). He wished to take me with him. When we reached a certain spot we were told that we should have to go on horseback to reach the mine. As I knew he had been forbidden to ride horseback, because of his bladder, I refused; but my son assured me he felt certain he could make this trip without danger. We hesitated; we discussed it; I yielded.

Ah! why can we never retrace our steps! This excursion so tired my son that he fell ill of gastric fever. He was in the hands of stupid and ignorant physicians who knew nothing of his condition and who let months slip by while they said that *nothing was the matter!* A tumor attacked the bladder, the walls could not endure the strain: the bladder *burst!*

The tortures of hell are nothing to the tortures suffered by my

unhappy son! A celebrated surgeon was called in. He did not arrive until twenty-two hours after the accident. My child had made all his preparations for leaving this world. They operated, but all hope was gone. The poor boy survived the operation for thirteen days; the surgeon had given him only twenty-four hours more. But my son, who understood his mother's and sister's grief, resisted, fighting bravely in spite of everything. What days, Monsieur! They gave us the measure of his greatness of soul.

Thinking only of us, of the consequences of his death to two women who would remain alone and without support in a foreign country, who would always mourn an adored son and brother, he tried in all ways to soften the horror of this situation. What he said to us in those supreme moments were the words not of a young man of thirty-three but of a saint, an angel, a superhuman being! Oh, that face tortured by suffering! Those eyes that seemed to see something of another world! And his mouth, twisted by pain, still trying to smile, his hand pressing mine as he said: "Good-by, darling Mother, good-by! I have loved you so dearly! Do not forget me! Oh! Almighty God," he said, "you did not lay so much on your son, on your own son, who was God, and I, who am only a poor man, you give ten times more to bear. Oh! death! in pity, death! If you love me, ask God to send me death!"

For thirteen days and longer!

Oh, Flammarion! have pity on me! In the name of your mother, be merciful! I am mad with grief. It is thirty-two days since he died and I have not slept ten hours since. At night I sit up until four in the morning, and when fatigue has conquered me I throw myself, entirely clothed, on my bed and shut my eyes, but a *fixed idea* continues during this painful sleep; I do not lose my memories for a single instant, and when I open my eyes I am obsessed by them all day long; what I suffer is so frightful, so atrocious that I ask myself if hell is not preferable to what I endure. Is it possible that it can be God who has created beings destined to experience such horrors!

You, an astronomer and a thinker, who weigh the suns and the worlds, you whose glance penetrates those mysterious regions among which our spirit loses itself, tell me, I beg you on my knees, tell me

if our souls survive somewhere. If I can preserve the hope of seeing my son again, if he sees me. If there exists any way of communicating with him.

You who know so many things about the heavens, about spirits, about the marvels of the universe, I ask you in pity to tell me something that can leave my wounded, tortured heart a ray of hope, however feeble! You cannot understand the excess of my grief. I wish that I might die of it. I hope to die, but—my daughter is here, who beseeches me to live, not to leave her alone in the world; and then I see myself *forced to live* and forced to suffer! What horror! When I think that in an instant I could put an end to my misery! If it were possible to weigh grief, to measure it as you measure the worlds, the weight would be so heavy, the extent so great that you would be frightened to think that one human soul could reach such a degree of torture: there must be something infernal in my destiny! Neither red-hot irons nor pincers could cause such suffering! My son, my beloved child! I want him, I wish to see him! I desire no heaven without him. Oh! my adored Emanuel! flesh of my flesh! joy of my life! my happiness as a mother lost forever! Is there a God? Is it he who permits these horrors on earth? Monsieur Flammarion, in pity, in the name of those you love and who love you, do not be insensible to the greatest human grief that has ever torn a heart! Say something to me, you who possess the secrets of the heavens! you who know! We simple mortals can neither know nor understand. Tell me if souls survive somewhere, if they remember, if they still love those who remain on earth; if they see us, if we can call them near us.

Ah! if I could see you and fall at your knees! Forgive this mad act. I no longer know whether I dream or wake! I feel only one thing, a grief so sharp that it seems like a red-hot iron, continually plunged into a gaping wound.

Forgive me, Monsieur Flammarion! Your suns and stars, so beautiful and so marvelous, do not feel or suffer. And I feel a grief greater than all the worlds that move in space! So small, so unimportant a thing, and yet to feel so intolerable a grief! What can it be? What is this mystery? A being so feeble and limited—and to suffer so!

Forgive me once more, Master, in the name of your mother!  
Forgive me and pity your unhappy countrywoman,

N. BOFFARD,

At Reinosa, Province of Santander, Spain.

So runs this letter, full of anguish, which I reproduce literally, in order to show all the horror of such a situation. I repeat that I must apologize for the dithyrambics that concern me. Their only significance is in so clearly revealing this immense grief joined to the ardent hope of seeing these clouds dispersed.

One would have to possess a heart of stone to be untouched by these heartrending appeals of mother love, to remain deaf to the anguish of such despair, and not to feel an ardent desire to consecrate one's life to bringing some relief.

Priests receive appeals of this sort every day, because they are considered ministers of God, endowed with the power of penetrating the riddle of the supernatural and solving it. They answer such grief with the consolations of religion. The priest speaks in the name of Faith and Revelation; but faith cannot be imposed, it is not even as generally held as we imagine. I know priests, bishops, and cardinals who are without it, even while they teach it as a social necessity. There are a hundred different religions on earth, all of them perhaps useful, but unacceptable from the point of view of philosophy. Face to face with such events as I have just related, are their ministers able to convince us that a just and good God rules over humanity? The man of science is seated neither on the bench of the confessional nor in the bishop's chair, and he can tell only what he knows. He is honest, frank, independent, rational before everything. His duty is research and study. We are still seeking and we do not pretend to have found the answer, still less to have a revelation of the truth from heaven. That

was the only answer I was able to give the unknown woman, even while I left her the hope of some day seeing her son again and in the meantime of remaining in spiritual relationship with him. But I do not, like Auguste Comte, Saint-Simon, or Enfantin, imagine myself the high priest of a new religion. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that the universal religion of the future will be founded upon science, and especially upon astronomy, associated with the knowledge of physics.

Let us make our search humbly and all together. I must excuse myself again for having reproduced the expressions of praise in this letter, but to suppress them would be to suppress at the same time the expression of this distress, this confidence and this hope.

The loss of a son inspired the preceding letter; the loss of a daughter inspired the following.

Theil-sur-Vanne, November, 1899.

**MASTER:**

I have the honor of knowing you through your works well enough to be sure that you are kind and to hope that, although I am unknown to you, you will be willing to read with indulgence what I write and will pity my misfortune while according me your spiritual help, of which I have such great need.

On the nineteenth of last September I had the unspeakable sorrow of losing a charming child sixteen and a half years old, of great intelligence and an exquisite delicacy of feeling, and oh! how beautiful! She seemed an incorporeal being, so ideally lovely were her chaste, graceful body and her angelic face. My sweet darling, with her large, magnificent blue eyes full of expression, framed with lashes as dark as her delicately arched eyebrows, her nose a little long but fine and straight, her mouth somewhat large but expressing so much goodness, her face a soft oval, the color of a lovely lily. A dear little dimple in her chin gave beauty to her smile and lighted up a face that was usually rather serious.

A splendid mass of light auburn hair, naturally curly, delicately waved, graced her virginal forehead like a golden foam; her ears

were dear little shells which you divined, hidden in the mass of her fine hair, little nests for kisses, upon which I can no longer place my lips, hungry with tenderness. My dearly loved daughter is no more. My eyes can no longer rest in affection upon her charming, beloved face; I can only weep for her. So many moral and physical perfections brutally, cruelly, stupidly, savagely blotted out! Pitiless death has taken everything from me. My Renée, my beloved—I have her no longer, and I go on living. Life!—what a prison!

And with her have vanished our good talks. They are ended now—all our wonderful conversations on the most abstruse questions of the life beyond, for although she was so young, my daughter was a thoughtful girl, a precious friend, my confidante and dearly loved companion. She was everything to me, this pure and lovely flower, cut down before her full and perfect blooming. Why? What a problem!

Since then, I have thought of suicide as a way of rejoining her, but (did this intuition come from her approaching end?) the evening before her death, while her arms were about me, she said coaxingly, "Mamma must not commit suicide; she must wait, must n't she?" I was completely taken aback and I did not understand until the next day when, white as a lily, she gave me her last kiss and closed her eyes forever. Ah! that last kiss! She put all that remained of her life into it. What moments! What tortures! Supreme, never-to-be-forgotten hours! I still see her. I love my suffering. I see my dear little dead girl who had felt, who had guessed my despair: she wished me to remain to weep for her. My grief is full of vain regrets, of the sense of bitter deception, of revolt against everybody and everything; I find myself murmuring against God Himself, who has taken from me what is a thousand times dearer than my life. From this time on I can live only in the memory of her—my daughter, my constant thought—she was my religion, I adored her. If it is possible, I should like to find some consolation in spiritualism, to take refuge in it with faith, hope, and love.

But I know so little about these matters.

My husband and I have tried to experiment with a table, alas! without results, although we did everything to insure success—

placing on the table the photograph of our dear child, one of her curls, a page of her writing—and although we evoked her with all the strength of our will. But our tears, our calls, our longings were all useless. I wish to go on, to persevere, and it is toward this end, dear and illustrious Master, that I am begging you to help us. Does she still exist? she whose life was cut off so brutally in its first flowering, who had had time to love only her mother, her mamma—dear word in so beloved a mouth! Ah! I was too happy! how long is it since I heard the sweet sound of her voice! I would gladly give all the years of life that remain to me in order to hear it again.

I am consumed with the desire for proofs of the survival of the beautiful and loving soul of my daughter. If I could attain to such happiness, most dear Master, with your help, I cannot tell you what this never-failing source of consolation would mean to me. You would mingle in my thoughts with my daughter and God.

Reading your admirable works has made me think of placing my hope in you, feeling sure that you will be *able* to do as I ask and will be *willing* to receive kindly the prayer of a poor mother who lives only in the hope of finding once more the child who, as you believe, has vanished but is not dead. Extend your kindness to this sad and ignorant mother. You who have light, lighten her darkness, help her in her moral distress: it is the most beautiful gift of charity that can be given. My great desire to fathom these mysteries does not spring from vain curiosity; it is a real, a unique, a potent need from which death alone can deliver me. I await your answer with confidence, but also with impatience, and should you think it wise, I will gladly go to Paris or wherever you advise me.

Be good enough to receive, Monsieur and illustrious scientist, my thanks in anticipation and the warmest greetings of your servant,  
R. PRIMAULT.

I have reproduced this letter, like the former,<sup>1</sup> without modification, and without suppressing the words of praise

<sup>1</sup> The letters reproduced here are preserved in the files of my research into psychic phenomena which I opened in 1899. (See *L'Inconnu*, p. 88.) This one is No. 809. The preceding one is No. 1730. The originals may always be referred to.

addressed to me. As I have already said, the sensations of childish vanity are unknown to me and for more than half a century I have grown used to titles that no longer have any significance for me. The absolute conviction of an astronomer is that we are all atoms of the utmost insignificance. But these expressions of admiration from an author's readers, whoever he may be, explain the confidence and the faith expressed and should be respected.

Alas! scientific honesty obliges us to say only what we know. We have no right to deceive any one, even from the best of motives and in order to offer him a transitory happiness. I could not give absolute certainty to that poor mother. That was twenty years ago. Since then I have never ceased to search along the same path. This book is written to set forth the elements of a solution.

I have allowed myself to produce literally the touching letter of my unknown correspondent because it expresses the grief of all mothers who have lost a child, of all those who have lost some one dearly loved and to whom the very term "Just God" seems an insult to reality. We can easily understand the revolt of these souls. I possess other letters that are incomparably more severe with all the false consolations of religion, that have been sent me by Catholics, Protestants, Jews, spiritualists of all beliefs, free-thinkers, materialists, atheists, taking as a text the injustice which we see about us, in order to deny the existence of an intelligent Principle in the organization of the world. Men often console themselves with skepticism, by submission to the inevitable, by convincing themselves of the indifference of nature to human efforts. Women will not do this, they will not resign themselves. They will not accept nothingness. They feel that there exists something unknown but real. They wish to know.

Hardly a week passes but I receive letters of this sort.

But what is the universal intelligence? We have a tend-

ency to believe that God thinks as we do and that our sense of justice corresponds with His; that His thought is of the same nature as our own, although infinitely superior to it. It is perhaps something entirely different. The insect thinks dully when it forms the chrysalis and also when it bursts this envelop to spread the wings it has acquired; perhaps our thought is as far removed from the thought of God as that of the caterpillar is from our own. We are surrounded by mystery.

But our duty is to search.

During the infamous German war, which has cut down, in the flower of their youth, fifteen million young men who had the right to life, who had been brought up by their fathers and their mothers often at the price of enormous sacrifices, letters reached me by the hundred, denouncing the barbarity and injustice of human institutions, lamenting that the hatred of war, which a group of humanity's friends have preached for so long, should not have been understood by rulers; revolting against God, Who permits such frightful destruction, and declaring that their lives had been shattered by the irreparable loss of those they loved.

More than ever the frightful problem of our destiny rises before us. Is it really insoluble? Cannot the veil be pushed aside, lifted, if only for a moment? Alas! The religions which have all sprung from this heartfelt need, this desire to understand, this grief at seeing before us the mute body of some one dearly loved, have not brought with them the proofs they promised. The finest theological discussions prove nothing. We do not want words but demonstrable facts. Death is the profoundest subject that has ever occupied the thoughts of men, the supreme problem of all times and all peoples. It is the inevitable end toward which we all tend; it is a part of the law of our existence, as important as birth.

They are both natural transitions in the general evolution, and yet, for all that, death, which is just as natural as birth, seems to us to be against nature.

Hope in the continuation of life is innate in human nature. It belongs to all periods and all peoples. The development of science plays no part in this universal belief, which rests on personal aspiration and which nevertheless is not based on positive foundations. That is a fact which it is valuable to state.

Sentiment is not a negligible quantity, equal to zero, its scientific coefficient.

The two letters already reproduced form part of a series which I began to collect long ago and with which my readers are already familiar. The number of letters received, recorded, and included in this collection of documents, of observations, of investigations, of questions that have arisen since the inquiry began, in 1899 (see my work "*L'Inconnu et les problèmes psychiques*," p. 90), have reached the figure 4106, to which I ought to add about 500 that reached me before I began the inquiry.

I could quote here hundreds of others, very much like the two preceding. Here is one which may seem striking, in another respect, to more than one reader. It is a fervent prayer, which was sent me at La Rochelle, the fifteenth of August, 1904. It is somewhat brutal, but I give it complete, as I gave the others.

#### MY ELDER BROTHER:

Both my eyes are suffering from cataract, but nevertheless I must write to you. I am a skeptic, a hardened scoffer, but I must believe in something. A frightful, irreparable catastrophe has just crushed the lives of four people. My daughter, whose charm, simplicity and gaiety in 1902 had delighted all Rochefort, beginning with the mothers of those girls who were her rivals, has just gone to a madhouse in Niort, where she vegetates, waiting for the end.

It was an eighteen-months' agony for her, the martyr, and for her poor mother, who took her to Paris, to Bordeaux, to Saujon, where ambitious specialists demonstrated the utter powerlessness of their pretended science,—an agony also for me, alone here, and for my son, victims both of the same catastrophe. I am haunted by the thought of suicide. My brain beats out this refrain: "Your daughter is mad!" and I think of the general misery, of the immense fraud that life is for the great majority of human beings. We carry with us from our birth the defects of our ancestors. What can become of our personality, paralyzed, stuck fast in the carnal magma? This magma, by the play of its molecules, by the example of the parents' education, by the manner of life forced upon us, by the physical and moral condition of the father and mother, this matrix will be the all-powerful director of the destiny of the personality that has just become incarnate, or rather that has just been merged into an aggregate of which it will be the slave, all its life. What does all this mean?

The gross ignorance and degrading stupidities uttered in the pulpits of the Church have ended by revolting me. But I should like to believe in something acceptable. The spiritualists, with their naïve credulity, are really too silly, also. They have given me pages of Pythagoras, Buddha, Abélard, Fénelon, Robespierre which are lacking in common sense. It is grotesque.

For thirty-three years I have not cared to read. The blow that has fallen on me has made me pick up some books in which I hoped to find what I seek. In short, here is "L'Inconnu"!

Shall I confess that I have read it religiously? I admit on principle the manifestations and apparitions you mention, as, for example, the story of Marie de Thilo's cat (page 166). The fear of the cat, which must have seen the phantom, seems to have been due to some electrical excitation. But, Monsieur, my elder brother, why do you see in these things only the dying?

There is nothing to prove that the last sigh, the last human thought of the one who is passing should be the cause of manifestations produced without his knowledge. Would it not, on the contrary, be a question of the first step in the world beyond, at the moment of the rupture with the flesh?

I surely belong to the great number of your unknown friends,

of those who sympathize with you. They are awaiting, at present, a final book that will conclude your psychical investigations. Spirits? Mediums? What have you been able to prove, to verify scientifically, as an astronomer and a mathematician for whom two and two make four and not five? In a word, with your universally recognized authority, what conclusion have you reached? We wish to know. And it is the part of a man such as you to enlighten so many eager minds. And do not think that I am burning incense before you when I speak in this way. That is not one of my failings. Are you not going to make up your mind to it? You have no right to conceal anything. Ah! what a service you would render us in writing this honest, convincing book! We have enough of evangelical sermons, of the dissertations of mediums, of neuroses, of claptrap. We beg you, tell us what you know."

(Letter 1465.)

It will be easily understood that I cannot reveal the author of this letter, who is a high official in the Government.

It will also be understood that I should not wish to publish this work until I believed it had attained the dignity of its important subject. It was already under way at the time of this request, in 1904; it had even been begun in 1861, as one can judge from my Memoirs. Such works as these cannot be written out in a year.

Besides, if I had replied to all these appeals I should have written not one book but a dozen. Will they ever see the light? As some of them have been well started for nearly a quarter of a century, they are on the road to being finished.

But let us begin with this one. My readers have assisted me greatly in this research by sending me for many years such observations as helped to prepare the solution,—the solution that has been demanded with perhaps too much confidence. Can our efforts succeed in throwing some light upon this darkness of ages that surrounds the problem of death?

In my childhood, during lessons in philosophy and re-

ligious instruction in school, I often heard a discourse, given periodically, which took as text the four words: "*Porro unum est necessarium*," or in English, "one single thing is necessary." This single thing was the salvation of our souls. The lecturer spoke to us of the wars of Alexander, of Cæsar, of Napoleon, and arrived at this conclusion: "What does a man profit, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" They described to us also the flames of hell, and they terrified us with frightful pictures representing the damned, tortured by devils in an inextinguishable fire which burned them without consuming them, for all eternity. The subject of the text retains its value, whatever may be one's beliefs. It cannot be disputed that the one all-important point for us is to know what fate is reserved for us after our last breath. "To be or not to be!" That scene in "Hamlet" is repeated every day. The life of a thinking man is a meditation upon death.

If the existence of human beings leads to nothing, what is all this comedy about?

Whether we face it boldly, or whether we avoid the image of it, *Death* is the supreme event of *Life*. To be unwilling to consider it is a bit of childish silliness, as the precipice is before us and as we shall inevitably fall into it some day. To imagine that the problem is insoluble, that we can know nothing about it and shall only be wasting our time if, with daring curiosity, we try to see clearly,—that is an excuse dictated by a careless laziness and an unjustified timidity.

The funereal aspect of death is due, above all, to what surrounds it, to the mourning that accompanies it, to the religious ceremonies that envelop it, to the *Dies Iræ*, to the *De Profundis*. Who knows if the despair of those who are left behind would not give place to hope if we had the courage to examine this last phase of our earthly life with the same pains that we bring to an astronomical or a psychological observation? Who knows if the prayers of the dying

would not give place to the serenity of the rainbow after the storm?

It is hard not to desire an answer to the formidable question that presents itself when we think of our destiny, or when a cruel death has taken from us some one we love. How is it possible not to ask whether or not we shall find each other again, or if the separation is for eternity? Does a Deity or Goodness exist? Do injustice and evil rule over the progress of humanity, with no regard for the feelings that nature has placed in our hearts? And what is this nature itself? Has it a will, an end? Could there be more intelligence, more justice, more goodness, and more inspiration in our infinitesimally small minds than in the great universe? How many questions are associated with the same enigma!

We shall die; nothing is more certain. When the earth on which we live shall have turned only a hundred times more around the sun, not one of us, dear readers, will still be of this world.

Ought we to fear death for ourselves, or for those whom we love?

"Horror of death" is a senseless expression. One of two things is true: either we shall die wholly, or we shall continue to exist beyond the grave. If we die wholly we shall never know anything about it; consequently we shall not feel it. If we continue to exist, the subject is worth examining.

Some day our bodies will cease to live: there is not the least doubt on this point. They will resolve themselves into millions of molecules, which will later be reincorporated in other organisms of plants, animals, and men; the resurrection of the body is an outworn dogma that can no longer be accepted by any one. If our thought, our psychic entity survives the dissolution of the material organism, we shall have the joy of continuing to live, because our conscious life will continue under another mode of existence that is superior

to this. It must be superior, for progress is a law of nature that manifests itself throughout the whole history of the earth, the only planet that we are able to study directly.

As concerns this great problem, we can say with Marcus Aurelius: "What is death? If we consider it in itself, if we separate it from the images with which we have surrounded it, we see that it is only a work of nature. But whoever fears a work of nature is still a child."

Francis Bacon merely repeated the same thought when he said: "The ceremonies of death are more terrifying than death itself."

"True philosophy," wrote the wise Roman emperor, "is to await death with a tranquil heart and to see in it only the dissolution of those elements of which each being is composed. That is according to nature, and nothing is evil which conforms to nature."

But the stoicism of Epictetus, of Marcus Aurelius, of the Arabs, the Mussulmans, the Buddhists does not satisfy us: we wish to know.

And besides, whether or not nature ever does anything wrong is a debatable question.

No thinking man can avoid being troubled in his hours of personal reflection by this question: "What will become of me? Shall I die wholly?"

It has been said, not without apparent reason, that this is on our part a matter of naïve vanity. We attribute a certain importance to ourselves; we imagine it would be a pity for us to cease to exist; we suppose that God occupies Himself with us, and that we are not a negligible quantity in creation. Assuredly, especially when we speak astronomically, we are no great matter; and even the whole of humanity itself is likewise of little importance. We can no longer reason to-day as in the time of Pascal; the geocentric and anthropocentric system no longer exists. Lost atoms on an-

the curiosity even to wonder. They are brutes that eat, drink, enjoy themselves, reproduce their kind, sleep, and are occupied above everything in acquiring money. I have had, during an already long life, the joy of spreading among the different classes of all humanity, in all countries and all languages, the basic ideas of astronomical knowledge, and I am in a position to know the proportion of those who are interested in understanding the world which they inhabit and of forming a rudimentary idea of the marvels of creation. Out of the sixteen hundred million human beings who inhabit our planet there are about a million interested in such things, that is to say, who read astronomical books, out of curiosity or otherwise. As for those who study and make themselves personally familiar with the science, who keep up with the new discoveries by reading special and yearly publications, their number can be placed at about fifty thousand for the entire world, of which six thousand are in France.

We can therefore conclude that out of every sixteen hundred human beings there is one who knows vaguely what world he inhabits, and out of a hundred and sixty thousand there is one really well informed.

As for the instruction in astronomy in primary and secondary schools, in colleges and lyceums, either civil or ecclesiastical, it virtually amounts to nothing. In the matter of positive psychology the results are equally negligible. *Universal ignorance* is the law of our mundane humanity, from the days of its simian birth.

The deplorable conditions of life on our planet, the obligation to eat, the necessities of material existence, explain the indifference to philosophy on the part of the earth's inhabitants, without entirely excusing them; for millions of men and women find the time to indulge in futile amusements, to read newspapers and novels, to play cards, to occupy themselves with the affairs of others, to pass along the old story of the mote and the beam, to criticize and spy upon those about

them, to dabble in politics, to fill the churches and the theatres, to support luxurious shops, to overwork the dressmakers and hatmakers, etc.

Universal ignorance is the result of that miserable human individualism that is so self-sufficient. The need of living by the spirit is felt by no one, or almost no one. Men who think are the exception. If these researches lead us to employ our minds better, to find what we are here to do, on this earth, we may be satisfied with this work; for, truly, our life as human beings seems very obscure.

The inhabitant of the earth is still so unintelligent and so bestial that everywhere, even up to the present day, it is still might that makes right and upholds it; the leading statesman of each nation is still the Minister of War, and nine tenths of the financial wealth of the peoples is consecrated to periodic international butcheries.

And Death continues to reign over the destinies of humanity!

She is indeed the sovereign. Her scepter has never exercised its controlling power with such ferocious and savage violence as in these last years. By mowing down millions of men on the battle-field she has raised millions of questions to be addressed to Destiny. Let us study it, this final end. It is a subject well worthy of our attention.

The plan of this work is outlined by its aim: *to establish the positive proofs of survival*. It will contain neither literary dissertations nor fine poetic phrases, nor more or less captivating theories, nor hypotheses, but only the *facts* of observation, with their logical deductions.

Are we to die wholly? That is the question. What will remain of us? To say, to believe that our immortality rests with our descendants, depends on our works, on the way in which we have helped humanity, is a mere jest. If we die wholly, we shall know nothing of these services we have ren-

dered, and our planet will come to an end and humanity will perish. Thus everything will be utterly destroyed.

In order to discover if the soul survives the body we must first find out if it exists in itself, independently of the physical organism. We must therefore establish this existence on the scientific basis of definite observation and not on the fine phrases and the ontological arguments with which, up to the present, the theologians of all times have been satisfied. And first of all we must take into account the insufficiency of the theories of physiology, as they are generally accepted and conventionally taught.

## II

### MATERIALISM—AN ERRONEOUS, INCOMPLETE, AND INSUFFICIENT DOCTRINE

We should distrust appearances.  
COPERNICUS.

**E**VERY one is familiar with the Positive philosophy of Auguste Comte and his judicious classification of the sciences, descending gradually from the universe of man to astronomy and biology. Every one is also familiar with Littré, the follower of Auguste Comte; his dictionary is in all the libraries and his works are scattered broadcast. I used to know him personally. He was an eminent savant, an encyclopedia, a profound thinker; in addition, a convinced materialist and atheist. The beauty of his face did not correspond to the beauty of his soul. It was difficult to look at him without thinking of our simian origin, and yet he had the greatest nobility of mind and a rare generosity of heart. He lived not very far from the Observatoire. His wife was very pious, and on Sunday he used to escort her to mass at Saint-Sulpice, out of pure and simple goodness, without ever entering the church himself. Le Dantec, atheist and materialist, who succeeded him, let himself be buried with the rites of the church, though this is to be regretted, in order not to pain his wife, who also was very pious,—we should like to see these lifelong companions of the same minds as their husbands. This professor of atheism also was very good. All this is rather paradoxical. The same was true of Jules Soury, that “devourer of curés,” who was buried by them with their

liturgies. There is no real logic in this world. But one's doctrines do not always direct one's deeds. One can be a professing Catholic and yet a liar, or one who takes advantage of others. One can be a materialist and an entirely honest man. I also knew the excellent Ernest Renan, who, out of deep sincerity and in order to absolve himself from all hypocrisy, had refused the priesthood to which his theological studies had led him.

These eminent minds are much to be respected in their sincere opinions, which we should respect as they respected the opinions of others; but we may take exception to their ideas, and moreover they never made any pretense to infallibility.

Littre worked over the psychological questions that we are proposing to study here. We may take his arguments, as well as those of Taine, his emulator, as a basis for the modern materialistic assertions. Do not let us fear to meet them directly and to take the bull by the horns.

In his work entitled "La science au point de vue philosophique," a chapter on psychic physiology contains the following statements:

Perhaps the expression *psychic physiology* may appear anomalous. I could have made use of the term *psychology*, which is used to designate the study of the intellectual and moral faculties. I myself have used this word many times in my writings, and because of its common usage and when the text leaves no room for obscurity in my thought, I shall use it again. It is true that the word  $\psi\chi\eta$  which is its root, is suited to metaphysics and theology, but it can also be applied to physiology by giving it the meaning of the totality of the intellectual and moral faculties,—a phrase much too long and complex not to be replaced, on most occasions, by some simpler expression.

Nevertheless, as psychology was undoubtedly at its beginning, and still is, the study of the mind, considered independently of the nervous substance, I neither wish to nor ought to use an expression which is peculiar to a philosophy quite different from that which

lends its name to the exact sciences. Among the positive sciences one recognizes no quality without matter, not at all because *a priori* one has the preconceived idea that there exists no independent spiritual substance, but because, *a posteriori*, we have never met with gravitation except in a body possessing weight, nor with heat except in a warm body, nor with chemical affinities without substances that may be combined, nor with life, feeling, or thought except in a living, feeling, thinking being.

It has seemed necessary to me for the word *physiology* to appear in the title of this work. I could, indeed, have used the expression *cerebral physiology*. But cerebral physiology implies more than I expect to include.

The brain is engaged in all sorts of operations which I do not pretend to consider, for I shall limit myself to the part it plays in producing those impressions which result in the idea of the exterior world and of myself.

It is for this reason that I have determined to choose the expression, "psychic physiology," or, more briefly, psychophysiology. *Psychic*, that is to say relating to feelings and ideas; *physiology*, that is to say the formation and combination of these feelings and ideas in relation to the construction and function of the brain. This is not because I wish to be so pretentious as to introduce a new expression into science; all that I wish to do here is, on one hand, to outline my subject clearly, and on the other to impress on my readers that the description of psychic phenomena with their connections and relations, belongs to *pure psychology* and the study of a function and its effects. The more progress psychology has made in breaking away from the theory of innate ideas, especially the psychology that springs from the school of Locke, the more closely it has approached to physiology. And the more physiology has examined the extent of its province the less it has been frightened by the anathemas of psychology, which forbade it to indulge in lofty speculations. And to-day there is no longer any doubt that intellectual and moral phenomena are phenomena of the nervous tissue, that humanity is only a link, though without doubt the most considerable link, in a chain that stretches, without any clearly defined breaks, down to the least of the animals; and that, under whatever name we may act, so long as we employ the methods of

description, observation, and experience, we are physiologists. I can no longer conceive of a physiology in which all that is best in the theory of feelings and in ideas should not occupy a great place.<sup>1</sup>

Such is the basis of the materialistic philosophy of the soul.

I invite the reader to consider scrupulously this manner of reasoning. We may not admit the existence of the soul, "because we know of no quality without matter, because we have never met with gravitation in a body without weight, heat without a warm body, electricity without an electrical body, affinity without substances in combination, life, feeling, thought without a living being, feeling and thinking."

But this sort of reasoning, starting with the use of the word *quality*, simply begs the question.

To compare thought to gravitation, to heat, to the mechanical, physical, and chemical reactions of material bodies is to compare two very different things, precisely those things which we are debating,—mind and matter.

The will of a human being, even of a child, is personal and conscious, while gravity, heat, light, and electricity are impersonal and unconscious, the results of certain material conditions, inevitable, blind, essentially material in themselves. The difference between the two subjects I have mentioned is great; it is all the difference between night and day.

Scientific reasoning itself sometimes errs fundamentally. Heat, for example, does not always come from a warm body; motion, which has no temperature, can produce heat. Heat is a form of motion. Light also is a form of motion. The nature of electricity remains unknown.

I confess that I cannot understand how a man of the merit of Littré, the head of the Positivist school, could have been satisfied with such reasoning and not have perceived that this was merely begging the question, almost a play on words;

<sup>1</sup> Littré, *La Science au point de vue philosophique* (Paris, 1873), p. 306; *La Philosophie positive*, March 23, 1860.

for this argument plays with the word "quality." What we ought first to *prove* positively is that thought is a property of the nervous substance, that the unconscious can create the conscious, which is contradictory in principle.

We should hardly dare to compare a piece of wood to a piece of marble or a fragment of metal, and yet we carefully compare the mind and thought, the sentiment of liberty, justice, goodness, the will, to a function of the organic substance. Taine assures us that the brain secretes thought as the liver secretes bile. Does it not seem, with such intellects as his, as if the trend of the argument had been determined in advance, and no less blindly than with the theologians? Is not that a case of preconceived ideas, of systematic convictions?

It is important, from the very beginning of this discussion, for us not to be easily satisfied with words. What is matter? According to general opinion, it is what is perceived by our senses, what can be seen, touched, weighed. Very well! the following pages are to prove that there is in man something besides what can be seen, touched, and weighed; that there exists in the human being an element independent of the material senses, a personal mental principle, which thinks, wills, acts, which manifests itself at a distance, which sees without eyes, hears without ears, discovers the future before it exists, and reveals unknown facts. To suppose that this psychic element—invisible, intangible, and imponderable—is an essential faculty of the brain, is to make a declaration without proof; and it is a self-contradictory form of reasoning, as if one said that salt could produce sugar or that fish could become inhabitants of terra firma. What we wish to show here is that actual observation itself, the observation of the facts of experience, prove that the human being is not only a material body endowed with various essential faculties, but also a psychic body endowed with different faculties from those of the animal organism. And by "actual observation" we mean that we shall use no other method than that of

Littré, Taine, Le Dantec, and other professors of materialism, and that we shall repudiate the grotesque doctrines of oral arguments, mere wanderings from the subject.

How was it possible that eminent thinkers such as Comte, Littré, Berthelot were able to imagine that reality is bounded by the circle of our sense impressions, which are so limited and so imperfect? A fish might well believe that nothing existed outside of water; a dog which made a classification of canine sense impressions would classify them according to odor and not according to sight, as a man would do; a carrier-pigeon would be especially aware of the sense of direction, an ant of the sense of touch in his antennæ, etc.

The spirit overrules the body; the atoms do not govern, they are governed. The same reasoning can be applied to the entire universe, to the worlds that gravitate in space, to vegetables and animals. The leaf of the tree is formed, an egg that hatches is formed. This formation, itself, is of the intellect in its nature.

The universal spirit is in everything, it fills the world, and that without the intervention of a brain. It is impossible to analyze the mechanism of the eye and of vision, of the ear and of hearing, without concluding that the organs of sight and hearing have been intelligently constructed. This same conclusion can be drawn, with even more supporting evidence, from the analysis of the fecundation of a plant, an animal, or a human being. The progressive evolution of the fertilized human egg, the rôle of the placenta, the life of the embryo and the fetus, the creation of the little creature in the womb of the mother, the organic transformation of the woman, the formation of the milk, the birth of the child, its nourishment, the physical and psychical development of the child, are so many irrefutable manifestations of an intelligent, directing force that organizes everything and directs the tiniest molecules with as perfect an order as it does the planets and stars in the immensity of the heavens. And this spirit does

not come from a brain. It has been truly said that if God has created man in his own image, man has returned the compliment. If the cockchafer imagined a creator they would make him a great cockchafer. The anthropomorphic God of the Hebrews, the Christians, the Mussulmans, the Buddhists has never existed. God the Father, Jehovah, Jupiter are only symbolic words.

If generation has been admirably arranged from the point of view of physiology, it has been far from perfect from the point of view of maternity. Why so much suffering? Why the frightful final pains? The church sees in them a punishment of Eve's sin. What nonsense! Did Adam and Eve ever exist? Do not the female animals suffer? Nature takes no heed of the woman's periods of suffering or of the brutality of the actual birth; it is undoubtedly lacking in sensibility: the "good God" is not tender toward his creatures. He is not even humane, and the Sisters of Charity are kinder than he. What a problem! We do not understand God: all the evidence shows this. What does it prove? Our own spiritual inferiority.

It is undeniable that spirit, intelligence, and mental order exist in everything. Experimental science stops short when it teaches that all the phenomena of the universe reduce themselves, in the last instance, to the dualism of matter and movement, or even to the monism of matter and its properties. In natural history, botany, animal physiology, anthropology, an element may be observed that is distinct from matter and movement: that is *Life*. Has not the physiologist Claude Bernard shown us that life is not a product of material molecules? Moreover, the universe reveals itself to us as a dynamism, for movement is inherent in the atoms themselves, and this dynamism is not confined to the material order, since it organizes everything, things and persons.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Some years ago I knew a modest naturalist and skilful observer, of the highest personal worth, who studied directly, with his own eyes,

We may say with the psychologist Bergson that the doctrine which makes thought a function of the brain, or which sees a parallel, an equivalent, between the labor of the brain and that of thought, is entirely insufficient. They tell us that the memories are there, accumulated in the brain under the form of a modification that has been impressed on such or such a group of anatomical elements: if they vanish from our memory it is because the anatomical elements in which they lie have been impaired or destroyed. The impressions made by external objects would exist in the brain as on a sensitized plate or a photographic film. These comparisons are really most superficial; for example, if the visual image of an object were an impression left by this object upon the brain, there would not be the memory of an object, there would be thousands, there would be millions of them; for the most simple and stable object changes its form, its dimensions, its shade of coloring according to the spot from which it is perceived; unless I condemn myself to absolute stability while watching it, unless my eye remains absolutely immovable in its orbit, innumerable images, which cannot be imposed upon one another, will be traced, one after another,

the life of the insects and discovered marvels concerning it. He was called Henri Fabre, and lived at Sérignan (Vaucluse). It was not until after fifty or sixty years of uninterrupted labors that he saw his reputation pass beyond his own department. Every one has read, especially since his death, the ten volumes of his *Souvenirs entomologiques*, and it seems to me that no reader can refuse to see there the constant manifestation of mind in nature, in each insect, even in each living molecule. Let us recall, as an example, the *Spheg*, a hymen-opteral insect which digs several holes in the sandy earth and lays an egg in each after it has first deposited there a victim that has been paralyzed but not killed, to serve as fresh food for the larva after its hatching. The victim must remain living but inert as long as the feast of the larva lasts: the little *larvæ* would not relish spoiled meat. Everything for their cherished existence is foreseen by the mother, which will never know them and understands nothing about it. The whole of insect life is full of these instincts of foresight. See also in my *Contes philosophiques*, the chapter entitled "L'oreille," and in *Contemplations scientifiques* (p. 18), "L'Intelligence des plantes."

on my retina and transmitted to my brain. What would happen if it were a question of the visual image of a person whose physiognomy changes and whose body moves, whose clothing and surroundings are different every time you see him? And yet it cannot be denied that our consciousness holds in reserve a unique image—or one almost unique—an invariable image of the object or the person, which is evident proof that something quite different has taken place here from a mere mechanical registration. The same things can be said about auditory memories. The same word spoken by different persons, or by the same person at different moments, in different sentences, gives sound images that are by no means exactly the same. How can the memory be compared to a phonograph? This consideration alone would be enough to make us suspect the theory which attributes a weakness in the memory for words to the impairment or destruction of the memories themselves, automatically recorded by the surface of the brain.

But let us see, according to the same author, what happens in these maladies.

In those cases where the injury to the brain is serious and the memory of words has been greatly impaired, it sometimes happens that a more or less great excitement, for example some deep emotion, will suddenly bring back the memory that had seemed lost forever. Would this be possible if the memory had been lodged in the brain matter, now impaired or destroyed? Far more often things happen as if the brain served to recall the memory but not to preserve it. The sufferer from aphasia becomes incapable of finding the word he needs: he seems to go round and round it, and to lack the necessary strength to put his finger on the desired sound; and in fact, in the realm of psychology the outward sign of strength is always precision. But the memory still seems to be there, and at times, when he has replaced by paraphrases the word believed to have disappeared, the sufferer from aphasia will manage to slip into one of them the word itself.

Let us now consider what takes place in progressive aphasia, that is to say, when the difficulty in remembering words grows steadily greater. In such cases, the words generally disappear in regular order, as if the malady were well acquainted with grammar. Proper names disappear first of all, then common names, next adjectives and finally verbs, as if they were in layers, placed one above another, and the injury reached these layers successively. Yes, but this malady can spring from the most diverse causes, take the most varied forms, appear at some point in the affected region of the brain and progress in no matter what direction. The order in which the various memories disappear remains the same. Would this be possible if the malady were attacking the memories themselves?

If the memory has not been stored in the brain, then where has it been preserved? For that matter, has the question of "where" any significance when we speak of something else than a body? Photographic plates are preserved in a box, phonographic records in racks, but why should memories, which are not visible, tangible things, have need of a container, and how could they have one? Are these memories anywhere but in the mind? But the human mind is consciousness itself, and consciousness means first of all memory.<sup>1</sup>

We can say here, with the eminent thinker, that all things happen as if the body were simply made use of by the spirit. In this case we have no reason to suppose that the body and the spirit are inseparably bound together.

Here is a brain that labors, there is a consciousness that feels, thinks, and desires. If the labor of the brain corresponded to the totality of consciousness, if there were some equivalence between the cerebral and the mental, consciousness might share the fate of the brain and death be the end of everything: at least experience could show nothing to the contrary and the philosophy which affirms our survival would be reduced to basing its thesis on some structure of metaphysics, a basis generally fragile! But if the mental life

<sup>1</sup> See the lectures "Foi," and "Vie," in *Le Matérialisme actuel* (Paris), 1913.

surpasses the physical life, if the brain is limited to translating into movement a small part of what takes place in our consciousness, then life after death becomes so probable that the burden of proof rests upon him who denies rather than on him who affirms; for the only reason we can possibly have to admit the extinction of consciousness after death is that we see the body disintegrate, and this reason is no longer valid if it is a fact, established by experience, that the consciousness is at least partially independent of the body.

Bergson, metaphysician that he is, appears more "positive" than the physicist Littré. Spirit is not matter. It has never been proved that the soul is a function of the brain, a property of the cerebral substance that is destined to die with it.

We even ask how it is possible that a thinker of Taine's breadth of mind, for example, who appreciates at its full value the conception and composition of a work, its plan and execution and who has even written a special book on the intelligence ("L'Intelligence"), should be able to attribute the creation of a philosophical work to the secretion of a combination of molecules of the materials that constitute a brain. The action of personal intelligence is so evident in a matter like this, so irrefutable, that it needs a veritable and systematic autosuggestion to eclipse it.

The brain is, without any doubt, the organ of thought, and no one would attempt to deny it. But in contradiction to what was formerly believed, the whole brain is not necessary to thought or to life.

To the examples drawn from the disorders of memory which we have just cited, we can add many others leading to the same conclusion.

My learned friend Edmond Perrier presented to the Academy of Sciences, in his lecture of December 22, 1913, an observation of Dr. Robinson's concerning a man who had lived for nearly a year with almost no suffering and with no ap-

parent mental trouble, with a brain that was nearly reduced to a pulp, and was no longer anything but a vast purulent abscess. In July, 1914, Dr. Hallopeau brought to the Society of Surgery the account of an operation that had been performed at the Necker Hospital upon a young girl who had fallen from the Metropolitan Railway: at the trepanning it was ascertained that a large proportion of the brain matter was reduced literally to pulp. They cleaned, drained, and reclosed the wound; the patient recovered. On March 24, 1917, at the Academy of Sciences, Dr. Guépin showed, through an operation on a wounded soldier, that the partial ablation of the brain does not prevent manifestations of intelligence. Other examples could be cited. At times there remain only very slight portions: the mind makes ingenious use of what it can.

If the students of anatomy do not find the soul at the points of their scalpels, when they dissect a body, it is because it is not there. When the doctors and physiologists see nothing in our psychic faculties but the peculiar qualities of the brain, they are grossly deceiving themselves. There is something else in the human being besides the gray or white substance of the brain.

We may object that generally the faculty of thinking seems to depend on the condition of the brain and that, like the brain itself, it grows feeble with age. But is it not the instrument that grows weaker, the body and not the spirit? Very often, among great brain-workers, the mind remains sound up to the very last day of life. All my contemporaries have known in Paris writers like Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Legouvé, historians like Thiers, Mignet, Henri Martin, scholars like Barthélemy-Saint-Hilaire (1805-95), savants like Chevreul (1786-1889), who have shown up to a very advanced age the strength and youth of their souls.

*Homo sapiens*, thinking man: it is under this title that certain physiologists have long defined the human race. Is it

possible that a chemical association of the molecules of hydrogen, carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, etc., should be able to think?

Biology is a very recent science. Deterministic biology is a philosophy. The field of this philosophy is to consider mental and psychic phenomena as the effects of physiological reactions. But physiological explanations in the form of figurative expressions are only a confession of weakness. People look on the invention of a word as a great discovery and the hypothetical statement of a fact as an explanation.

Despite modern discoveries in the purely physico-chemical origin of muscular movements, sensation and the vital principle have remained almost as mysterious as in past ages. We cannot refuse to recognize in each one of us, side by side with, or rather above, physiological phenomena, an *intellectual principle*, active and autonomous, without which nothing can be explained, with which everything is easily understood.

As for this, let us say at once that the normal and well-known manifestations of the soul, of which we have just spoken, are eclipsed beside those which will be represented in the following chapters.

Medicine would find it of great advantage to take these things into consideration, and to work not only with the physical organism but also with the intellectual dynamism. A certain number of diseases which do not yield to pharmaceutical treatment, may be cured by means of the mind. As evidence that this is so, we have the cures effected by hypnotism and suggestion, and the so-called miracles of the religious faiths, from the time of the temple of Epidaurus and the cult of Æsculapius up to Lourdes and its rivals. Do not the homeopathic globules of the twentieth solution act a little through persuasion? Faith moves mountains.

The mind is not the body; it does not emanate from it and proclaims itself as entirely distinct from it. The will of

man is recognized by every one. The good or evil perseverance in this will, the spirit of sacrifice, heroism, contempt for pain, the organic insensibility of the martyrs when they defied the most atrocious tortures, renunciation, devotion, the virtues and the vices, friendship as well as hatred, charity as well as envy—are they not all proofs of the soul's independence of the brain?

There are some human beings who do not think about anything. We meet a few of them in this world. But in general, even the most primitive man knows that there is something greater than eating, drinking, and love-making, that this ephemeral world of the senses is not an end in itself,—is indeed, only the manifestation of a superior principle, of which we can perceive nothing here but the confused shadow. This is the feeling which the religions have tried to satisfy.

If we analyze the human body and its natural functions we cannot fail to recognize that despite all the charms it can offer to our senses, it is, on the whole, when we consider only its substance, a rather vulgar object. Its true nobility lies in its spirit, its feeling, its intelligence, in its veneration for art and science; and the value of a man does not lie in his body, so short-lived, so changeable, so frail, but in his soul, which reveals itself, even in this life, as blessed with the faculty of enduring eternally.

Moreover, this body is not an inert mass, an automaton; it is a living organism. But the construction of a being, a man, an animal, or a plant, is the witness of the existence of a constructive force, of a mind in nature, of an intellectual principle that governs the atoms and is not of them. If there were only material molecules, devoid of direction, the world would not go on, some sort of chaos would have existed indefinitely, without mathematical laws, and the Cosmos would not have been ruled by order.

According to the mechanical theory of the universe, the totality of things is the inevitable effect of unconscious com-

binations; creation is an intellectual nothingness which becomes something and ends by thinking. Could we imagine a hypothesis more absurd in itself and more contrary to all our observations?

Mysterious nature has filled everything with spirit and she even shows herself endowed with a malignity that is generally unsuspected. What is the coquetry of the young girl which leads her to become a wife, to suffer in her beautiful body, to be happy in the pains of motherhood in order to perpetuate the human race? What is love, that delightful snare? What is mental suffering? What is feeling? Does not the silent language of nature make itself clearly heard? What is the building of a nest by two birds? the brooding mother fed by the future father? the beakful of food brought by the father and mother to the hungry nestlings? What are the hen and her chickens? Have you ever thought about the *first* beat of a heart in an egg, in a child? Have you ever analyzed the fertilization of flowers? Not to see in that a reasoned order, an intention, a plan, a general aim, a finality, a mind which governs us all; not to see in life itself the supreme aim of the organization of the worlds—that is to fail to see the sun at high noon.

Where does this mysterious force lead us? We do not know. So long as life imposes its laws upon us, the planet which we inhabit carries us through space at the speed of 107,000 kilometers an hour, itself the plaything of forces that direct the world's system and of fourteen different movements. We are thinking atoms on a moving atom a million times smaller than the sun, which is itself an atom in our gigantic stellar nebula, which is only one universe, surrounded by an infinity of other universes. Unlimited immensity! Prodigious movements, stupefying speeds!

Force itself seems inherent in the atom, for we can nowhere find an immovable atom. A living being which did not con-

tain in itself a directing force, would not live but would fall in ruins like an abandoned building.

Renan and Berthelot, those two inseparable friends, would sometimes discuss together the problem which interests us here. They both died without the hope of a future life, but with somewhat different sentiments. On August 2, 1892, Berthelot wrote to Renan, who was sinking from day to day (and died a month later): "Let us console ourselves in watching the growth of our grandchildren. It is the only sort of survival of which we can have any *certain, scientific knowledge*." This manner of speaking does not imply, in its spirit, an absolute negation, and undoubtedly it responded to certain thoughts of the author of "La Vie de Jésus."

On the preceding July 20th, Renan had written to Berthelot: <sup>1</sup>

The most important act of our life is our death. Generally we perform this act under detestable circumstances. Our school of thought, the very essence of which is to have no need to blind ourselves with illusions, has, I believe, quite special advantages for this solemn hour.

At this moment I am at work correcting the proofs of my fourth and fifth volumes of "Israël" and I should greatly like to see it all again. If some one else should give the proofs to the printer I should be somewhat impatient in the depths of Purgatory, yet no one but the Eternal and myself will ever be aware of the greater part of the corrections I intended to make. God's will be done! *In utrumque paratus.*

The philosopher, the ancient theologian, is *prepared*. His belief in God persists. One can be an anti-clerical and a deist, like Voltaire. Renan was perhaps not far from admitting an indeterminable survival of the soul.

According to his son-in-law, Monsieur Psichari, who was at

<sup>1</sup> *Correspondance de Renan et Berthelot* (Paris, 1898), published by Berthelot.

his death-bed, Renan declared that nothing of him would remain, *nothing, nothing, nothing!* This was the impression of his last hour. A hundred other great minds have had the same skepticism concerning the survival of the soul. Nevertheless, they continued to think about it. This opinion is founded only on our ignorance. Ptolemy considered nothing more stupid than the hypothesis of the movement of the earth: *πανν γελοιωτατον*, superlatively ridiculous. What is thought? What is the soul? The supernatural does not exist, and the soul, if it exists in individuals, is as natural as the body.

We have finally reached the point of admitting the *unity of force and the unity of substance*.<sup>1</sup>

Everything is dynamism. Cosmic dynamism rules the worlds. Newton gave it the name of attraction. But this interpretation is insufficient. If there were nothing but attraction in the universe, the stars would form only one mass, for it would have brought them together long ago, in the beginning of time; there is something else, there is movement. Vital dynamism governs all beings: in man as he has evolved, psychic dynamism is constantly associated with vital dynamism. At bottom all these dynamisms are one: it is the spirit in nature, deaf and blind as far as we are concerned in the immaterial world, and even in the instinct of animals, unconscious in the majority of human works, conscious in a small number.

In "Uranie" (1888), I wrote:

What we call matter vanishes just as scientific analysis believes

<sup>1</sup> This is the title which I gave in 1865 to the scientific account which was published in the *Annuaire du Cosmos* for 1866. At that time we were singularly blind; but the progress of science has merely confirmed this idea of the ancient alchemists. The structure of the atom, composed of electrons, shows us even to-day that matter is being lost in the modern idea of energy. The atoms are the center of forces.

it is about to grasp it. We find force is the dynamic element, the mainstay of the universe, and the essential principle behind all forms. The human being has the soul as its essential principle. *The universe is an intelligent principle that we can not understand.*

In "Les Forces naturelles inconnues" (1906), I wrote:

Psychic manifestations confirm what we have learned elsewhere, that the purely mechanical explanation of the universe is insufficient and that there is something else in the universe than this pretended matter. It is not matter which governs the world: it is a *psychic and dynamic element*.

Since the time when these lines were written, the progress of psychic observations has superabundantly confirmed them.

A mental power rules silently and all-powerfully over the instincts of insects, assuring their existence and their perpetuation, as it rules over the birth of a bird and the evolution of the superior animals, including man himself. It is this sort of dynamism which leads the caterpillar to become a formless pulp in the chrysalis, and afterward a butterfly. It is this that from the organism of certain media brings forth a substance which changes into organs that are real, though they live for but a short space,—a dynamism instantaneously creating transitory materializations.

Let us assert it: the universe is dynamic. An invisible thinking force governs worlds and atoms. Matter obeys.

The analysis of things reveals, everywhere, the action of an invisible spirit. This universal spirit is in everything, governing each atom, each molecule, though they themselves are impalpable, imponderable, infinitely small, invisible, and constitute by their dynamic aggregation visible things and living creatures; and this spirit is indestructible and eternal.

**Materialism** is an erroneous doctrine, incomplete and in-

sufficient, which explains nothing to our entire satisfaction.<sup>1</sup> To admit only matter endowed with certain essential qualities, is an hypothesis that does not bear analysis. The Positivists are mistaken, there exist "positive" proofs that the hypothesis of matter dominating and governing everything through its essential qualities is beside the truth. They have not divined the dynamic intelligence which animates living creatures and even things.

We are able to say, with Dr. Geley, that the classical agents are powerless to solve the general difficulty of philosophy in regard to evolution, which has at least brought the *most* out of the *least*.<sup>2</sup>

Materialism which, whether consciously or unconsciously, has become so wide-spread among all the classes of society, is only a *theory of the appearance of things*, is only the outer surface of things that have not been analyzed. "*Quod terra immobilis, in medio cœli, si ego contra assererem terram moveri . . .*" wrote Copernicus, on the first page of his immortal work, in its dedication to the pope. And it proves that what has been considered fully demonstrated was absolutely false. We should do as much to-day for psychic physiology.

For it is through the experimental method itself that we are going to prove the weakness of materialism. We shall bring forward as evidence the entire error of classic materialism. The whole of the standard psychic physiology is erroneous, contrary to reality. There is in the human being something more than chemical molecules endowed with certain qualities: there is an element that is not material, a spiritual principle. The impartial explanation of facts will show it to us and we shall see it act, independently of the physical senses.

<sup>1</sup> The greatest of physiologists, Claude Bernard, who passed his life in carefully investigating the functions of the brain, concludes that "the mechanism of thought is unknown to us." (*La Science expérimentale*, p. 371.)

<sup>2</sup> *De l'Inconscient au Conscient*, p. 33.

### III

#### WHAT IS MAN? DOES THE SOUL EXIST?

We ought to seek for truth in entire liberty of mind, freed from all preconceived ideas.

DESCARTES.

**W**E have just shown that the theories of materialism are entirely unproved. They are not founded on as solid a basis as has been imagined; they have many deficiencies; they leave a large number of things unexplained. They cannot be compared, as is pretended, to geometrical theorems or to mathematical certainties. Therefore the question is open to our free examination.

Before seeking to learn if our soul survives the dissolution of our body, it is indispensable to know if our souls truly exist. To discuss the continuance of a thing that did not exist would be to waste our time rather ingenuously. If thought were a product of the brain it would perish with it.

This knowledge can be acquired only by scientific, positive observation, by the experimental method. But until our day psychology has been rather a matter of words, of meditations on theories, of hypotheses. That is a tradition which we shall take good care not to follow here. We shall try to determine the nature of the soul and to learn its faculties by practical observations.

It is regrettable to have to admit that until the present day these faculties have been almost unknown. The new psychology ought to be founded on science. Let us remember the origin of the word *metaphysic*, "after the physical," in the classification of its founder, Aristotle.

It has been forgotten too often.

In order to go on living after the destruction of the body, we should have to exist spiritually. Has our soul an individual existence? Have we a soul? Or, to speak more exactly, is man a soul? This is the first question to be answered; this is the first point to be established.

We have seen above that the materialists, the positivists, the atheists, the deniers of spirit in nature are utterly wrong in thinking and teaching that there is nothing in the universe but matter and its properties, and that all the facts of humanity can be explained by this theory, which is at once learned and popular. Here is an incorrect hypothesis. But we must prove the contrary thesis.

What is the soul? Where, by the way, does this word come from? What does it mean?

Up to the present the belief in the soul has been based on metaphysical dissertations and on revelations that claimed to be divine, but were unproved. Religion, faith, sentiment, desire, fear are not proofs.

How did the idea of the soul occur to the minds of men?

The word "soul" and its equivalents in our modern languages ("spirit," for example) or in the ancient languages, such words as *anima*, *animus* (a Latin transcription of *ανημος*), *spiritus*, *ψυχη*, *πνευμα*, *atma*, soul (a Sanskrit word resembling the Greek *ατμος*, vapor), etc., all imply the idea of *breath*; and there is no doubt that the idea of the soul and the spirit were the primitive expression of this idea of breath, among the psychologists of the earliest epoch. Psyche, even, comes from *ψυχειν*, "to breathe."

These early observers who identified the essence of life and thought with the phenomenon of respiration, had to reconcile the patent, undeniable fact of the decomposition of the dead body, of the body deprived of breath, deprived of the soul, with their belief in the apparitions of the dead, that is to say, in the persistent life of those whose bodies lay there in-

animate or, what was more, were dissolved and reduced to ashes. They therefore imagined that the breath, the soul was something which abandoned the body at the moment of death to go and live elsewhere its own life.

Even to-day, "the last breath" designates death. If some admitted the persistence of life under an invisible form, others saw in this admission only the expression of the sentiment, the regret, the affection of the survivors, and from the very beginning of the various human groups, we see two distinct and even opposed theories dividing the beliefs of men—spiritualism on one hand, materialism on the other. But the one group as well as the other reasoned superficially.

The meaning of the words "soul" and "spirit" ought to be discussed, examined. There are fundamental distinctions to be established. The properties of the living organism and psychic elements differ essentially.

In general, men think, with complete conviction, that there is only one incontestable reality in the world, the reality of objects, of matter,—that is to say, of what we see and touch and of what comes within the range of the senses. For them everything else is only an abstraction, a chimera, nothing.

The majority of laymen and scholars adhere to this way of thinking. But it is possible for the laymen and the scholars to be mistaken, and that is what has occurred in this case.

I agree with my regretted friend Durand de Gros that physics, physics itself, teaches us that appearances, even when they have all the force of the most irresistible evidence, ought to be held in suspicion and severely examined. What is more evident than the passage of the sun and the entire heavens above our heads? Have not the eyes of all men in all times proclaimed this as evidence? Could there be any more imposing? And yet, it is only an illusion; astronomy has proved it to be so.

How superficial our doctrines appear in their criticism of knowledge, when, reasoning only from apparent observations,

they point out to us what appear to be facts of experience, "The sun is a luminous disk which revolves above our heads from the east to the west, from its rising to its setting": there was a truth of observation, it would seem—if there were such a thing!—and one that the unanimous testimony of men had proclaimed for thousands of years. How does it happen, then, that science dares to affirm that this "truth established by observation" is undeniably an error? How does it happen that all the world knows to-day that it is an error?

To be best understood,—that fact which can be accurately and truthfully affirmed, that which is the result of real observation, is not that one which is expressed by saying: "The sun is a disk," etc.; it is the fact which should be expressed thus: "I have the impression of a brilliant disk which I have named the sun, and which is of such a nature that it appears to me to move from east to west."

Those are the words in which the experimenter ought to set forth the statement of his experience, if he wishes to remain within the strict limits of the known facts of his experience; that is to say, if he wishes to express absolute certainty.

And even this disk is a false appearance, as the sun is a globe.

Let us give sensations and perceptions their due and not confound them with reality. The latter has to be proved. I see a flash of lightning, the sound of a cannon shot reaches my ears. To be quite exact, I ought to think: "I have the sensation of having heard a cannon shot, I have the sensation of having seen a flash of lightning." But the physiologists often ignore this essential distinction. The things they offer us as facts of observation are often, if strictly examined, only conjectured facts, not observations at all; they are inductions drawn from observations, where they have failed to take into account this operation of their minds. I have the sensation

of a luminous disk, of such or such an apparent diameter, moving across the sky, from sunrise to sunset; that is absolutely true. That is what I have every right to affirm, at least according to the principles laid down by the doctrine of experiment in regard to certainty. But if I say, "A disk moves across the sky," etc., I am stating more than I know and I risk making a mistake; and the proof is that I have, in fact, made a sort of mistake.

It would be superfluous to multiply examples in support of this thesis. We experience such or such a sensation, we have such or such an idea, such or such an emotion; that is the only knowledge which is immediate and certain, that is the only truth that is actually experimental, and worthy of absolute belief.

The idea of an object implies, therefore, a sensation, a perception, a conception. But what are these things? Are they so many attributes of the object itself? No. This sensation, this conception, prove that, face to face with the object felt, perceived, apprehended, there is something that feels, perceives, apprehends.

Speaking exactly, the fact of feeling, perceiving, apprehending constitutes in itself an absolutely fundamental fact, the only one that our immediate observation imposes upon us.

We have made use of this form of reasoning since the discussions of Berkeley (1710), and even since those of Malebranche (1674). It is not a matter of yesterday.<sup>1</sup> We judge the universe, objects, living beings, forces, space, and time only through our sensations, and all that we are able to think about reality exists in our mind, in our brain. But it is a strange form of reasoning to conclude from this that our ideas constitute reality itself. These impressions have a cause, and this cause is external to our eyes, and to our senses. We are mirrors that reflect the images cast upon them.

<sup>1</sup> The general discussion of this may be found in my work *Philosophie astronomique* [just being published], in the chapter "The External World and Human Perception."

The pure idealism of Berkeley, of Malebranche, of Kant, of Poincaré, goes too far in its skepticism; but let us never lose sight of the principle.

It is true that it is urgently necessary to protest against superficial appearances, and to proclaim that the external world is not what it seems to us. If we were not endowed with our eyes and ears it would seem utterly different to us. The retina might be constructed differently, the optic nerve might be able to register not merely those vibrations of between 380 and 760 trillions a second, that range from the extreme red to the extreme violet, but even those beyond the infra-red and the ultra-violet, or to be replaced by nerves that were sensitive to the electrical vibrations or to the magnetic waves or to the invisible forces that are unknown to us. To those beings who may exist on other planets, the universe would be something quite different from the universe of our scientific systems. We should therefore be in error if we mistook our sensations for realities. Real nature is quite otherwise. We do not know it, but the mind ought to study it.

I feel, I think; this is the only thing of which we are certain, with a present certainty—a real test, and the only one worthy to be so qualified. From this primary fact, the only one of real observation, of undeniable certainty, there springs, by means of induction, a great secondary fact,—the cause from which emanates this sensation and this thought.

And this cause resolves itself into two elements: the subject and the object; that is to say, that which feels and thinks, and that which is thought and felt.

Certain philosophers of the idealistic school, such as Berkeley in the eighteenth century, and H. Poincaré in the twentieth, have gone so far as to pretend that only the thinking subject exists, that only our sensations are proved for us, and that the object, the exterior world, may very well not exist at all.

That is an exaggeration, exactly contrary to that of the radical materialists, and no less erroneous.

What is true and irrefutable is that we know what we think, and that we are ignorant of the ultimate reality, the essence of things, and of the external world of which we are able to perceive only the appearance.

Suppose we know that reality is anti-scientific. We know that our senses reveal only a part of it and even so after the manner of prisms, which modify reality. If our planet were constantly covered with clouds we should know nothing of the sun, nor the moon, nor the planets, nor the stars, and the world system would remain unknown, with the result that human knowledge would be condemned to an irremediable falsity. But what we know is nothing to what we do not know. And even our optic nerve is only a partial interpreter.

Illusion forms the unstable basis of our ideas, of our sensations, of our sentiments, of our beliefs. The first and most fundamental of these illusions is the immobility of the earth. Man feels himself to be fixed in the center of the universe and has imagined all sorts of things in consequence. Despite the demonstrations of astronomy, we have sought in vain to see, to touch truth; we have not been able to do so. We are, let us suppose, at the close of a beautiful day in summer, the air is calm, the sky clear, and everything about us is utterly peaceful. And yet we are, in fact, on an automobile racing through the depths of the heavens with dizzy speed.

Humanity lives in a state of profound ignorance and does not know that nature's organization does not help us to learn anything of reality. Our senses deceive us in everything. Scientific analysis alone brings some light to our minds.

Thus, for example, we feel nothing of the formidable movements of the planet on which our feet rest. It appears stable, immovable, with fixed positions: a top, a bottom, left side, right side, etc. But it rushes through space, bearing us with

it, at a speed of 107,000 kilometers an hour, in its annual course around the sun, which itself moves through space in such a fashion that the earth's course is not a sharp curve but an ever open spiral, and that our wandering earth has not passed twice over the same path since it existed.

At the same time, the globe turns on its axis every twenty-four hours, so that what we call the *top* at a certain hour, is the *bottom* twelve hours later. This diurnal movement makes us travel 350 meters a second, in the latitude of Paris, and 465 meters at the equator.

Our planet is the plaything of fourteen different movements, not one of which do we feel,—not even those which touch us the most closely; for example, that of the tides on the earth's surface, which twice a day lift the ground beneath our feet as much as 30 centimeters. There is no fixed landmark that can enable us to observe them directly; if there were no shores the ocean tides would not be visible.

Do we even feel the weight of the air which we breathe? The surface of a man's body supports 16,000 kilograms of the air's weight, which is exactly counterbalanced by the pressure from within. Before Galileo, Pascal, and Torricelli, no one suspected that air had weight. Science has proved it; nature did not make us feel it.

The air is crossed by various currents of which we are unaware. Electricity has a continual part in it, the manifestations of which we scarcely ever perceive, except during storms, when there are violent ruptures of equilibrium. The sun sends us constantly magnetic radiations which, at a distance of 150 millions of kilometers, act on the magnetic needle without our senses being able to reveal this action. A few sensitive delicate organisms resemble these electric and magnetic currents.

Our eye perceives what we call light only through the vibrations of ether that are comprised of from 380 trillions (extreme red) to 760 trillions (extreme violet) a second;

but the slow vibrations of the infra-red, below 380, exist and bear their part in nature, in the same way as do the rapid vibrations, above 760, of the ultra-violet, which are invisible to our retina.

Our ear perceives what we call sound only from 32 vibrations a second up to 36,000 for the shrillest whistles.

Our sense of smell perceives what we call odors only in very great proximity, and from a certain number of emanations only. The sense of smell in animals differs from that in human beings.

As a matter of fact, in nature, outside of our senses, there is no light, nor sound, nor odor; it is we who have created these words in response to our impressions. Light is a form of motion, like heat, and there is as much "light" in space at night as there is at noon, that is to say, as many vibrations of ether crossing the immensity of the heavens. Sound is another form of motion, and it is a noise only to our auditory nerves. Odors come from particles suspended in the air, which especially affect our olfactory nerves.

These are the only three senses which, in our terrestrial order, put us in touch with the world external to our bodies. The other two, taste and touch, act only through contact, which serves us little; they do not in all cases bring us the knowledge of reality.

There are about us vibrations of ether or of air, forces, invisible things which we do not perceive. That is a statement of our order which is absolutely scientific and incontestably rational.

It is possible that there may exist about us not only invisible things but even invisible, intangible beings, with whom our senses do not put us in touch. I do not say that such do exist, but I say that they *may exist*, and this statement is the absolutely scientific and rational corollary of the statements which precede it.

As it is granted—and proved—that our organs of percep-

tion do not reveal things to us as they are, and often give us false or erroneous impressions concerning movements of the earth, the weight of the air, radiations, electricity, magnetism, etc., we are not justified in thinking that what we see represents the only reality; we are even invited to admit the contrary.

Invisible beings may exist about us. Who would have imagined the microbes before they were discovered? But they swarm by millions and play a considerable part in the life of all organisms.

Appearances do not reveal reality to us. There is only one reality directly appreciated by us,—that is our thought. And what is most undeniably real in man is the spirit. My former works have already led to this conclusion. The present book is destined to prove it even more convincingly. Will my readers pardon me for having repeated here what I published in "*Lumen*" in 1867, and in "*Les Forces naturelles inconnues*," 1907? It is absolutely necessary to recall these ideas.

Henri Poincaré, of whom we were just speaking, "idealist," not "spiritualist" as he was, despite the skepticism of his conversation, wrote the following page, apropos of the last years of a French scholar, Potier, a professor at the *Ecole Polytechnique*:

The illness which killed him was long and cruel. For twelve years he was stretched on his bed or on a sofa, deprived of the use of his limbs and often tortured with pain. The encroachment of the disease was slow and prolonged, the crises were more frequent every year. At the end, there was almost nothing left of his body, and in the bed, from which he could no longer rise, one saw only two eyes. His soul was stronger than the blind power of a brutal illness; it did not yield. He had himself carried to the Polytechnic School and the School of Mines. More and more, in the moments that were left him of respite from suffering, he continued to interest himself in all that he had once loved. And in

this body, which became more piteous from day to day, the intelligence remained as luminous as ever, like a fortress, the ramparts of which crumble bit by bit under the enemy shells and which is still rendered redoubtable by the energy of its commander. Several weeks before his death, he asked me for some books on mathematics, in order to take up a study that was new to him. To his last day, he showed us that thought is stronger than death.<sup>1</sup>

No, it was not a spiritualist who wrote these lines, it was a professor of skepticism. So true is it that truth triumphs through itself and burns, inextinguishable, like Sirius in the midst of the starry night.

As a matter of fact, Henry Poincaré has often assured me personally in our many and lengthy conversations, that as he doubted even the reality of the external world, he believed only in spirit. That was excessive. Let us exaggerate nothing.

After all, we are well aware of what we feel in ourselves. While I am writing this book, while I conceive the plan, while I lay out the chapters, I feel exactly, strictly, without any *parti pris*, without any dogma, simply, directly, that it is I who do this work, my mind and not my body. I have a body. It is not my body that has me. This consciousness of ourselves is our immediate impression, and it is on the basis of our impressions that we can and must reason: they are the very foundation of all our reasoning.

How is it possible to pretend that the definition of the human being can be given in these words: "A tissue of flesh about a skeleton"; or in these: "A combination of molecules of oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, carbon"; or in these: "A man consists of six kilos of bones, fifteen of albumen and fibrine, and fifty of water"; or "He is a bundle of nerves"?

Let us prefer the definition of Bonald: "Man is an intelligence served by organs."

<sup>1</sup> *Savants et écrivains*, p. 199.

Let us declare that man is essentially spirit, whether he knows it or not. Does not each one of us carry in himself the sense of justice? Does not a child who has been justly punished for a fault know that he deserved it? And when he has been unjustly punished does he not revolt against the injustice? From what comes the moral conscience? Man has had for ancestors the animals of the tertiary, secondary, and primary geological periods, which had gradually evolved from reptiles into simians. It is not their brains that have created moral conscience, especially this sense of justice which is innate in children. We can pretend that it comes first from ancestors, then from education. But whence comes this education? This belongs to the world of the spirit. There is no common measure between this intellectual, spiritual, moral world and the physico-chemical operations of the brain substance.

The will is certainly a form of energy belonging to the order of the intelligence. Let us take one example out of a thousand. Napoleon wishes to conquer the world and sacrifices everything to this ambition. Examine all his acts, even the least important, from the campaign in Egypt up to Waterloo. Not physiology, nor chemistry, nor physics, nor the theory of mechanism, will explain this personality, this continuity of ideas, this perserverance, this obstinacy. Cerebral vibrations? That is not enough. In the brain there is another thinking being of which the brain is only the instrument. It is not the eye which sees, it is not the brain which thinks.

The study of a star through the telescope cannot be legitimately attributed to the instrument, nor to the eye, nor to the brain, but only to the spirit of the astronomer which seeks and finds. The human will, in itself alone, would suffice to prove the existence of the psychic world, of the thinking world that differs from the material, visible, tangible world.

The action of the will is revealed in everything. We can take very simple examples of this.

I am sitting in an arm-chair, my hands on my knees.

With my right hand I amuse myself in lifting, one by one, the fingers of my left hand; they fall back naturally.

But if I *will* they do not fall back; they will remain in the air.

What is it that is acting upon their muscles? It is simply my will.

Therefore, there is a mental force that acts upon matter. This force is associated with my brain,—that goes without saying. But, nevertheless, it is an *idea*, and this idea acts upon matter. The initial cause is not the brain, the vibrations of which are only the effects.

The man who exercises his will is the author of his destiny.

Let us now consider, especially, *thought* in man.

It is the perpetual demonstration of the existence of the soul. When we reflect, when we say simply, "I think," or "I will," when we calculate a problem, when we exercise our power of abstraction and generalization, we affirm the existence of the soul.

Thought is the most precious, the most personal, and the most independent thing possessed by man. Its liberty cannot be attacked. You can torture the body, imprison it, drive it by material force; you can do nothing against thought. Nothing you do, nothing you say can compel it. It laughs at everything, scorns everything, dominates everything. When it acts a sham part, when worldly or religious hypocrisy causes it to lie, when political or commercial ambition puts a deceptive mask upon it, it remains itself, despite and against everything, and knows what it wishes. Is this not convincing evidence of the existence of a psychic being, independent of the brain?

It is not merely matter, not merely an assemblage of molecules that is able to *think*. It is just as childish, just as ridiculous to assert that the brain feels and thinks as to

attribute the thoughts expressed in a telegram to the galvanic batteries that create the electricity used in the telegraph.

Spirit, thought, the controlling power of the mind, is neither matter nor force. The earth which gravitates about the sun, a falling stone, running water, heat which loosens or tightens the bonds between the atoms, show us, on the one hand, matter, on the other, energy. Thought, reason, the direction of things in accordance with a certain plan, reveals an entirely different principle.

No one has forgotten the classic lines of Vergil, in the magnificent sixth book of the *Æneid* :

*Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus,  
Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.*<sup>1</sup>

The poet has expressed the truth. The universe is ruled by spirit, and when we study this spirit in man, we ascertain that it is neither physical energy nor matter. It makes use of both and it often governs them according to its will.

The proofs of the existence of the human personality are innumerable: a special volume would be necessary to state them. As a matter of fact, has not each one of us many times apprehended their significance?

We have these proofs before our eyes every day. Stoicism in adversity, the energy displayed in escaping poverty, the devotion to noble causes, the sacrifice of one's own life for the welfare of the country, the will to conquer, the apostle of either religion or science, the martyr for the triumph of what he believes to be true—are not all these just so many manifestations of the existence of the soul? How is it possible that material cerebral secretions which, as people pretend, resemble those of the kidneys or of the liver, could produce intellectual personalities?

<sup>1</sup> All that exists in the universe is transfused by the same principle, Soul animating matter, which mingles with this great body.

A very original demonstration of "the reality of the soul through a study of the effects of chloroform and curari on the animal economy" was presented a long time ago (in 1868) under this title, by Monsieur Ramon de la Sagra, a corresponding member of the Institute (Academy of Moral and Political Sciences), who died in 1871 on the island of Cuba.

The breathing of the vapors of ether or of chloroform destroys all general sensitiveness, so that persons who have been placed in this extraordinary physiological state can undergo the most serious operations without feeling them. And not only do those under the influence of ether or chloroform feel no pain, while sharp instruments separate, cut, and torture their tissues and nerves; not only do they remain entirely insensible to these lacerations, wounds, and cuts, which in an ordinary state would wring cries of pain and terror from them, but it often happens that agreeable, even exquisite and delirious sensations are experienced by the soul during this astonishing sleep.

Ramon de la Sagra presents this phenomenon as a scientific demonstration of the existence of the soul. The soul and the body are certainly not the same thing, as they are so manifestly separated here; thanks to the influence of ether or chloroform, the soul continues to think as an individual, while the body is tortured by the steel. These two elements of the human whole are separated here by the agent of *anæsthesia*. This learned Spaniard had been very much struck by the action of the chloroform upon his wife, who, during her moments of unconsciousness, had kept her thought intact and had shown him that her intelligence had been in no way affected. She talked tranquilly with the surgeon, Verneuil, while he was cutting flesh and nerves with his knife. And later she told her husband that her ideas had been rather agreeable.

Let us remember, also, that in the school of Nancy pain has been suppressed by hypnotism.

The distinction between the soul and the body—nay, more, their separation—has been observed under many conditions, in certain states of hypnosis, of somnambulism, of magnetism, of double personality, etc. The physiological hypotheses that have been imagined to explain these manifestations of the psychic individuality independent of the bodily organism are entirely insufficient. Our present conceptions of life and thought are on the point of collapsing.

Everything proves to us that the human soul is a substance distinct from the body. Despite its etymology, the “soul” is not a breath; it is an intellectual entity. How many words, in fact, have changed their significance! Electricity, for example, which is derived from the word *ambre*, *ελεκτρον*.

We intend to establish this personality by proving the existence of the supra-normal faculties which have nothing in common with the properties of nature.

## IV

### SUPRA-NORMAL FACULTIES OF THE SOUL, UNKNOWN OR LITTLE UNDERSTOOD

When I was a child, I spake as a child . . . I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.—SAINT PAUL.

**T**O imagine that we can attain certainty in any sort of study is to be rather naïve: we are certain of nothing; our senses, our powers of observation, our intellect are not fitted to discover absolute reality. The most positive of the sciences, astronomy, attains to certainty in its measurements. Like arithmetic, algebra, and geometry, it is an exact science. We *know* that our planet turns about the sun in 365 days, 6 hours, 9 minutes, and 9 seconds, at a distance of 149,500,000 kilometers, that the sun is 1,301,000 times larger than the earth, that it is 332,000 times heavier; that Mars turns about the sun at a distance of 228 millions of kilometers, in a year of 686 days, 23 hours, 30 minutes and 40 seconds, and revolves on its own axis in 24 hours, 37 minutes, 22 seconds, etc. Physics, chemistry, zoölogy, botany, geology, are far from being so exact; human physiology and medicine also are far from exactitude, and psychology is still farther.

All psychological instruction in schools and from standard treatises needs to be perfected and even reformed.

As the normal faculties of the soul—understanding, reason, will, which are the objects of classical instruction and which are habitual and permanent in their manifestations—have not given indisputable proof of the soul's independence of the

brain or of the certainty of survival, we have approached the problem from another angle and we ought to go farther toward its solution. Man is before everything a thinking being. Thought is a fact. Along with this primordial fact, may we not inquire if certain faculties of the soul, at present unknown or little understood, do not offer us subjects for investigation, the careful analysis of which would help us to dispel an ignorance that has already lasted far too long, throw light on the problem of our psychical constitution, increase our very limited knowledge, and finally establish an acceptable science of psychology such as we have always desired, after so many barren discourses on the same subject, and so many useless dissertations revolving in the same circle? Perhaps humanity is not intended to remain always imprisoned.

The preceding chapter has already invited us to study experimentally the question as to whether or not the soul exists independently of the body. If it exists, like an atom of iron, of oxygen, of hydrogen, or of radium, for example,—an atom which would be endowed with the faculty of thinking, a psychic atom,—it must survive organic disintegration and even pass through, in the course of the corporeal life, the material modifications of the brain as well as those of ideas. The animating principle remains; the form alone is perishable.

We have just recognized, through the preceding discussions, that the probability of the soul's personal existence has been physiologically settled. We can go even farther and prove this personal existence, by the manifestations of faculties of the soul that cannot be attributed to the material properties of the brain, or to organic, chemical, or mechanical combinations—faculties that are intrinsic.

The will, the special proof of the individuality of the spirit, will be examined in the following chapter, as well as other demonstrative faculties. But first I wish to point out cer-

tain unexplored or little-understood faculties,—metaphysical faculties, to use the happy expression of Charles Richet.

For example, the mind's power of perceiving unknown things, or rather of foreseeing.

What is a presentiment? What is the nature of this faculty of the soul which is often so sure?

For this investigation, which was begun so many years ago, I have brought together, compared, and discussed hundreds of observations.

Some of my readers may remember that in the year 1899 I undertook an analytical inquiry into these faculties of the soul and their manifestations, the first results of which I published in my work, "*L'Inconnu et les problèmes psychiques*." Twenty years have passed since then and I have continued to receive, from great numbers of observers, communications which I have made it my duty to verify as much as possible, well knowing that despite the best memory and the most indisputable honesty, one's recollections inevitably lose their shape and make all testimony more or less suspicious. We shall not exercise a too great severity in the admission of these often extraordinary facts. Another excess would be to reject them all beforehand. Truth lies between extremes, and we must not forget that "the truth may at times not appear true."

One may have remarked, in the work of which I have just spoken, examples of presentiments that had a definite cause; for example, on page 124, that of a collegian, weeping bitterly at the moment when his father was dying far from him; on page 324, that of a student of medicine who met a doctor whom he had not seen for a long time and of whom he was just thinking; on page 326, that of a lady oppressed with a great uneasiness at the hour in which her father was dying, far away; on page 332, that of a workman leaving his work to rush to his wife who had just been knocked down by a wagon; that of a man leaving his friends abruptly, at

a pleasure party, to return home, where he found his child ill with croup, surrounded by four doctors, etc. These presentiments were caused by the transmission, if not of thoughts and of some sort of appeal, at least of psychic waves. We shall give them special study here.

The presentiment of which you are about to read is particularly worthy of attention. I invite my most stubborn readers to weigh it well in every way.

Monsieur Constans, Minister of the Interior, President of the Council of Ministers, while he was dining one day, with Madame Constans, at my table in my observatory of Juvisy, told us the following incident as it had happened to himself:

It was in 1889, at the time of the great struggle against General Boulanger<sup>1</sup> and his party over the revision of the French Constitution. One morning, in his office, a book was handed him with his mail. As he was in a hurry to leave for the Council of Ministers, he flung it on a table, asking Madame Constans to see what it was, and went out. Madame Constans, who was having her hair arranged by her maid, took the book on her knees and started to open it: she thought it was a prayer-book sent by a cousin. But three days before she had received, she said, "some horrible things" which had made her prudent. When with great care she had half opened the book she thought she saw "some vile things." She immediately gave the whole package to her maid, saying: "Carry that out to the entrance hall, it's some more filth." This confidential servant had hardly gone out when Madame Constans, half-dressed, her hair down her back, ran to the entrance and cried: "*Don't open it, don't touch it!*" Why?

She sent for Monsieur Cassel, the Director of Public Safety, and urged him to examine the object, as she had a presenti-

<sup>1</sup> With whom I also had relations, as astronomers like to observe everything, even in politics.

ment of some mystery connected with it. When Monsieur Cassel shook the book, he saw certain little white particles fall on the table. He put a match to them, and they caught fire. He realized the danger, put the book under his arm, and left for the prefecture, for the laboratory of Monsieur Girard. At the end of an hour Monsieur Cassels came back and told Madame Constans that the book contained enough dynamite to blow up the wing of the Ministry that was occupied by the minister. Madame Constans fainted and remained ill for eight days.

Such was the tale which Monsieur and Madame Constans told us at table, before a dozen persons.

The minister's wife had guessed the danger; more than guessed,—felt it so intensely that she had run, half-clothed, as far as the minister's antechamber to stop the servants who were about to open it.

Does not this show a sort of inner vision of the spirit, which has no connection with normal sight? We may attempt to compare this impression to a dog's sense of smell, but what an abyss exists between the two experiences! To have suspected a menace, that can be explained in the circumstances; but to have *violently felt* the immediate danger!

A few days after this was told me, my friend Girard, director of the laboratory of the prefecture of police, confirmed for me his special analysis of the charge of dynamite.

At this same dinner Madame Constans told us of another presentiment no less worthy of attention, which she had experienced.

In accordance with my practice to verify everything, by investigation, I was able to have the story confirmed by the physician who was attending her, Dr. Rességuet of Toulouse, the Constans family physician, in a letter which I give fully as I have given the preceding ones.

## LETTER OF DR. RESSÉGUET

Toulouse, March 16, 1901.

DEAR, GREAT MASTER:

I am making it my task to answer your questions on the subject of Madame Constans's presentiment in connection with her refusal to take some medicine sent by a pharmacist. This is the story; I shall tell it to you impersonally, as a historian:

Madame Constans was twenty-three years old, and was living in Toulouse, when one day she contracted diphtheria. Dr. Ressayguet, who is still at Toulouse, was called to her bedside. He ordered that her throat should be painted with muriatic acid. Madame Constans's mother gave him a bottle containing the supposed acid; but the sick woman, though very feeble, refused to let them go on, objecting that *they were going to kill her*,—that it was not muriatic acid. After a few unsuccessful attempts to treat her, and wishing to make sure himself as well as to prove to the patient that the medicine was all right, he thrust the stick of a match into the little bottle. It carbonized at once; it was sulphuric acid!

That is what I remember. I do not recall the exact details, but I have not forgotten that a serious mistake had been made by the druggist in connection with one of my prescriptions, and that Madame Constans, because of a strong presentiment, felt she must refuse to use the remedy.

I have endeavored to gather more materials about it; I have looked through my old note-books of this period, but in vain. I know that it was a case of diphtheria. My prescription had called for two bottles, one of which was for cauterization, the other for a potion, and the druggist's mistake must have been a confusion of labels. I know I have always remembered the fortunate presentiment which saved Madame Constans from the terrible effects of the ingestion of a caustic.

Allow me to tell you, Monsieur and great Master, that I am one of those whom your learned and interesting writings on the "Plurality of Worlds" has deeply interested and stirred. For a long time I have been your disciple in the matter of scientific theology, which has come to save the religious aspirations of humanity from materialism.

Be good enough to receive the homage of my profound and sincere gratitude. This homage is your due.

B. RESSÉGUET.

(Letter 980.<sup>1</sup>)

Here, then, are two incontestable empirical observations of presentiments, of which a materialist physiology can surely give no explanation. I could add to them a hundred similar statements which prove the existence of inner faculties, still unknown, that may be studied for our personal instruction.

There is here no act of reasoning, nor transmission of thought, nor telepathy. It is a sort of divination. The transmission of thought, telepathy, will be the object of special chapters later. We are entering upon the analysis of a whole unknown world, and we ought to distinguish with care the intrinsic nature of the phenomena.

We shall have analogous facts to study in the chapters on mental vision. Let us limit ourselves here to what are strictly presentiments of our waking hours, without troubling ourselves for the moment about what happens in dreams.

I have related somewhere how Delaunay, the director of the Observatoire at Paris, had the presentiment that the sea would prove fatal to him and had always refused to take a sea voyage, until one of his relatives, Monsieur Millaud, came in August to beg him to take a week's rest. They went to Cherbourg and were both drowned as they were returning from visiting the "roadstead," the boat capsizing in a gust of wind. Arsène Houssaye relates a similar story in his "Confessions" (Volume IV, page 425). Let us hear him:

<sup>1</sup> I repeat here, what I have already said on page 14, that the numbers associated with these letters are those under which they were filed during my researches on psychic phenomena, begun in 1899, and they may serve, on occasion, for reference to the originals and to verify the narratives. I will add that among the numerous letters that have been sent me telling me of these inexplicable facts are some which state that they are only revealing them to me, personally, on the express condition that I do not publish them. (For example, letter 419.)

His sister Cécile had fled from the Prussian invasion of 1870 and had taken refuge in a town on the sea-coast.

One day some one suggested a trip on the ocean, but all at once my sister exclaimed: "No, I do not wish to go on the ocean." Her friends asked her why: she told them how once at Toulon, as she was going on board a ship, an Italian fortune-teller had advised her to stay on shore; "*Carissima donna*, the sea will do you harm." My sister had gone on, nevertheless, giving a hundred sous to the Italian. They were hardly at sea before a gust of wind had flung her into the water, from which, however, she had been saved. The next day, the fortune-teller had appeared at the sous-prefecture. They did not wish to receive her, but my sister went out to her. The old sibyl looked into her eyes and prophesied that the sea would be fatal to her.

That was why she had not wished to take refuge in England, where she was expected by one of her friends. Instead of a trip by sea, they decided on a walk on terra firma.

It was the tenth of October; the prefect, his wife, his young daughter, his two nieces and my sister went gaily to the point of Penmare'h, that bristling promontory of cyclopean crags. Penmare'h means "horse's head," for the speech of the Bretons is as full of images as that of Châteaubriand. The sea broke against it with the noise of a tempest, all about were unfathomable depths and whirlpools; also, below the horse's head there was a veritable hell-hole. Out on the point of Teul-an-Ifern, then, the prefect led these five young and pretty women, so that they might see the terrifying spectacle of the raging sea. They were all laughing gaily when they came out on the rock, as into a box at the opera. While they sat down here and there, the prefect smoked a cigar near by in the doorway of a marine painter's studio. The women called to him to come and watch the wonderful sight of the sea besieging the rock. They were not in the least uneasy, for the assault of the waves stopped far below them.

The hour for departure had come, but my sister, captivated by the rugged beauty of the spectacle, asked for five minutes' grace. Suddenly a wave from the depths, one of those terrible waves like a thunderbolt leapt up, scaled the rock, and carried off the five terri-

fled women. The prefect turned white as he stared at the whirling water. An umbrella was flung toward him; a single cry: "Mother!" He dashed forward as if to fight the waves, but already the flood had gone down, bearing its harvest. And then nothing, just nothing but the sea, already calmer, singing the *De Profundis*, its bouquet of women on its bosom.

The jealous ocean has kept my sister in its depths, without flinging her back upon the shore. Nothing reappeared,—her graceful body, or her hair, loosened by the waves, or her umbrella, or her fan; nothing remained of her but that cry: "Mother!"

It was a white pigeon that brought me this somber news. Alas! the pigeons of the siege of Paris never brought us good tidings.

Presentiments, warnings of this kind are too numerous to be fortuitous and it is not surprising that we should seek an explanation of them. They form part of the psychic phenomena we are to study. One chance coincidence, yes; but twenty, a hundred, a thousand? No. There is no superstition in analyzing these mysteries.

The story we are about to hear shows us an entirely well-balanced man who, while he was with friends twenty kilometers from home, and expecting to spend the night, was oppressed with a sense of indefinable misfortune. He changed his plans so as to return home immediately, where he found his mother playing cards. Later she went to bed as usual, but appeared to him at the end of the same night, announcing that she was dying, at the very moment when she actually died from the rupture of an aneurism, in a room situated at the other end of the house. There are two distinct facts here: first, the sensation from fear of imminent and unforeseen misfortune; secondly, the apparition at the moment of death. Here is the letter:

DEAR MASTER:

For the sake of the knowledge you are giving to the world, I must inform you of something that happened to me five years ago, and

which you certainly ought not to doubt, despite your severe scientific methods. First of all, I must tell you who I am.

At present (1899) I am thirty-five years old. I enjoy excellent health. I have never suffered from hallucinations, and I have always been skeptical regarding visions and presentiments.

I am a landowner and live on my estate. I am engaged in the cultivation of my lands, and besides, I have administrative duties in the service of the government. I am a *semsky natchalnik*, which can be translated as an administrator or territorial judge, in the district of Kolm, province of Pskoff.

At half-past seven in the morning, on the twentieth of April, 1894, my mother, Madame Olga Nikoloiewna Arboussoff, breathed her last. Nothing gave warning of the approach of this death, for my mother was only fifty-eight years old and was feeling well. At the time I was living with her on my estate, where I am still living, in the village of Fnoukovo, district of Kolngdepskof.

In the year 1894, the twentieth of April (the day of my mother's death) fell during Easter week (old style) and on the nineteenth I had gone to pay an Easter visit to some friends. They live about two kilometers from my estate and I have often passed the night with them, returning home the next morning. I expected to do so on this occasion. Nevertheless, an indefinable presentiment prevented me from spending the night with them, and despite their urgent entreaties, I started back the very same evening. During the whole journey I was ill at ease and obsessed with the presentiment of approaching misfortune. I knew no relief until I arrived home and found some friends with whom my mother was playing cards.

My mother used to suffer from violent attacks of headache, and when I asked her how she felt, she answered that her head pained her a little. Before going to my room, I wished her good night, as usual, and then lost no time in falling asleep.

My house is large and my chamber is somewhat removed from my mother's; two stone walls separate them.

The next day (April 20th) I awoke entirely covered with cold sweat, and trembling from a frightful dream that had just appeared to me. To tell the truth, it was not a dream but a vision. At the moment of my awakening, at exactly half-past seven (for I looked at once at my watch), I plainly saw my mother approach my bed.

She came and kissed me on the forehead, saying: "Farewell, I am dying! I am dying!"

I was just getting up to go into my mother's room when I suddenly heard a great uproar in the house and people running about. My mother's chambermaid dashed into my room, bathed in tears and screaming: "Monsieur, Madame has just died!"

According to the statement of the servants, it appeared that my mother had risen at about seven, and had gone into her grandchildren's room. She kissed her little granddaughter, went back to her room and, as her custom was, knelt down before the icons to say her morning prayers.

At the moment when she prostrated herself before the images she suddenly died. Death had been caused by the bursting of a blood-vessel.

Well, the death had taken place at exactly half-past seven, the hour of my vision.

There, my dear Master, is the event which I believed I ought to communicate to you. If you desire to ask me some questions I shall make haste to satisfy you for the sake of your valuable and carefully verified researches. It seems to me, as a matter of fact, as if I had already written to you.

ALEXIS ARBOUSSOFF,  
Kolm, Government of Pskoff, Russia.

(Letter 814.)

There are two remarkable facts here that may be interpreted for our instruction.

Whatever may be the tale of the observer, who may vary his expressions according to his memory, and whatever may be the orthography of the foreign names, the events in themselves exist.

In the first place, the account is scientifically admissible. It is that of a well-balanced man, at the height of his powers, and it is our duty to consider it with the same care as an astronomical, meteorological, or chemical observation, or any other actual observation. There are two remarkable facts here to be examined for our instruction.

Monsieur Alexis Arboussoff, thirty years of age, in 1894, living with his mother, fifty-eight years of age, on his estate in Russia, goes to visit his friends, twenty kilometers from his home, intending to spend the night and return the next day. But that very night a painful presentiment disturbs him to the depths of his being and prevents him from carrying out his plans: he feels himself urged to return home at once, without waiting until the next day. When he comes back into the house, he is amazed to find no explanation of this presentiment, everything is going along tranquilly, as usual, and friends are playing cards with his mother.

The interesting thing to know would be what had been the cause of this telepathic sensation. It did not seem that it could have been his mother, as she did not appear disturbed about her health despite the headache from which she was suffering. We know of cases in which sorrowful appeals have been sent out, physically or morally, and heard far away under some form or other. Here we seem to find an intuition in the mind of the son. Nevertheless, the psychic communication between the two cannot be doubted, and it is accompanied here by a singular prevision of the future. Madame Arboussoff was going to die in a few hours: she did not suspect it and her son was equally unaware of it.

But there is something else in us besides our apparent normal consciousness. Whatever name we may give it—"unconscious," "subconscious," "subliminal"—this other thing exists: you cannot escape that.

Well, it is our inmost self, transcendent, permanent, existing before our material body and independent of it; it is our soul, whose faculties are unknown to official science.

Let us now look at the second point.

The man who tells the story, a responsible landowner and territorial judge, goes to bed and sleeps the sleep of an honest man satisfied with his lot. But now it happens that the next morning he awakens, covered with sweat, trembling

from a horrible nightmare. What was it? His mother, dead suddenly in her room far away and separated from him by two other rooms, comes up to his bed, kisses him on the forehead, and says, "Farewell, I am dying!"

The personal action of the dying woman cannot be doubted here. Her spirit must have affected that of her son, enough to show him her image. We must not conclude from this that something material, or semi-material, an ethereal body, clad like the dead woman, had passed from the mother's room to the son's: such an interpretation is not necessary. But this mother did, nevertheless, really show herself to her son when she announced her death to him. That is the incontestable fact before which all denials must yield.

Is that not a proof of the existence of a spirit in the human organism, a thinking spirit, a mental will, affection, personality? The observation is as positive, as irrefutable as that of a fire-ball, of a thunderbolt, of any carefully verified physical phenomenon.

It was in spirit that this mother made herself felt to her son and this psychic action of her brain was expressed by her image.

The account that follows shows a certain analogy with the preceding one and in the same way brings forward a supra-normal faculty of the soul for our study.

My mother died on October 4, 1888, in her home five miles from Ozark, Missouri. She was fifty-eight years old. At the time I was living at Fordland, about twenty miles from my mother's house. I had not seen her for two months, but she wrote to me every week. The night of her death, I was attending a religious service with my wife. We had our year-old baby with us. About ten o'clock in the evening, before the end of the service, while the congregation was singing, I felt the need of seeing my mother, a thought which was suggested to me by the sight of some people who seemed too warm and which reminded me that my mother was subject to attacks of breathlessness in which she needed air, and in their faces I seemed

to see my mother suffering. All at once I was mastered by the impulsive desire to rush to her, a desire so strong that I confided the baby to a neighbor and left, without telling my wife, who was in another part of the church. I ran to take the train, but missed it, and in my determination to reach my mother's home without delay, I followed the track on foot, for about seven miles, and by another road; I was able to reach my mother's house at three in the morning. I had therefore walked more than four hours.

My mother had just died. I knocked, no one answered. I managed to open the door and found my sister, whom the noise had awakened. I asked her where my mother was and she answered: "She is in bed." "Oh!" I said, "she is dead!"

I was sure of it. We went to her bed; she had indeed died, undoubtedly several hours before. She had gone to bed about ten o'clock, feeling better than usual and planning with my sister to get up early to go to Ozark.

THOMAS GARRISON.

An inquiry made by the English Society for Psychical Research has published the details of the verification of this tale by the sister of the narrator, his wife and the neighbors.<sup>1</sup>

So here is a man who, without any known cause, without any normal reasons, leaves a religious service which he is attending, gives his child to a neighbor to hold, does not tell his wife, and goes twenty miles on foot at night to rush to his mother who has just died!

It seems to me impossible to doubt that the spirit of the dying mother had affected his own. Moreover, it was the spirit of the narrator which had felt that emotion, as imperious as it was incomprehensible. Was the action conscious or unconscious on the part of the mother? We know nothing about it. But we cannot refuse to admit that between the two persons, the mother and son, there was psychic communication, mental correspondence. It is what we call

<sup>1</sup> Myers, *Human Personality* (London, 1903), II, 112.

supra-normal faculties belonging to the soul, independent of the physical senses.

Let us continue our free examination. Ought we to classify this event in the category of tragic presentiments? In any case it is most extraordinary.

Among hundreds, among thousands of psychic phenomena of this order, we have merely an embarrassment of choices to prove the existence in man of unknown powers and unsolved riddles. For example, here is one of recent date, of which I heard from the mouth of the very person to whom it had occurred.

A lady living in Paris (Madame Marichal, 20 rue Custine, xviii<sup>th</sup> *arrondissement*) awoke on a certain night—Thursday, the twenty-sixth of March, 1914,—under the impression of a terrible nightmare. A sort of specter, vague and formless, was there, close to her bed, clutching her arm, and ordering her to choose between two frightful menaces. “It is necessary,” it made her understand, “that of the two, your husband and your daughter, one must die. Choose!”

“Choose,” she said, “between my husband and my daughter? It is impossible. Neither the one nor the other!” she replied, trembling all over.

“You must choose,” replied the apparition. “One of the two must die. Decide! Which is to be sacrificed?”

The woman struggled long minutes, a prey to the most dreadful anguish, without being able to decide. Mad with grief, she refused to answer. What indescribable suffering gripped her soul! We can imagine it. Her husband was there, in perfect health, forty-six years of age, sleeping beside her. Her daughter, who came with her to tell me this singular hallucination, is, at the moment at which I write these lines (June, 1918) a beautiful girl of seventeen. We can imagine Madame Marichal’s agitation. She felt an equal affection for them both.

Finally, conquered by a will stronger than her own that

insisted on an answer, she ended by saying to herself that maternal love ought to be stronger than anything else and that she would sacrifice her husband sooner than her child.

Five days later Monsieur Marichal, whom she had been careful not to tell of this nightmare, and who had never been ill in his life, felt fatigued when he returned from his office (Marine Cable) and went to bed. The doctor, who was called on Wednesday, could not discover symptoms of any malady, and diagnosed the case as a slight attack of grippe. On Thursday his condition grew worse. On Saturday the condemned man was dead. The heart had stopped, the doctor declared. No indication of any heart trouble had ever been discovered.

I have questioned Madame Marichal and her daughter, both separately and together, in order to compare their accounts of this strange tale, and for me its authenticity is unquestioned.

We can add this premonitory dream to the seventy-six similar dreams published in "L'Inconnu." But what a sinister affair! and how explain it?

The most simple thing is to suppose that Monsieur Marichal was to die at this date, without himself suspecting his state of health. When we die it is, in certain circumstances, only the end of a cycle of illness of which we are unaware. We think our health is good, but gradually an unknown sickness is weakening us. The very sensitive subconsciousness of the wife may have unconsciously perceived this state of health and its fatal end. Our psychic personality is endowed with powers that have as yet been analyzed very little.

This is an explanatory hypothesis, but it is only an hypothesis.

If we accept it we must, to complete it, imagine why it took the form of an apparition with an annunciation.

Another hypothesis:

Does not the invisible world, in the midst of which we live, contain beings as invisible as the forces that govern nature, such as attraction, electricity, magnetism of the sun and the planets, etc.,—beings, spirits, thoughts which may possess a rudimentary consciousness as well as the power of seeing what is taking place in a living organism and of making themselves manifest? That is a bold hypothesis, but it will help us to understand the case that has just been reported. An invisible being which had become visible could, so to speak, impose on Madame Marichal the trick of the forced card. We have all seen those sleight-of-hand men who offer us a handful of cards, inviting us to choose “freely.” But we always choose the card the man wishes (except when another is substituted). The spirit we are imagining might have known, seen that the condemned man had to die shortly and have led the wife to choose him herself.

Even while I am imagining this hypothesis, I admit that it seems to me very unlikely; but we cannot declare that it is inadmissible. It recalls, under another aspect, the guardian angel which the Christian religion teaches us is the invisible companion of each one of the faithful. Whether it is applicable or not, the fact to be explained is there before us, unassailable.

May we not also admit, from the evidence of events,—a series rich in concurring observations,—that the atmosphere, or, to speak more exactly, the ether contains a psychic element that has not yet been discovered? The chemical composition of the air, oxygen, and nitrogen, was discovered only in the eighteenth century. It was believed then that its composition was entirely understood; about twenty years ago, however, more subtle, unknown elements were discovered, *neon*, *trypton*, *argon*, and *xenon*. Others may exist, even more tenuous and of a finer essence. Every second a human soul abandons a body. Is it annihilated? Nothing proves that it is. These souls number about 86,000 to 100,000 a day, more or less, one

million in ten days, ten millions in a hundred days, thirty-six millions a year. To believe, with Victor Hugo, that "everything is full of souls" is perhaps not poetic fiction. But may not this psychic element be concerned in the explanation of the phenomena we are studying?

Nevertheless, in the example with which we are dealing here, the first hypothesis seems to me the most probable, especially if we reflect that our mental being is able to externalize itself, to go out from us and assume a form that is foreign to our consciousness and even to talk with us, as happens in dreams. But in this instance it is the case of a dream that was at first unconscious and on awakening became hallucinatory.

We see how complex the question is which we are studying. This example, which I have just presented from among a thousand, has no other aim, for the moment, than to justify the title of this chapter: "Supra-Normal Faculties of the Soul, Unknown or Little Understood." It bears the number 4033 in the inquiry of which I have already spoken.

A tale which is not without resemblance to that of Madame Marichal is related in "Ainslee's Magazine" for March, 1892, by Dr. Minot Savage:

In a certain quarter of New York there lived a young man who had just finished his studies abroad at the university of Heidelberg. By nature he was anything but imaginative. Tall and robust, he had the reputation of an athlete. His favorite studies were mathematics, the physical sciences, and electricity. He had just come back from abroad and, so far as could be known, his health was excellent. He was at the time with his mother in her house in the country. It was his custom to go every day, after dinner, into the public square for a little stroll while he smoked his pipe. One evening he came in quietly and went to bed without speaking to any one. The next morning he went into his mother's room, before she had risen, and passed his hand over her face so as to wake her gently; then he said:

"Mother, I have something very sad to tell you. You must arm

yourself with courage so as to be strong enough to bear the news."

His mother was, naturally, astounded and asked him what he meant.

"Mother, I know what I am saying; I shall die soon."

Troubled and full of anguish, as may be imagined, she asked him to explain himself.

"Last evening," he answered, "as I was walking in the square, a spirit appeared to me and began to walk beside me. I have received the warning: I must die."

Very much impressed, the mother sent for a doctor and told him of the incident. The doctor, after having carefully examined the young man, found nothing abnormal in his condition and assured them that it was only a bad dream, a pure hallucination, that they must not think of it again, and that in a few days the mother and son would laugh at their fears.

The next day, the young man was not quite so well as usual and the doctor was called a second time: again he laughed at their fears.

The third day the condition of the sick man had grown worse, and then he was obliged to admit a case of appendicitis. The young man was operated upon and died two days later. Only five days had passed between the vision and the death.

When confronted with these tales, people have the habit of disposing of them lightly with the word "hallucination," and they imagine they have solved the problem by suppressing it. This is childish.

I should only have to dip into the innumerable documents of this inquiry to add new and different cases to those that have been told and to show the extent of the unknown regions we have to explore. My hand has just fallen on the following letter, which is quite different from the preceding one and no less curious. It was sent me from Constantinople, September 22, 1900. Here it is:

**MONSIEUR:**

On behalf of the scientific research, based on experiment, to which you are faithfully consecrating so many hours, devoted to the

furthering of public instruction, I have made it my duty to acquaint you with two cases observed by myself.

A gentleman, who is related to me, was at my house in Constantinople one day, at about half-past eleven in the morning, and said to me: "I don't know why, but since this morning I have been obsessed with the thought that my aunt is dead at Geneva." I asked him, then, if he thought his aunt was ill, and he answered that he had quarreled with his family ten years before, and had had no news of them since. But while we were talking and I was trying to prove to him what mere imagination his presentiment was, his servant came to my house, bringing him a telegram from Geneva, announcing the sudden death of his aunt, which had taken place that very morning.

This same gentleman, on the night of the thirty-first of last July, awoke with a start and said to his wife: "They have killed the King of Italy."

His wife, thinking he was dreaming, did not answer him. The next morning she spoke to him about this dream, but he answered that it was not a dream and that those words had come out of his mouth without his being able to imagine how or why.

From the window they could see the harbor, and he himself said to his wife: "The best proof that the King of Italy isn't dead is that all the police-ships have raised their flags."

An hour later, he went back to the window and all the police-ships had their flags at half-mast. Astonished at this change, he ran out for information and learned that King Humbert had been assassinated during the night. Frightened at this coincidence, he came to consult me as an alienist, and asked me if this vision were not a grave symptom that something was wrong with his brain. I reassured him, but did not fail to take down notes on the case, especially because, as I have just told you, this man is perfectly well balanced and in all ways worthy of trust.

While awaiting a reply, I beg you to be good enough to pardon my boldness in addressing you without knowing you personally, and to accept my respectful homage.

DR. L. MOUGERI,  
Alienist of the Royal Italian Hospital,  
20 rue Cabristan, Constantinople.

(Letter 943.)

We have here, as we see, two cases of telepathy, analogous though different: first, a death perceived at a distance, from Constantinople to Geneva, in a waking state; secondly, the assassination of the King of Italy, learned of during sleep. There can be no doubt of the perception of the two facts. Is the explanation the same for the two cases? In the first there was probably a special current between the aunt and the nephew, in the second case, a transmission through the general spherical waves. It is difficult to decide. It is because of this difficulty that the number of observations has a real value.

I have thanked the honorable doctor for adding this communication to so many others. No one has the right to deny these facts. It is senseless to see nothing in them but illusion; it is denying the sun at high noon. The human being is still, for us, an unexplored mystery. The science taught in schools has followed the wrong track until now, and he who seeks for truth must henceforth be convinced that there exist *unknown powers of the soul* of the greatest importance, to be discovered, determined, and explained.

My opinion is that we ought, with an open mind, to investigate everything. Francisque Sarcey was gracious enough, one day, to show me a letter which he had just received about palmistry, dated March 22, 1899, and which began as follows:

No one admires more than I your good sense, and the excellent principles which you profess or the very prudent advice which you give the world in your chronicles. But no one can know everything, and the excellent good sense (a rare thing) which is most peculiarly characteristic of you, does not permit you, I admit, to fathom what at first seems unfathomable. In this you are diametrically opposed to Monsieur Flammarion, who himself possesses the real scientific sense. *He rejects nothing without examination.*

A. DE M.

(Letter 841.)

This letter continues with a dissertation upon palmistry which there is no need for us to discuss here. If I have reproduced this passage it is only to remind us of the care we must take to disdain nothing, in the hope that, unhindered by preconceived ideas, we may succeed in determining what is true and actual in psychic phenomena. Sarcey was all the kinder to show me this letter because he did not in the least believe in these phenomena.

Nevertheless, how numerous, how irrefutable are these phenomena! Let us no longer disdain them.

To prove, to discuss supra-normal powers of the soul! That is not always easy. The following case was sent me from Cette, January 20, 1912, and it was one of those which showed me how wise I had been to invite, through the press, those who had had these experiences to be good enough to inform me, in the interest of our general understanding.

On a certain evening, I came out of the Grand Café at Cette, leaving a good friend of mine within, in perfect health. It was exactly midnight. I went to bed in excellent humor and slept the sleep of the just, with no other preoccupation than that of enjoying a well-earned repose.

All at once, at three o'clock in the morning, I sat up in my bed, wakened by a frightful nightmare. I saw my comrade, his skull open, breathing his last, bidding me farewell and embracing me. It was horrible! I can still see clearly that frightful vision. I got up terrified, dressed, and waited for day in the hope that the distraction of the coming and going in the streets would drive away the frightful nightmare that obsessed me. At seven o'clock in the morning I set out from my home. They were just coming to tell me that my lamented comrade, Théaubon, while visiting a friend, had, after events that do not concern us here, jumped out of a window and broken his skull, which had caused instant death.

Stunned, overwhelmed, and still under the impression of my dream, I thought I was going to faint.

What I tell you is the exact truth, for I have too much respect and

veneration for the great scholar whom I admire to tell him anything that is not literally true.

LOUIS PÉRIER,  
Employed in the Town-hall at Cette.

(Letter 2220.)

How should we interpret this vision?

Did the spirit of the narrator see the accident at a distance or did the person appear and show himself?

We are familiar with so many cases of sight at a distance that the first explanation occurs to us.

However, the author did not see the accident, he saw his friend, his skull broken, breathing his last and embracing him.

But, on the other hand, if the dead man had been killed instantly, at a most tragic moment for himself, can we imagine that he would have thought of his friend?

This is not probable, but after all it is possible; he had just left him, three hours before. We see how complex the question is.

Here is a very remarkable case of the telepathetic perception, on the part of a wife, of an accident occurring to her husband, at a distance, taken from "Phantasms of the Living." It concerned Dr. Olivier, a physician at Huelgoat, Finistère, who writes:

On October 10, 1881, I received a professional call into the country about seven miles from my home. It was in the middle of the night, a very dark night. I started down a sunken road, above which rose trees that formed an arch overhead. The night was so dark that I could not see how to guide my horse and so let the animal choose his own path by instinct. It was about nine o'clock; the country road on which I happened to be at this moment was strewn with large round stones and sloped down steeply. The horse walked slowly, very slowly. All at once, the animal's forefeet slipped and he fell, his mouth striking the ground. Naturally, I was thrown far

over his head. My shoulder struck the earth and I fractured my collar-bone.

At this very moment my wife, who was undressing at home and preparing to go to bed, had a strong inward feeling that an accident had happened to me; she was seized with a nervous trembling, began to cry, and called the maid: "Come quickly, I am frightened, some misfortune has happened to my husband; he is dead or injured." Until my arrival she kept the servant beside her and did not cease weeping. She wished to send a man to find me, but she did not know to what village I had gone. I returned home about one o'clock in the morning and called the servant to bring me a light and unsaddle my horse. "I am hurt," I said, "I can't move my shoulder."

My wife's presentiment was confirmed.

A. OLIVIER,

Physician at Huelgoat, Finistère.

I possess, in my collection, the accounts of a certain number of events similar to this, the perception of misfortune or accident at a distance. Further on we shall see one almost identical, which oddly enough occurred three quarters of an hour earlier.

The actual existence of the human soul is revealed by the evidence of psychic powers that cannot be attributed to matter and which are still far from having been sufficiently studied. Man does not yet know his true nature. He is endowed with hardly suspected powers, which his gradual evolution will develop. The classical schools of learning have taken the wrong path.

We see, touch, analyze, and dissect, in the human organism, only what is most apparent, most superficial, and most crude. We still ignore what subtleties it possesses inwardly, and nevertheless, this is what it is essential to understand. Analysis by experiment of the powers of the soul ought from now on to take the place of our former metaphysics and the words which represent it. The pretended knowledge of the soul has consisted, in fact, of words. There is very little

reality beneath these expressions with which we have been contented for centuries, and which have never taught us anything. Another method is necessary from now on. This examination of the powers of the human soul will lead us to consider as exactly as possible all the actual observations which reveal them, and which prove the reality of such much-disputed, paradoxical happenings as the following:

The will acting without words and at a distance;  
 Psychic transmissions: telepathy;  
 Mental vision, by the spirit; the prevision of the future;  
 Manifestations of the dead at the moment of death—and after.

Diverse and independent observations all agree in affirming that there is in man an active psychic element, different from the properties of his material senses.

We are entering here upon an immense world, newer than that which Christopher Columbus discovered on arriving at the so-called West Indies.

Is it from his own brain that the subject, who has been hypnotized can draw what he says, when he speaks of things that he does not understand; visits, mentally, houses that are unknown to him; treats of questions that are foreign to him; replies to unknown languages; hears the thought and not the words; feels what a person, near or far away, is thinking, or transports his spirits to a distance and describes scenes of which he can know nothing?

Let us cease basing our judgments on material appearances, on the classic physiology.

In general, we dare not confront the unknown, face it as a problem, an equation; we are inclined to believe we know everything (!) and that what is outside the limits of science is not worthy of examination.

Long ago, about the year 1865, I was almost alone in France in upholding the connection between solar activity

and the diurnal oscillations of the magnetic needle. The astronomers, among others Monsieur Faye who, with Le Verrier, was the most celebrated of all, said I was mistaken. For them the observed correspondences were only fortuitous.

Kepler's sentence, comparing the sun to a magnet, *Corpus Solis esse magneticum*,<sup>1</sup> was my own, his humble disciple's; the physicists would not admit it. The sun, they proclaimed, could not be a magnet, since the magnetism of an iron bar is lost when it is heated.

But the sun, despite its 6500 degrees of heat, is a magnetic center, and now (1919) they have found the means even of measuring the magnetism of the individual spots! It is thus that science itself is transformed. We are far from understanding "reality" in anything whatever.

Apropos of the constant observations that any one can make on the difference between reality and appearance, I have just caught sight of the following note. I wrote it in my observatory at Juvisy on November 13, 1917:

On this cold morning, the solar disk is a burning red. The atmosphere is impregnated with a half-transparent fog. Lovely winter landscape, although a great number of trees still keep their green foliage. Many red and yellow. Many entirely bare. If, because of atmospheric conditions, the sun constantly appeared as red as this, we should believe this was its natural color. No one would ever have seen it white. It is thus with a great many things. Our impressions form the natural basis of our judgments.

This is perhaps the hundredth time I have seen the sun like this and have made the same reflections. The same may be true of all our sensations.

As I transcribe this note, I can add to it what I have said very often for fifty years: if the atmosphere were even more opaque, or constantly covered with clouds, neither the sun nor

<sup>1</sup> *Kepleri Opera omnia*, III, 304, ed. Frisch; see my *Etudes sur l'Astronomie*, I (1867), 117.

the stars would ever be visible, the solar system would remain unknown, and the human race would remain irretrievably in the most absolute ignorance of reality.

What shall we think now of persons that are psychic, psychic in different degrees? They are more numerous than one imagines; Goethe and Schumann were remarkable types of them. We shall speak further on of Goethe in connection with "double personalities." Let us notice in passing a curious telepathic experience of Schumann's. In a letter written in the year 1833, to Clara Wiek, he relates what follows:

I must tell you of a presentiment which I have just had: it has haunted me from the twenty-fourth to the twenty-seventh of March, while I was absorbed in my new compositions.

There is a certain passage which obsessed me, and some one seemed to repeat after me, from the depths of his heart: "*Ach, Gott!*" While I was composing I saw funereal things, coffins, despairing faces. When I had finished I sought for a title. The only one that came to my mind was: *Leichenphantasie* (Funereal Fantasy). Wasn't it extraordinary? I was so much upset that tears came to my eyes; I really did not know why; it was impossible for me to discover a reason for this sadness. Then came Therese's letter and everything was explained.

His sister-in-law wrote him that his brother Edward had just died. Schumann gave the name of *Nachtstücke* (Nocturne) to this piece which he had at first wished to call *Leichenphantasie*.<sup>1</sup>

Presentiments appear under all forms. An examination of them would fill an enormous volume.<sup>2</sup> I shall point out one

<sup>1</sup> *Schumann: sa vie et ses œuvres*, by Louis Schneider and Marcel Mareschal.

<sup>2</sup> We find in the writings of Daniel Defoe, the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, the story of the fire at London that was foreseen by one of his friends, a lady, and which he speaks of in his *Vision of the Angelic World*; a case very like that of the Princess de Conti, who saved her children.

more of the most extraordinary, experienced by a great lady across the channel, Lady Eardley, who related it in the following words to Mr. Myers: <sup>1</sup>

When I was a young girl of about sixteen I had a light attack of measles. I was living with my grandfather and grandmother. After three or four days in my room, they told me I could take a warm bath. I was overjoyed, and since I felt much better I went to the bath-room and undressed; but just as I was about to enter the water I heard a voice say to me, "Open the door." The voice was distinct, quite external, and yet seemed to come in some way from myself. I cannot say whether it was a man's or a woman's voice. I was astonished and looked about me. Naturally no one was there. A second time I heard, "Open the door!" I began to be frightened, saying to myself: "I must be mad or ill." But I did not feel ill. I decided to think no more of it and was already in the bath when I heard for a third, and I think for a fourth time the same words spoken. I made a bound, opened the door, and came back to the bath. As I stepped into it I fainted and fell flat in the water. Fortunately I was able to seize the bell-rope which hung on the wall close to the bath. The chambermaid arrived and found me, she says, with my head under water. She seized me and carried me out of the room; my head struck against the door, which brought me to my senses at once. If the door had been closed I should certainly have been drowned.

How extraordinary! What was this voice? Whence did it come? Probably from the young girl herself, who may have thought of a possible weakness. What variety there is in all these incomprehensible warnings! Yes, the human soul is gifted with powers unknown to the science of to-day.

Our psychic mentality, which is in general submerged in our material being, shows itself in certain examples that are well known but have been poorly explained by the blind physiological skepticism of the modern schools. Among

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1889, p. 197.

others, let us recall the following events in the life of Jeanne d'Arc:

Jeanne said to the soldier of Chinon, who had cursed her when she was entering the château: "Ah! You deny God, and yet you are so near your death!" That very evening the soldier was accidentally drowned.

At other times, and more often, it is Jeanne herself who attests that she is warned by "her voices." At Vaucouleurs she goes directly to the lord of Baudricourt, without having ever seen him: "I recognized him," she explained, "thanks to my voice; it said to me: 'There he is!'"

At Chignon, when she had been brought into the king's presence, Jeanne recognized him unhesitatingly among the three hundred courtiers in the midst of whom he had disguised himself under a borrowed coat. She asked him for a private interview in which she recalled to him, to convince him of her mission, the words of the silent prayer that he had already addressed to God, alone in his oratory, a prayer concerning his contested legitimacy.

It is once more her voices which inform her that the hammer of Charles Martel is buried in the church of Saint Catherine de Fierbois; which waken her at Orleans when, worn out with fatigue, she has flung herself on her bed in ignorance of the attack on the fortress of Saint-Loup; which warn her that she will be wounded by a dart on May 7, 1429, at the attack of Tournelles.

At the siege of Orleans she warns Glandale that he will perish "without losing blood, within three days." As a matter of fact, at the capture of Tournelles, Glandale falls in the Loire and is drowned. And so on.

Whence came these voices? In all probability from herself. But they closely touched the invisible world.

Jeanne d'Arc was a rare type of these sensitive beings

endowed with supra-normal faculties; but there are many others who approach this state.

These manifestations of the spirit are only just beginning to be studied by the method of experiment; again we ought to state that in this order of phenomena we can almost never *experiment*, but only *observe*, which greatly reduces the field of study. Also, the conditions of organic, earthly life are so crude that we are in much the same situation as that of a man who tried to make astronomical observations in a country where the sky was almost continually overcast.

These exceptional conditions are the more to be regretted because the problem of the soul, which is the same as that of its survival, is undeniably the most interesting and important of all questions, for it concerns ourselves, our inner nature, our immortality or our annihilation.

We shall study, in the next chapters, the undeniable cases of mental vision, by means of the spirit, as well as the vision of future happenings before they occur, and we shall have there, also, convincing evidence of the transcendent faculties of the soul.

To see the future exactly, or to see what is happening a thousand miles away,—what could be more incredible, and yet more certain?

The power of foreseeing the future will be studied here in a special chapter. What is *time*? How is the *future* made?

The problems worthy of our attention are so numerous and so vast that their explanation is never finished and our curiosity is constantly renewed by their study. The everyday banalities of life do not satisfy intellectual beings, for they know that to live intellectually is to live twice as fully, and they love to live by thought. Let us continue our comparative study.

A learned schoolmaster, Monsieur Savelli, at Costa in Corsica, wrote to me in 1912:

It is clear that these questions interest readers to the highest degree, and I know that I am speaking for them when I beg you to continue your teachings.

The question of the nature of time must be very difficult to solve. To a seeker who asked a famous mathematician to define it, the latter replied: "Let us speak of something else!" Nevertheless, I think it my duty to submit to you some very disturbing observations which it is impossible to doubt.

(1) One evening my father, returning home with a friend, was surprised to hear cries of distress; women were weeping and exclaiming. They thought that some calamity had occurred, that perhaps some one had been killed: they looked at the house from which these lamentations had just come and stopped, but utter silence followed the outcries. The next evening at the same hour, when he passed the house again, my father heard the same groans. This time they were real. A child, who had not been ill the evening before, had been seized with croup during the day and had just died very suddenly. This event took place at Ville-de-Paraso, a neighboring commune to that in which I exercise the functions of a teacher.

(2) Monsieur Napoleoni, a retired quartermaster, has told me the following experience: "We were coming home about midnight, passing, in the most profound silence, two isolated houses, when we heard loud blows repeated at regular intervals that vibrated in the silence of the night. It seemed to us that some one was striking wood with a hammer. I will not deny that my hair rose on my head and I returned home very much stirred by this inexplicable phenomenon. Two days later, I chanced to be in the same spot where those strange noises had astounded me and I heard them again: it was the village carpenter, who was nailing up the coffin of the shepherd who had died the evening before."

(3) The day on which the Massoni bandits murdered Dr. Malaspina of Costa, my uncle, Costa Michelangelo, who is still alive and who was then (1850) a pupil in the lyc  e of Bastia, had the sensation of being seized in an invisible clutch that paralyzed all his movements. The maternal grandparent of my uncle was the sister of Dr. Malaspina.

(Letter 2230.)

Of these three events, the first two are premonitions<sup>1</sup> and the third is a sort of telepathic sensation of which one can read many hundreds of examples in my work "*L'Inconnu*." They are unexplained and inexplicable, in the present state of science! But they are irrefutable and confirm one another; their study will throw light upon our own consciousness, which is still so little advanced, for we are ignorant most of all of our own nature. Let us therefore not neglect it.

We are beginning to understand telepathic transmissions through the discovery of the wireless telegraph, but nothing has yet put us upon the track of the explanation of premonitory events which, although incontestable, are so difficult to admit. The principal difficulty lies in the contradiction that seems to exist between the vision of future events, of which we shall give absolute proof here, and our sense of free will.

Without taking up, for the moment, the question of these particular cases, and in order to keep to the question of principle, I shall say at once that from now on we can no longer have any doubt about the fact that in certain circumstances future events have been seen and described in advance, exactly and explicitly. To this statement I may add, in the second place, that this fact of observation must be reconciled with free will. Time is not what it seems to us. It does not exist in itself. Eternity is motionless and always present. One day a French cardinal, in close relations with Pope Leo XIII, was discussing this question with me during a walk in a garden at Nancy, and maintained that premonitions could not be reconciled with free will.

"You believe in the existence of God?" I asked him. "I feel sure you do not doubt it. You believe with all the theologians, and with Cicero, as well as with your predecessor, the Bishop of Hippo, that God knows the future?"—"Assuredly, yes."—"You also admit free will and the respon-

<sup>1</sup> We shall see others in Chap. IX, "Knowledge of the Future."

sibility of Christians?"—"Yes."—"Well, in what way does the admission of these premonitory events differ from this doctrine?"

As for time, the past no longer exists, the future does not yet exist: only the present exists. But what is the present? The present hour? Not that. This very moment? No. A second? No. A tenth of a second? No. A hundredth of a second? Not that either. A millionth of a second? Even that is very long for an electrician. Let us admit it, however, if you wish. That, then, is the *present, reality*. You must admit that it is not very substantial.

As time does not exist in itself and is measured in our spirit only by our sensations, the chain of events is like a present that unrolls continually, and to watch this unrolling does not prevent the human will from playing its part in it.

The problem remains, none the less, both very complex and very curious. This *vision of the future* will be especially proved in Chapters VIII and IX.

Let me repeat that we live in the midst of a world of which we know only the surface, and we can barely guess at the inner realities. There exist, between these realities and our souls, affinities, relations, an intercourse that are still unknown.

I shall conclude this chapter with a letter which I received while I was classifying the documents and manuscripts concerned with this work. It comes from an eminent mind whose character is coldly positive, a former student at the Ecole Polytechnique, chief engineer of bridges and highways, life member of the Astronomical Society of France, and an impartial judge of great or little events. Here is the letter:

## GOVERNMENT OF MOROCCO

BUREAU OF PUBLIC WORKS

Chief Engineer

Tangier, July 6, 1918.

MY DEAR MASTER:

As you have made a special study of "unknown natural forces," permit me to inform you, without comment or any attempt at explanation, of two events, one of which took place yesterday, the other a year ago, and the chief interest of which lies, for me, in the fact that, being the person concerned, I can guarantee their authenticity.

First event: I possess, for my observations of the heavens, an electric clock from Leroy, a clock that runs, as you know, by means of batteries for four years and does not stop until the batteries are exhausted; this clock has run for three and a half years in my workroom and has never suffered the least derangement. But yesterday while friends were enjoying some music at my house, in another room than that in which the clock stood, I suddenly looked at my watch and noticed that it was twenty minutes before midnight. I do not know why, but as soon as I had consulted my watch, and for the first time since owning the clock, I began to think that the batteries had only a few more months to run, and that perhaps it would be well for me to set about replacing them, as it was possible that they would not run as they were guaranteed to do, for the full four years; then I thought no more about it.

Half an hour later, when my friends had left, I came back into my workroom, and what was my stupefaction to find that my electric clock, which, as I repeat, had run for three and a half years without stopping once, had ceased running at exactly twenty minutes before twelve; the batteries were not used up and I only needed to push the pendulum to set it going again.

PORCHÉ-BANÈS.

I can imagine no better than could the observer any explanation for this curious happening, unless it is that *our spirit perceives certain things by means of powers that are still unknown*. We might suppose that when the pendulum

had completely stopped, the learned engineer was unconsciously struck by this stoppage and, also unconsciously, looked at his watch and thought of the clock entirely by chance! But no; the sensation was experienced in another room, where it could not be heard. And, for that matter, what is chance? A veil before unknown explanations. Why did the clock stop, as the battery was not exhausted? A grain of dust? Dryness? Electric fatigue? Other imagined hypotheses? These interpretations are inadequate to explain the psychic correspondence.

Here is the second event spoken of in the same letter.

A year ago, in the light sleep one falls into toward the end of night, I saw in my dreams a certain person from Tunis whom I scarcely knew, as I had met her only twice during the eight years that I had passed in Tunis. I had left that country nine years before and in consequence I had not seen her for fifteen years. I repeat that I had also never thought of her; she was some one entirely indifferent to me, with whom I had never even entered into any relations and of whom I had no reason to think. It was absolutely extraordinary that her image should have come back to me in a dream.

But the same morning, an hour after arriving at my office, they brought me the card of this person, who had arrived for a trip into Morocco and remembering, as vaguely as I did, that she had met me in Tunis, had stopped, as she passed through, to see if I were still here. At the moment of my dream the boat which was bringing the person in question to Tangier was at the entrance of the harbor, but I suspected nothing, least of all that the person in question was on board.

I do not know whether these two anecdotes will interest you, but I guarantee their absolute authenticity.

You know, as far as that goes, that I am a "scientific person" and that I reason out my sensations.

If one calculates the probability of one of these events, still more of both of them, being produced by chance, one will find it infinitely small.

PORCHÉ-BANÈS.

(Letter 4041.)

So far as this second case is concerned, we have the beginning of an explanation through the ether waves, of which we shall speak later in the chapter on Telepathy.

What we ought to admit, without the least doubt, is that the science of the future should seek to explain the powers of the soul that are still unknown to the science of to-day, or that have been too little studied until now.

The following pages will plunge us into such a study, while at the same time they draw the necessary distinctions; will acting through mental suggestion, telepathy, and psychic transmissions at a distance; mental vision, by means of the spirit; vision of the future. These indubitable documents prove a spiritual existence of the soul independent of the physical powers of the senses.

The soul and the body are too different entities, endowed with different attributes.

## V

### THE WILL, ACTING WITHOUT THE SPOKEN WORD, WITHOUT A SIGN, AND AT A DISTANCE

Science is forced, by the eternal law of honor, to look squarely at any problem which appears frankly before it.

SIR WILLIAM THOMSON.

**O**F the many different manifestations of our psychic being, one of the most remarkable is, assuredly, the action of the human will, without the intervention of the spoken word, or of any sign, and at a distance.

The will is an essentially immaterial faculty, distinct from what we generally mean when we speak of the properties of "matter." You can act upon the brain of another person through the force of your spirit. In a theater, in a church, several yards behind him, you can force him to turn without his suspecting your action, without his being aware of your presence. The experience is far from rare, and after eliminating the cases due to chance, there remain a respectable number of authentic declarations, even where an unknown person is concerned.

In the case of a person known to the experimenter, already in touch with him, the effect takes place far more frequently. It proves none the less surely the action of the will at a distance.

The materialistic critic might maintain that it was a matter of the exercise of an unknown sense belonging to the brain and that this exercise did not prove its spiritual origin. The objection is easy to answer. The brain is a material organ. It is once more the story of the electric apparatus. Behind the

apparatus, at the back of the brain, there is a personality. When I speak it is because I think speech; language is the effect, not the cause. To imagine an apparatus, a brain endowed with a responsible, mental personality, wilful, capricious, reasoning, reflective, is to raise up an hypothesis that would have to be proved. Is not our own sensation there to make us understand the truth?

In the exercise of the five senses, sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, the vibratory movement goes from the external world to the brain, being transmitted to it by the aid of the nerves—the optic, auditory, olfactory, tactile. In the exercise of the will, operating at a distance, in the transmission of thought, the vibratory movement goes, on the contrary, from the brain to the exterior world. Within the brain there is the active cause, the soul.

Entire works have been written about mental suggestion, and the examples which prove it are innumerable. I myself have observed several, in the past, in the experiences of Charcot, at La Salpêtrière, and of Dr. Luys, at La Charité. One of the most striking is, perhaps, the experiments of Pierre Janet, at Havre, on a good, honest peasant, the mother of a family, not in the least neurotic. What he ordered her to do, while he was several miles from her, she understood mentally and obeyed him with absolute precision, and without there being any way in which she could have been made aware of it.<sup>1</sup>

Does the will reveal a psychic personality, an individuality, a spirit, a soul? Is this a more certain interpretation than that which admits only physico-chemical powers belonging to the brain matter? Does the "I" exist? To ask the question is to answer it.

<sup>1</sup> One can read these details, as well as many other experiences, in the work of Dr. Ochorowicz, *De la suggestion mentale* (Paris, 1887). See also Jules Liégeois, *De la suggestion et du somnambulisme* (Paris, 1887); Pierre Janet, *L'Automatisme psychologique* (Paris, 1903); Dr. Joire, *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1897.

We are going to prove, from very carefully observed examples of mental suggestion, that through orders from the mind, transmitted from one being to another, without words, without gestures, but through will alone the human personality clearly manifests itself.

The well-known experiences of Dr. Ochorowicz will enable the reader to judge impartially, with full knowledge of the situation.

The doctor had under his care a lady affected with hysterical epilepsy, in which the malady of many years standing had been aggravated by an access of suicidal mania.

This lady, twenty-seven years old, strong and well built, had the appearance of perfect health. Her gay and active temperament was united with an extreme inner moral sensibility, which was not externally evident. Her character was extremely truthful, profoundly good, with a tendency to self-sacrifice. She had remarkable intelligence, many talents, powers of observation, a weak will and painful indecision at times, at others an exceptional firmness; the least moral fatigue, any little unexpected impression, pleasant as well as painful, reverberated, although slowly and insensibly, in the vaso-motors and brought on an attack, a paroxysm, or a nervous fainting-fit.

Dr. Ochorowicz writes:

One day, or rather one night, when her attack, including the phase of delirium, had come to an end, the patient fell peacefully asleep. Suddenly she awoke and seeing her friend and me beside her, she begged us to go away and not to tire ourselves uselessly on her account. She insisted so much that, in order to avoid a nervous crisis, we took our leave. I went slowly down the stairway—she lived on the third floor—and stopped several times to listen, troubled by a presentiment of evil, for she had wounded herself several times a few days before. Once in the court, I stopped again, wondering whether or not I ought to leave. Suddenly the window opened noisily and I saw the body of the patient lean quickly out. I dashed

toward the spot where she might fall, and mechanically, without attaching any importance to it, I concentrated all my will to oppose her fall. It was mad. I merely imitated the billiard players who, foreseeing that a shot is going to miss, try to stop the ball by gestures or by words.

Nevertheless, the patient, already far out, stopped and drew back, jerkily.

The same manœuvre was repeated four or five times and finally the patient, as if wearied, stood motionless, her back pressed against the frame of the still-open window.

She could not see me; I was in the shadow; it was night. At this moment Mademoiselle X—, the patient's friend, ran in and caught her by the arms. I heard them struggling and ran up the stairway to help. I found the patient in a paroxysm of madness. She did not recognize us but took us for brigands. I succeeded in forcing her from the window only by exercising the ovarion pressure, which made her fall on her knees. Several times she tried to bite me, and it was only after great difficulty that I succeeded in putting her back to bed. At last I got her to sleep.

As soon as she was in a hypnotic state, her first words were, "Thank you, and forgive me."

Then she told me that she had been determined to throw herself from the window, but each time she felt herself supported from beneath.

"What do you mean by that?"

"I don't know."

"You did not suspect my presence?"

"No, it was precisely because I thought you had gone away that I wished to carry out my plan. However, it seemed to me at moments that you were beside me or behind me and that you did not wish me to fall."

Here is another experience from the same source:

It was my custom to put the patient to sleep every other day and to leave her in a deep sleep while I took notes. After an experience of two months, I could be certain that she would not stir before I approached her to induce the real state of somnambulism. But on

this day, after having taken several notes and without changing my attitude (I was a few yards from her and outside her field of vision, my note-book on my knees and my head leaning on my left hand), I pretended to write, scratching my pen, but inwardly concentrating my will on an order which I gave mentally.

I "*Lift the right hand.*"

(I look at the patient through the fingers of the left hand pressed against my forehead.)

One minute: no action.

Two minutes: agitation of the right hand.

Three minutes: the agitation increases. The patient rubs her lids and lifts her right hand.

I confess that this experience stirs me more than anything ever has. I begin again:

II "*Rise and come to me.*"

She rubs her eyes, stirs, rises slowly, and comes to me with difficulty, her hand outstretched.

I lead her back to her place without speaking.

III "*Draw the bracelet off the left wrist and hand it to me.*"

No action.

She stretches out her left hand, rises, and goes towards Mademoiselle X—, then toward the piano.

I touch her right arm and probably push it a little in the direction of her left arm, while I concentrate my thought on the order given.

She draws off her bracelet, seems to think, and hands it to me.

IV "*Rise, approach the arm-chair by the table, and sit down beside us.*"

She rises, rubs her eyelids, and walks toward me.

"I must do something else," she says.

She searches—touches the table—moves a cup of tea.

She draws back, takes hold of the arm-chair, pushes it toward the table with a smile of satisfaction, and sits down, limp with fatigue.

All these orders have been given mentally and without gestures, without pronouncing a single word.

There are in the works of Ochorowicz forty-one accounts of experiences of the same order, given after this one.

My readers are already familiar with those which I have published in "L'Inconnu," in the chapter on the psychic action of one spirit upon another (notably, pages 296-316).

These conclusive experiments made on the action of the will, and on mental suggestion, cannot be attributed to matter, to chemical combinations, to mechanical movements: their cause is a thought, a mental cause, a spiritual principle acting under a still-unknown form, but of which we can form an image by means of the wireless telegraph and telephone.

Such cases of mental suggestion were studied long since by Mesmer, and before him by Van Helmont. Here, among others, is a remarkable experience related by a judicial witness, the scholar Seifert, who at first considered Mesmer a charlatan, and, principally under the influence of the following events, ended by accepting his theory.

The scene was laid in 1775, in Hungary, in an old castle of Baron Horetcky de Horka. Mesmer was caring for the baron by hypnotism and was treating at the same time several other invalids who came to consult him. Seifert considered all this "humbug."

One day they brought in some papers; in one of them there was a tale concerning Mesmer, according to which he had provoked convulsions among some epileptics while he remained hidden in a neighboring chamber and merely moved his fingers in the direction of the invalids. Seifert arrived at the castle, the paper in his hand, and found Mesmer surrounded by gentlemen. He asked him if what they said of him in this paper was true, and Mesmer confirmed the report. Then, with considerable audacity, Seifert demanded, or almost demanded, proof by experiment, of this influence through a wall.

Mesmer stood a few feet from the wall, while Seifert, as the observer, placed himself in the half-opened doorway so that he could see at the same time both the hypnotist and his subject.

Mesmer first made several rectangular movements from one side to the other, with the index finger of his left hand, in the presumed direction of the invalid. The latter soon began to complain; he touched his sides and seemed to be in pain.

"What is the matter with you?" asked Seifert. "I feel uncomfortable," he said. Not satisfied with this reply, Seifert demanded a more exact description of what he felt. "I feel," said the subject, "as if everything in me were swinging from right to left." In order to avoid asking questions Seifert told him to describe any changes he felt in his body, without waiting for a request. A few moments later Mesmer made some oval motions with his fingers. "Now everything is turning about me as if in a circle," said the invalid.

Mesmer ceased all action and almost at once the invalid declared that he no longer felt anything. And so it went on. All these statements corresponded perfectly not only with the moments of action and with the intervals between, but also with the character of the sensations that Mesmer wished to provoke.<sup>1</sup>

I have seen the same things performed by my regretted friend, Colonel de Rochas, at the Ecole Polytechnique in Paris, by Dr. Barety at Nice, and by other experimenters. The action of the will at a distance is not subject to doubt, as those who have studied this subject know very well.

Van Helmont, a great physician and a great dreamer of the seventeenth century, had propounded the question before Mesmer, and he is very explicit on this point. He believes that all men are capable of influencing, at a distance, those like themselves, but that generally this force remains dormant in us, stifled by "the flesh." To succeed, there is required a certain agreement between the operator and the patient. The latter must be *sensitive* and so *practised* in his sensibility that, under the influence of his *inner imagination* he goes forward to meet the action. "It is especially in the pit of the stomach that this magic action makes itself felt, for

<sup>1</sup> Dr. J. Kerner, *Franz Anton Mesmer* (Frankfort, 1856), quoted in Ochorowicz, *Suggestion mentale*, p. 402.

the sensations of the stomach are more delicate than those in the fingers or even in the eyes. Sometimes the patient cannot bear even to have a hand placed over this region."

He wrote:

I have waited until now to reveal a great mystery; that there is in man such a power that by his will alone and by his imagination he can act outside himself, and impress a lasting influence on an object very far away. This mystery alone throws sufficient light upon many events difficult to understand and which are related to the magnetism of all bodies, to the mental power of man and his domination of the universe.<sup>1</sup>

Van Helmont lived from 1577 to 1644. Let us open the work of Kircher, "*Magnes, sive de Arte magnetica*," published at Rome in 1641, at the chapter on animal magnetism (*Ζωομαγνητισμος*). We shall find here examples of "sympathy and antipathy," of the "magnetic power of the human members," of the "magnetism of music."

These psychic experiences do not date merely from to-day. They go back to Jesus Christ, to Pythagoras, and even farther.

But what is mental suggestion?

The hypnotizers believe that their will concentrates "the fluid" and afterward projects it forth, in an approximate direction, like a package of opium. This fluid is so intelligent and so amenable that it rushes out, finds the right way, turns corners, and falls upon its subject. It overwhelms him, and at the moment when the subject is sufficiently saturated, the sleep occurs, whether the subject be near or remote. This is quite clear, as clear as that old explanation of the action of opium, according to which, as Molière said, "It puts people to sleep because it possesses the power of putting people to sleep."

Only, "we should first have to prove that the fluid exists,"

<sup>1</sup> Van Helmont, *Opera omnia* (Frankfort, 1682), p. 731. Ochorowicz, *Suggestion mentale*, p. 405.

wrote Ochorowicz, in this connection, "then that it can be projected, then that it can find its path, and finally that it can stop exactly in the nervous system of the subject." It seems to me that it would be prudent to limit ourselves to the expression "psychic force," which I proposed before 1865.<sup>1</sup>

There can be no doubt of the psychic action of one spirit upon another, whatever may be the mode of transmission.

Do ideas travel? They are transmitted by the vibrations of ether. We know already that ideas send their dynamic complement everywhere, that is to say, all about the emission. If it is not a substance which is transported, it is a wave which spreads. The action is general, but it remains more or less unfelt until it finds a suitable *milieu* and all the necessary conditions for a reversible transmission. The wave starts from a will, A; a brain, B, unites these conditions; the corresponding idea acts in it, and it falls asleep if the hypnotist commands it to do so.

One might object that all sensitive brains that are within the sphere of action ought to do the same. No, for all these brains are not trained, all these brains are not in touch with the operator.

In order to explain mental suggestion and the transmission of thought, the hypnotists have proposed the hypothesis of a transmission by *induction* similar to that of one electric current on another, without material contact, or like that of the Hertzian waves, as in wireless telegraphy.

Mental action at a distance may be conscious or unconscious.

What physicists proposed timidly, thirty years ago, as matters of observation that might be well discussed, and at which we have seen more than one skeptic, sure of his knowledge, smile disdainfully, is no longer open to discussion. For we see similar transmissions produced in the practice of wire-

<sup>1</sup> *Les Forces naturelles inconnues*, ed. 1865, p. 135; ed. 1907, p. 11.

less telegraphy, which has been invented since, and of which the following is a résumé:

In this sort of telegraphy, perhaps the most marvelous of all the phenomena of telegraphy, we make use of the Hertzian waves by the intermittent discharge of a powerful condenser that is fed by a strong electric generator. These waves spread through space at the rate of 300,000 kilometers a second. They radiate from the antenna that is joined to the transmitting apparatus and are picked up, at a distance, by means of another antenna.

The antenna consists, essentially, of one or more wires that are completely isolated from any electric contact with any external object and are in communication only with the transmitting apparatus or with the receiver.

These Hertzian waves do not act upon us; not one of our senses can discern them. Therefore a special apparatus is necessary to hear them: this apparatus is a *detector*. In the detector the Hertzian wave is, so to speak, transformed, and becomes perceptible to our ears by means of a telephone receiver.

These waves are widely separated one from another—like the waves produced on a sheet of water by the fall of a solid body—by a certain distance that is called the wave-length. This wave-length can be varied at the transmitter by means of special apparatus. But in order to have the greatest possible intensity of the waves, on their reception, as well as perfect clearness of sound, it is necessary that the receiving apparatus should be in unison and accord with the transmitting apparatus. To speak in terms of wireless telegraphy, the apparatus must be syntonized.

This accord is brought about at the receiving post, by inserting between the antenna and the detector a self-inducting spool, with a regulating slide.

In this way the operators find the positions that correspond to the greatest wave-length of the post from which they wish to receive, and in this apparatus for attaining precision they manage to eliminate completely the other posts that are sending messages at the same time,—but messages of different wave-lengths. These wave-lengths act upon the receiving apparatus according to the different positions

of the self-regulating spools and according to the different capacities of the condensers.

The various transmissions, sent in different wave-lengths, move simultaneously through space, without any ear being able to perceive them; but we intercept the messages we wish to receive by regulating the slide; and we hear what we wish to hear, to the exclusion of anything else, as two persons speaking together understand each other.

This quite modern invention of wireless telegraphy (and now that of the wireless telephone) helps us to understand the method of transmission of thought at a distance. Science will make many other discoveries, *which will alter our interpretations of phenomena*. What is certain is that it is wrong for us to deny what we cannot explain. Without these inventions of contemporary physics, the human will would none the less be able to make itself felt at a distance and thus prove to us that it exists and makes use of the brain as of an apparatus.

One day during the war with Germany of 1914-18, I was in communication from my observatory at Juvisy with the Eiffel Tower by means of the wireless telegraph, when I was surprised to hear a conversation between two speakers situated I knew not where, whose voices were as clear as voices in a drawing-room or in a lecture hall. This telephone, which operated without any conductor, at the time unknown, seemed to me more striking, more astounding than the transmission of the little telegraphic shocks of the Morse system, for that consists of the transmission of the Hertzian waves across the ether and at such distances that the sounds could not be heard: at the telephone, on the other hand (no one thinks of this), it is not the voice which is transmitted but an electric wave which becomes a voice again.

We know, on the other hand, that the transmission of thoughts between two people more or less separated from each other is experimentally certain.

We know also, from telepathic observations, that the spirit of a dying person, breathing his last, far away, sometimes acts with such intensity that the brain toward which his thought is turned is impressed to the point not merely of hearing him, but even of seeing him, in a form that is reconstituted by this sensation and at times to the accompaniment of fearful sounds.

This is a new aspect of the universe, for our philosophical contemplation, which we were far from foreseeing only thirty years ago.

Inert matter disappears under the invisible radiation of energy; what exists in cosmic life is energy, ethereal force, movement.

I wrote in "L'Inconnu" (page 378) :

Without doubt, our psychic force gives birth to an ethereal movement which is projected to a distance like all the vibrations of ether and is felt by those brains in harmony with our own. The transformation of a psychic action into an ethereal movement, and back, may be similar to that which we observe in the telephone, where the receiving disk, which is identical with the sending disk, recreates the sound-movement that was transferred not by sound but by electricity. But these are only comparisons.

The action of one spirit on another, at a distance, especially in such grave circumstances as that of death—and in particular of sudden death—the transmission of thought, mental suggestion, communication at a distance, are not more extraordinary than the action of a magnet on iron, the attraction of the moon for the sea, the carrying of the human voice by electricity, the discovery of chemical construction of a star through the analysis of its light, and other marvels of contemporary science. Only, these psychic transmissions are of a higher order and may set us on the road to knowledge of the human being.

These lines were written by me in 1899. We have every reason to think the same to-day, and even to strengthen our comparisons, which have been confirmed and developed by the

recent discovery of the wireless telegraph, and above all by the transmission of speech by the wireless telephone.

A case of will acting through thought alone is shown by the following experiment made on his wife by my friend and colleague Monsieur Schmoll:

On June 9, 1887, a warm and stormy day, I was taking my siesta swinging in a hammock that was hung in the dining-room and reading a pamphlet by Monsieur Edm. Gurnet. It was three o'clock in the afternoon. Not far from me, my wife was resting in an arm-chair; she was sleeping heavily. When I saw her thus, the idea came to me to give her, mentally, the order to wake. So I looked at her fixedly and, concentrating all my will in an imperious command, I cried out to her in my mind: "Wake up! I wish you to awake!" When three or four minutes had passed without my obtaining the least result—for my wife continued to sleep peacefully—I gave up the experiment, saying to myself that, after all, I should have been very much astonished to see it succeed. I tried it again, however, a few minutes later, with no more success than the first time. At that I began to read again, and had soon completely forgotten my unsuccessful attempt.

All at once, ten minutes later, my wife awoke, rubbed her eyes, and, looking at me with a surprised and somewhat annoyed air, said: "What do you want? Why did you wake me?"

"I have n't said anything!"

"But you have. You have just been tormenting me to make me wake up."

"You are joking. I have n't opened my mouth."

"Can I have dreamed it?" she said hesitating. "Yes, it is true. I remember now, I simply dreamed it all."

"Come, what did you dream? Perhaps it was interesting," I said, smiling.

"I had a very disagreeable dream," she went on. "I thought I was at the cross-roads of Courbevoie. It was windy and the weather was overcast. All at once I saw a human form—was it a man or a woman?—wrapped in a white sheet, roll to the foot of the slope. It made vain efforts to rise; I wished to run to its help, but I felt myself held back by an influence which I did not at first notice, but

which I finally understood to be you, who were determined that I should abandon the images of my dream. 'Come, wake up!' you shouted at me. But I resisted you and I was perfectly aware of struggling successfully against the awakening that you were forcing upon me. However, when I awoke, just now, your command, 'Come, wake up!' was still sounding in my ears."

My wife was very much astonished to learn that I had really ordered her, in my mind, to awake. She did not know what book I was reading and psychic problems have never interested her very much. She has never been hypnotized, either by me or by any one else.

A. SCHMOLL,  
6 rue de Foureroy, Paris.

I have many other observations of the same sort among my documents. Certainly, everything here cannot be explained. Why should there be a ten-minute interval between the order and the result? Monsieur Schmoll is used to scientific methods. We owe many excellent observations of the sun to him; he was my collaborator at the founding of the Astronomical Society of France in 1887. The event reported can neither be doubted nor attributed to coincidence.

To see by the mind, in the mind, is of frequent occurrence with somnambulists, as can be proved by the works of Deleuze, Dupotet, Lafontaine, and Charpignon. The last is very positive on this point:

We have many times formed in our minds *fictitious images*, and the somnambulists whom we questioned have seen these images. We have often obtained a word, a sign, an action *because of a mental demand*. Others, when they addressed questions to somnambulists in foreign languages unknown to the hypnotized patients, have obtained replies, showing a knowledge not of the idiom but of the thought of the speaker, *for if the experimenter spoke without understanding what he said, the somnambulist remained powerless to grasp the sense of the question*.

The act of putting a subject to sleep, at a distance, and suggesting

to him in this state acts which he accomplished quite as well as when under the influence of an oral suggestion, was successfully tried many times by the hypnotists of old.

My friend of fifty years, Dr. Macario, relates<sup>1</sup> how one evening Dr. Gromier, after having put to sleep a hysterical woman by hypnotism, asked permission of her husband to make an experiment; and this is what happened. Without uttering a word he led her out into the open sea,—mentally, of course. The invalid was at ease as long as the waters were quiet; but the hypnotist soon raised a frightful storm in her mind, and the invalid began to utter piercing shrieks and to clutch at near-by objects. Her voice, her tears, the expression of her face indicated great terror. Then, still in his mind, he brought the waves gradually back within reasonable limits. They ceased to rock the ship, and as they grew less, calm returned to the mind of the somnambulist, although she still panted and trembled nervously in all her limbs. "Never take me on the ocean!" she cried passionately, a moment later; "it frightens me too much! And that wretched captain who would n't let us up on the bridge!" This exclamation astounded us the more," said Monsieur Gromier, "because I had not uttered a single word that could have shown her the nature of the experiment I intended to make."

Macario remarks:

This power, the transmission of thought, explains a great number of somnambulistic phenomena that one would be tempted, otherwise, to attribute to supernatural influences. It explains, for example, the gift of languages that is said to have been sometimes observed in somnambulists—that is to say, the power of understanding what is said to them in a foreign language unknown to them or of replying by expressions belonging to a language of which they have no knowledge; for if it is true that the somnambulist perceives your

<sup>1</sup> *Du Sommeil, des rêves et du somnambulisme* (Lyons and Paris, 1857), p. 185.

thought, it makes very little difference to him whether you speak Greek, Latin, or Arabic. It is not your expression, as a matter of fact, that he hears; he reads your thought and in consequence he understands as well as if you spoke his native tongue. Events confirm this theory. Monsieur Gromier, whom I have quoted above, has several times asked questions in a language unknown to the somnambulist. At first the latter did not understand, but as the will of the hypnotist persisted, he ended by understanding and by replying suitably to the question put to him. But each time that the hypnotist spoke in a tongue of which he himself was ignorant,—that is to say, when he used expressions of which he himself did not know the meaning,—the somnambulist did not answer, because the hypnotist pronounced words to which no idea was attached.

I, for my part, have collected undeniable evidence of this much-disputed comprehension of languages unknown to the subject.

Another form of experimental transmission of thought consists in making a drawing, out of sight of the subject, which the latter must reproduce without having seen it. There are numerous cases of this. (See, among others, “*L’Inconnu*,” pp. 349–354.)

The phenomenon of thought-transmission is an established fact and unanimously admitted by all the philosophers who have taken the trouble to study it conscientiously and thoroughly, and only obstinate and superficial minds could persist in denying it after so much experience and so many positive proofs.

Telepathy consists essentially in the event of an intense physical impression manifesting itself, generally unexpectedly, in a *normal* person (that is to say, in one not subject to functional troubles and hallucinations), either while he is awake or during sleep, an impression that is in accord with an event that has taken place at a distance.

Let us note that, in spontaneous telepathy, the person who receives the impression is usually in his normal state; while

he who sends it is passing through a state of abnormal crisis,—an accident, agony, fainting, lethargy, death, etc.

The preceding observations prove the action of the human will without the spoken word, and without the intervention of the physical senses.

The action of the spirit upon matter, which has been studied for a long time, is nowhere so evident as in the phenomena produced by autosuggestion upon certain troubles of the blood circulation, such as red-spots, cutaneous congestion, vesication, hemorrhages, bleeding stigmata, etc. That the spirit is different from the body, that it controls it; that mind acts upon matter; that thought, that even the most subtle idea produces material effects; that the mental imagination suffices, under certain conditions, to create organs or to alter them, is rendered so evident by so great a number of varied examples that it is impossible to preserve the least doubt upon this capital point. We may notice, among these examples, the stigmata, with a bloody flow, fixed upon the skin by an idea, by faith, by conviction alone. For example, there is Saint Francis of Assisi, a mystic soul of an extraordinary piety, who renounces the material world, retires into a forest, consecrates himself to prayer, brings together a few pious men to whom he gives, through humility, the name of the Lesser Brothers (Franciscans), goes to preach in Syria, in Egypt, returns to Italy, submits himself to a rigorous fast, to an ascetic life, in consequence of which he is the dupe of (imaginary) visions in which, among others, there appears to him a seraph with many-colored wings who binds him and imprints upon his body the stigmata of Jesus's crucifixion: his feet and his hands are pierced as if by nails, and his side opens as if it had received a lance-thrust,—stigmata that persist.

There is here fully evidenced a psychic action of the soul upon the body, and this fact is of such importance, from the point of view of the materialistic physiology, that it has

been denied, flatly denied. "A religious legend," people have said. "It is exaggerated, it is not true." As it took place about the year 1220, it has been attributed to the credulity of the Middle Ages. "Who were the witnesses?" has been asked. Monks, ardent Christians, who accept everything with their eyes shut.

But this example of a canonized saint, to whom more than one miracle is attributed, is not unique of its kind. The researches I have made in connection with this work have furnished me with a great number of others.

The power of the will, of mental force, of the soul, of the idea, of autosuggestion, the manifestation of the action of the spirit upon matter are shown with striking evidence in the physiological phenomena of the stigmata. People have denied these phenomena; they have seen in them only fraud, deceit, credulity. That was an error. These stigmata are actually produced. Holes are formed in the palms of the hands of those suffering from hallucinations, on their feet, in their sides, and these wounds, the counterparts of those of the Crucified, really bleed. These examples are numerous and incontestable, superabundantly verified.

Here are a few of them:

A young girl, born on October 16, 1812, at Kaltom, the Tyrol, near Botzen, Maria Marl, was as much of a mystic as Saint Francis of Assisi. She was much admired in her village and she made her first communion at the age of ten, with so much fervor that she had hardly received the eucharistic bread when, flooded with heavenly light beyond the strength of nature to bear, she fell drooping into the arms of her mother and fainted. Her piety became more ardent from year to year. She passed her life in prayers, in adoration; she took communion constantly; she took a vow of chastity.

There happens to be at Kaltom a convent of Saint Francis, with sisters of the third order (not cloistered), where she had herself entered under the name of Theresa, in honor of the mystic Saint Theresa. She was eighteen years old, her body suffered, and she

was happy to offer her sufferings to God. A privileged victim, she experienced an almost daily ecstasy. She would fling herself on her knees at the foot of her bed and remain there, unconscious, for entire days, her hands clasped, her eyes raised to heaven, ecstatically contemplating the divine Crucified. After the second of February, the date of the Purification, the stigmata appeared on her hands, on her feet, on her side, as was witnessed by her family, by her confessor, by her doctor, by the primate, the Archbishop of Trent, by inquiry in behalf of the Government, and by a number of persons. Blood flowed from the wounds every Friday, when she was present in her mind, with absolute conviction, at the Passion of Jesus Christ.

A similar case of stigmata has been verified, also in the Tyrol, upon Maria Dominica Lazzari, an ecstatic visionary, frequently seized with convulsions, who was born March 16, 1815, at Capriana de Fiemme, near Cavaleri, ten hours from Trent. From the age of nineteen she felt and showed the wounds of the Passion, which she saw with her inner vision. Blood flowed from her hands, her feet, her side, as in the case of the stigmata of Saint Francis, and more, on her forehead, marked with the Crown of Thorns, where it flowed, especially on Friday, with such abundance that her face was entirely bathed in it. (Report of the surgeon, Dr. Dei-Cloche.)

A third "virgin of the Tyrol," celebrated at the same period, Crescenzia Nieklutsch, born June 15, 1816, at Cana, who lived in Méran, Trent, and Verona, showed the same symptoms. She was ecstatic, like those already mentioned. When she was nineteen years of age the stigmata appeared on her hands on the day of Pentecost, June 7th, a few days later on her feet, and finally on her side. From all these wounds there flowed a great quantity of blood, especially on Friday.<sup>1</sup>

As soon as we seek for these examples of autosuggestion, we find a far larger number of them than we should expect. The power of the imagination is shown with especial clearness in the stigmata of Catherine Emmerich. How is it possible not to see in this the idea acting upon matter?

Despite the doctors of medicine, who could make nothing

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *L'Extatique de Kaltern et les stigmatisées*, by Abbé Nicolas, of Cagnes, an eye-witness. (Lyons, 1833.)

of it, and despite the doctors of physical and natural science, who authoritatively denied the whole thing, the stigmata of Catherine Emmerich are as certain as the leaves of the elms under which these men argued.

Let us examine this curious subject. I shall extract the following document from a work in three volumes which was sent me in the month of January, 1889, by Madame Sophie Funck-Brentano, a "niece of the writer of visions, Clement Brentano de la Roche."<sup>1</sup>

Anne Catherine Emmerich was born in the hamlet of Flamske, near the little town of Coesfeld, in Westphalia, September 8, 1774. From her earliest infancy she showed an extraordinary piety.

"One day," she said, "I was seeking to meditate on the first article of the creed, 'I believe in God the Father Almighty' (I may have been five or six years old). Visions of the creation appeared before my soul. The fall of the angels, the creation of the earth and of paradise, that of Adam and Eve and their disobedience,—everything was shown me. I imagined that every one saw these things as well as the objects which surrounded us."

(Her imagination was precocious!)

See now what she says about the beginning of her visions.

It was about four years before her entry into the convent and consequently in 1798, in the twenty-fourth year of her age. Kneeling before a crucifix, in the chapter of the Jesuits at Coesfeld, she was praying with all the fervor of which she was capable, plunged in a reverie full of sweetness, "When all at once," she said, "I saw my heavenly bridegroom leave the tabernacle, in the form of a young man, surrounded by splendor. In his left hand he held a crown of flowers, and in his right a crown of thorns, and he offered me the choice between them. I asked for the crown of thorns, which he him-

<sup>1</sup> *Visions d'Anne-Catherine Emmerich sur la Vie de Notre Seigneur Jesus-Christ et de la très sainte Vierge Marie*, collected by the R. P. Fr. Joseph-Alvare Duloy (Paris, 1885), 3 vols. See also *La douloureuse Passion de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ, d'après les méditations de la sœur Emmerick, Brentano* (Paris, 1835), and the *Nouvelle Biographie générale* by Hoefer, Vol. XV.

self placed on my head, and with my two hands I forced it deep into my forehead. He disappeared, and at once I felt violent pains about my head. Very soon *wounds showed like the pricks of thorns, that emitted blood.*" So that her suffering might remain secret, Anne Catherine drew her cap down over her forehead.

She entered the convent of Dulmen in 1802, and from then on led a life of ecstasy.

One day her heavenly bridegroom appeared to her and made the sign of the cross upon her. Her breast was at once marked with a red double cross, about three thumbs long and about half a thumb wide. On December 20, 1812, she was resting on her couch, motionless, her arms extended like a cross, ravished, in ecstasy, her face on fire. She was contemplating the Passion of the Savior, and her ardent prayer begged the favor of sharing in his sufferings. Suddenly a light descended upon her, in the midst of which she saw Christ crucified, his five wounds resplendent as suns. The heart of Anne Catherine was suspended between grief and joy; at the sight of the sacred stigmata her desire to feel the pain of the Son of God became so violent that it seemed to take on a visible form and to penetrate into the wounds of the Savior. At once, from each one of them, there sprang three rays of reddish-purple, terminating in arrows, which pierced her hands, her feet, and her side. Drops of blood escaped from the wounds which had just been made in her.

From that time on she suffered all the inner and outward pains of Christ in his Passion.

It is impossible to deny the authenticity of these events. Innumerable visitors came from all over Germany and elsewhere to verify them.

As the noise of these occurrences spread abroad, when the French had established their government in her town, the prefect of Munster, accompanied by the lieutenant of police, went to Dulmen, to assure himself of the state of things. They had to admit that these events, physiological or otherwise, baffled all scientific explanation. The prefect sent eight physicians and surgeons from the army to visit

the seeress, with the order to make use of all the resources of their art to heal the wounds. But these formed again every Friday.

With these examples we can compare many other similar ones,<sup>1</sup> such as those of Saint Theresa, Saint Catherine of Ricci, Archangela Tardéro, Saint Gertrude, Saint Lidwine, Saint Helen of Hungary, Saint Ozanne of Mantua, Saint Ida of Louvain, Saint Christine of Strumbelen, Saint Jeanne of the Cross, Saint Lucy of Marni, Saint Catherine of Siena, Pasethis and Clarisse of Cogis, Catherine of Ranconioso, Veronica Guilani, Colombe Schanolt, Madeleine Lorget, Rose Serra,<sup>2</sup> and also more than one pious man; but as it is not our intention to write a work on this subject, let us limit ourselves to adding to the preceding cases the one that has most caught the attention of contemporary scholars, that of Louise Lateau, the famous stigmatist of Bois-d'Haine, Belgium, studied in 1869 by Professor Delbœuf of the University of Liège.

It was on Friday, April 2, 1868, twelve days after Easter, that Louise Lateau, aged eighteen (she was born January 30, 1850), who had reached the age of puberty only five days before, but who had been ill and languid for more than a year, and who was possessed of an ecstatic, ardent, and mystical imagination, saw her first stigma appear, that on her left side; the following Friday the stigmata appeared on her left foot, and on the third Friday all five were present. The stigmata of the crown of thorns did not bleed until five months later.

These events, as we have said, since they are in complete opposition to ordinary physiology which considers thought as a material property of the organism, are forcibly denied by the classical professors. In 1877 the celebrated doctor,

<sup>1</sup> Among others, the woman who received the stigmata of Saint Francis in 1873, and the cases studied in the *Annales des Sciences psychiques* of 1893, p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> Victoire Claire, of Coux (Ardèche). Of the five bleeding wounds, 1848-80: *Annales des Sciences psychiques* of 1903.

Herr Virchow, speaking of the stigmata of Louise Lateau, proclaimed pompously that this baffling mystery was *either a fraud or a miracle*, eliminating at once the miracle and leaving as possible only the fraud. But as for us, we can affirm in the name of free science, that it was *neither a fraud nor a miracle*.

I have had the pleasure of counting so many springs that I was a contemporary of the creation of Lourdes in 1858, and heard from witnesses living in the country the amorous story of Madame P—— and Lieutenant G—— (graduate of Saint-Cyr, in 1857, then with the 42d of the line at Lourdes, who died as chief of battalion at Tonkin), which gave birth to the incident of the grotto and of the little idiot Bernadette Soubiroux, on the Shrove Thursday of that year, an incident which has had such marvelous results, despite the refusal at first of the honest curé of Lourdes, the Abbé Peyramale (the confessor of Madame P——), to admit the appearance of the Virgin.<sup>1</sup> My friend Commandant Mantin, born, as I was, in 1842 (at present at Pau), is still here to affirm it. Let me mention also, among our contemporaries, Captain de G—— and Monsieur Pelizza. The “miracles” of Lourdes, at which I as well as thousands of others have been present, are assuredly one of the most curious and obvious manifestations of the power of the idea, of mental exaltation, of faith.

The same is true to-day of those of Our Lady of la Salette, which have flourished for twenty years, despite the findings of

<sup>1</sup> An apparition so suspicious in all its details, as well as in its principle. Astounding words: “*I am the Immaculate Conception. . . . Go and bathe and eat grass.*” And this attitude: the Virgin Mary, holding a chaplet in her hand, “*I salute you, Mary, full of grace!*” And her request, “*Do me the kindness to come here for fifteen days!*” And this other, “*I desire to see people.*” And so on.

The story of Lourdes had, as its origin, the sudden appearance of a beautiful woman in the grotto, which struck the imagination of the stupefied child and gave him in hallucinations which followed the conviction of having seen the Holy Virgin. Such seems to be the most probable explanation of this event.

the civil tribunal of Grenoble, April 15, 1855, proving that this Virgin which appeared to two children on September 19, 1846, was Mademoiselle de la Merlière, who was deliberately playing this comedy. The water of la Salette also effected cures, as I have seen with my own eyes, in the diocese of Langres, in 1854.

These various miracles, produced by autosuggestion, have been observed from antiquity as well as in our days, among pagans as well as among Christians. We can also see, in the museum at Dijon, the votive offerings sent by the Romans to the goddess Sequana, at the source of the Seine. They were found in a temple that had been raised to this divinity, in a valley which I have just visited recently, not far from the village of Saint-Seine. Dr. de Sermyn relates, on his part, that they discovered, not very long ago, among the excavations carried on by Monsieur Cawadias in the ruins of the temple of Æsculapius, pedestals bearing commemorative inscriptions of the principal miraculous cures which were produced at that time. These pedestals represent the sacred archives; they date from the third to the fourth century before Christ. It appears from them that at this period, and contrary to what is generally supposed, the priests in the service of Æsculapius, in the sanctuary, did not prescribe any remedy. It was the god that cured. The sick saw him perform very daring operations on their bodies. The persons who were cured declared that they had seen the divinity come and open their abdomens, take away their tumors, and feel among their entrails.

Thus, for example, a man who had cancer of the stomach, tells how he came to Epidaurus, fell asleep, and had a vision. "It seemed that the god ordered his servitors, who accompanied him, to seize him and hold him tightly while he opened his stomach. The man, frightened, fled, but the servitors caught and bound him. Then Æsculapius opened his stomach, cut out the cancer, and, after having carefully sewed every-

thing up again, released the man from his bonds. Immediately after, the man awoke and found himself cured.”

We see that always and everywhere it is the vision that operates on the body of the invalid as a surgeon of to-day would do.

All the sick who go to Lourdes wish to be cured and in consequence have the image of the cure in their brains; but few of them are actually cured, because not all are endowed with the suitable nervous system to see their desires take shape and act as a supernatural being endowed with marvelous powers would act.

The ardor of religious conviction is a Proteus which changes its form and becomes Apollo, Æsculapius, Jesus, the devil, the Virgin Mary,—a good or an evil spirit according to the convictions, the preconceived ideas of the conscious self.

I will add that perhaps it is not autosuggestion alone that is concerned; wandering psychic forces make their influence felt at times.

Let us continue the study of the will.

That the will can act at a distance, without speech, without any material telegraphic or telephonic communication, by the very force of this will, can henceforth no longer be denied. We can appear to others. Is it the soul which moves and is transported? Is it an action upon the brain producing a real hallucination? We are confronted with this question and our duty is to examine it frankly, with no preconceived ideas. We shall solve it by means of experiment through these examples.

Among other instructive observations, I shall bring to the attention of my readers the following occurrence which was related by Mrs. Russell, of Balgaum, India, the wife of the inspector of public instruction in the district of Bombay. This very remarkable experience is as follows:<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *Hallucinations télépathiques*, example IX, p. 48.

I was living in Scotland; my mother and sisters were in Germany. I was living with a very dear friend and every year I went to Germany to see my people. It happened that for two years I was not able to see my family, according to my custom. All at once I decided to leave, but my family knew nothing of my intention. I had never been to see them in the early spring and I had not time to warn them by letter. I did not want to send a telegram for fear of frightening my mother. The thought came to me to wish with all my strength to appear to one of my sisters, in such a way as to apprise them of my arrival. I thought of her with all the intensity possible, I wished with all my might to be seen by one of them. I believe I did not concentrate my thought for more than ten minutes. I left by the Leith steamship one Saturday evening, toward the end of April, 1859.

I desired to appear to them toward six o'clock in the evening of this same Saturday.

I reached the house at about six o'clock on the morning of the following Tuesday. I entered without being seen, for the door was open, and made my way into the room. One of my sisters was sitting with her back turned to the door; she turned about when she heard me and on seeing me stared at me, turned pale as death, and dropped what she held in her hand. I had said nothing until now. Then I spoke: "It's I," I said. "Why are you so frightened?" At that she answered: "I thought I was seeing you as Stinchen [another of my sisters] saw you Saturday."

In answer to my questions she told me that on Saturday evening, toward six o'clock, my sister had distinctly seen me enter through a door into the room where she was, open the door of another room where my mother was, and shut the door behind me. She had dashed after what she believed to be me, calling me by my name, and was absolutely stupefied when she did not see me with my mother. My mother could not understand my sister's excitement. They looked for me everywhere, but naturally could not find me.

The sister who had seen me—that is to say, who had seen my apparition—had gone out on the morning of my arrival. I sat down on the steps to see how she would feel when she saw me, myself, on her return. As a matter of fact, when she lifted her eyes and saw me, seated on the stairway, she called my name and almost fainted.

My sister has never seen anything supernatural, either before or since, and I have never repeated these experiments. Nor shall I ever do so, for the sister who was the first to see me when I actually came to the house fell seriously ill from the shock.

J. M. RUSSELL.

We shall return to this subject in treating of the *doubles of living people*. Let us state only, at this moment, that the inquiry made by the English Society of Psychical Research, and the reputation of the author as well as that of her family, who confirm what she says, do not permit us to doubt the authenticity of the tale. It proves, as do the others, that the *will acts at a distance*.

The questions that we have just asked are equally pertinent to the following case, which is vouch'd for by the Rev. W. E. Dutton, of Leeds, England.<sup>1</sup>

Toward the middle of June, in 1863, I was walking in the main street of Huddersfield, in broad daylight, when I saw approaching me at a distance of several yards, a very dear friend, who I had reason to believe was seriously ill at his home in Staffordshire. I had learned of his illness a few days before from his friends.

As the figure came toward me, it was easy to examine it, and while I commented to myself on his rapid recovery, I never suspected that it was really not my friend. At the moment of our meeting the figure looked at me with a sad and penetrating expression and, to my great astonishment, neither seemed to notice that I was offering him my hand nor answered my affectionate greeting, but tranquilly continued on his way. I was transfixed with astonishment and for several seconds incapable of speaking or walking. I have never been quite certain that he made any sound; but nevertheless, this very clear impression remained in my mind: "I had so much need of you and you would not come."

When I had recovered from my astonishment, I turned to look once more after the retreating figure, but everything had disappeared. My first impulse was to telegraph, then the idea came to me, and

<sup>1</sup> *Hallucinations télépathiques*, LXXXIX, p. 266.

was at once put into execution, to go and see if my friend were really alive or dead, though, for that matter, I felt almost certain that the latter hypothesis was the correct one. When I arrived the following day I found him alive but only half-conscious. He had often asked for me, his mind was apparently fixed in the idea that I would not come to see him.

As far as I could discover, he must have been asleep at the hour when I saw him appear the day before. He told me later that he imagined he had seen me, without knowing exactly how or where. I cannot explain how my friend appeared to me dressed and not as he must have been at that very moment. My mind at the time was absorbed with other matters and I was not thinking of him. I may add that he lived several months longer.

W. E. DUTTON.

When the author was questioned as to whether or not he had ever had other hallucinations, he declared that he had had but this one.

All these cases of magnetism, of hypnotism, of mental transmission, of autosuggestion, of doubles of the living, which we have merely touched upon here in order to affirm the principle of their reality, and to which we shall return later, establish, beyond any possible doubt, the action of the spirit upon the physical organism, and lead us to conclude that the soul exists independently of the body.

Let us continue our experimental study.

But before going further I wish to answer an objection to the scientific method that arises quite naturally in the critical mind. It may be supposed that these coincidences have not the value we are attributing to them, as for every one observed, a thousand dreams, a thousand presentiments have no consequence whatever. This would be a valid objection if it were not a question here of special sensations, of precise facts, of circumstantial details, of unforeseen incidents, at times of scenes as clear to the sight as if they had been photographed. It cannot be applied, for example, to

the presentiment of Madame Constans, quoted on page 68, refusing, in spite of her doctor, to take a dose of medicine that would have poisoned her; or to those very personal cases of Delaunay and of Mademoiselle Houssaye, drowned in the sea (page 70); or to the dramatic death of Madame Arboussoff (page 72), etc. Our conviction concerning psychic transmissions is, on the other hand, gradually strengthened by the facts themselves, which are so absolutely characteristic.

## VI

### TELEPATHY AND PSYCHIC TRANSMISSIONS AT A DISTANCE

*Not words! Facts!*

**I**F the intervention of the will, without any word or sign, is a manifestation of the personal existence of the soul, telepathy and mental communications at a distance furnish more evidence that is no less demonstrable of this truth.

Cases of instantaneous and unexpected perception of accidents, of sickness, of death, from a distance of thousands of miles, occur in such numbers that to-day they form a normal part of the usual material of psychological studies. Denied and misunderstood for centuries, they form, from now on, an almost classic chapter.

My readers are familiar with them and I do not wish to repeat what I have already published on this subject.<sup>1</sup> I will limit myself to recalling on principle this important mental phenomenon of telepathy, because it proves the existence of the soul, and to simply putting before their eyes a few new and characteristic events.

In a chapter in "L'Inconnu," on "The Vision, in Dreams, of Actual Events, at a Distance," I believe I have given irrefutable proofs by authentic and remarkable examples, notably the experience of Pierre Conil, the writer, who saw and heard his dying uncle; the vision of his brother's bloody head, as seen by the captain of a vessel returning to Marseilles; the sight of a ship carrying his father and mother, by the

<sup>1</sup> In *L'Inconnu et les problèmes psychiques, Les Forces naturelles inconnues, Lumen, Uranie, Stelle, Le Fin du Monde, etc.*

engineer Palmero; the sight of a young girl falling from a window, by Monsieur Martin Halle; the sight and description of a cancer operated upon by Dr. Cloquet, etc.; on the whole, forty-six proofs of the telepathic transmissions of sight at a distance, or in the interior of the body, upon which we do not need to dwell here; with this conclusion: Vision from a distance, in dreams or in a state of somnambulism, can no longer be denied. We have read there, among others, of the well-known case of the Princess de Conti who in a dream saw that a remote wing of her palace in which her children were sleeping was going to fall and rushed to save them.

We shall have occasion to observe other events which will confirm this statement more and more.

Here is one of them, exceedingly curious, and of a most intimate nature, between a person awake and a person asleep, which was sent to me in August, 1904, by Monsieur A. d'Argy, Commissioner of the Marine, in retreat at La Rochelle, who begged me not to reveal the names.

Madame S—— of La Rochelle was living in 1887, in the Vendée, with her family. At the time she was engaged to Monsieur T——. There was an intense reciprocal affection, and an active correspondence.

One night, toward eleven o'clock Madame S—— awoke, hearing herself called despairingly by her given name. She recognized the voice instantly and felt a breath on her face. Mechanically she put out a hand to see what it was, thinking that some one was actually there.

She felt nothing, she saw nothing. Very much frightened, she called her mother, who was sleeping in another room, and told her about her disturbing hallucination. She had at the same time an intense feeling of some misfortune which had just come to pass far down in the Basse-Pyrénées. She wrote the next morning to her fiancé, but received no reply. The letters that followed met with the same fate. Several months passed without any news. Then Madame S—— learned, by chance, that her friend had been

taken to prison that very night, on very grave charges, to avoid creating a scandal in a little town. A doctor who accompanied the unfortunate man testified that, overwhelmed and seeing all his chances for happiness disappear, he called upon his fiancée in a despairing voice.

Their relations were broken forever. Monsieur T——, who married later into another family, died three or four years ago.

This tale is scrupulously exact.

ARGY.

(Letter 1068.)

This case of communication between the living recalls other cases that have been as carefully observed, among them that of a woman (Madame Wilmot) who set out to see her husband on a ship, and did indeed arrive there (see "L'Inconnu," page 489), and hundreds of telepathic transmissions of the same order.

There are innumerable cases of many sorts of similar communications between living beings at a considerable distance. Among those that have been sent me by careful observers I shall cite especially the following, which I owe to my fellow-member of the scientific press, Mr. Warrington Dawson, at present in the American Embassy at Paris, who in 1901 was directing an American agency for the great newspapers of Paris. Here is a letter from him, dated December 3, 1901 (18 rue Feydeau, Paris) :

DEAR MASTER:

It is my duty to acquaint you with a very curious case of telepathy which has just happened to me and which may help to advance your very important and clear-sighted investigations.

On Tuesday, the eighth of last October, I was occupied in my office, at 18 rue Feydeau, in writing an article on your young colleague, Mademoiselle Klumpke <sup>1</sup> (an astronomer at the Observatoire), when I stopped for lack of notes on an interview that she had been kind enough to give me. Remembering that these notes were in a drawer

<sup>1</sup> Who has since married the English astronomer Isaac Roberts.

of my work table in my apartment, 36 rue de Varennes, I returned to get them. I climbed up to my floor—the fourth above the entresol—leaving my hat on a table in the entrance hall, as I always did. Then I noticed that the apartment was deserted, although my house-keeper was supposed to remain there during my absence. I made a gesture of annoyance, saying, “This must stop!” then, remembering that my mother was to return to Paris before long and that she could arrange these matters better than I, I shrugged my shoulders while I crossed the narrow little hall to enter my workroom. Here I sat down at my table which was laden with papers and on which stood a lamp. It was about two o’clock in the afternoon of the eighth, and I am certain of the date, for the same evening I sent to America the article on Mademoiselle Klumpke, of which I am sending you a copy, bearing the date of October eighth.

You can read in this article, that she owes her initiation into astronomy to you, and that you were, through your books, her first master.

What was my astonishment to receive through the mail from America, the following week, a letter from my mother, telling me all the incidents which I have just told you, as they had been seen by one of our friends, Mrs. George Coffin of New York.

My mother’s letter bore the date of October eleventh, in New York, and the envelop was postmarked with that date; the letter was therefore mailed three days after the event and, as it takes at least eight days for a letter to go from Paris to New York, there was no possible way to learn of these happenings in less than three days except by cable, and certainly no one would dream of sending such unimportant details, especially at the rate of one franc, twenty-five centimes a word. My mother wrote on October eleventh, Friday, and said that she had seen Mrs. Coffin the preceding Tuesday, which was therefore the ninth. It is a curious fact that while trying to see me at two o’clock in the afternoon, New York time, Mrs. Coffin had seen not what I was doing at that moment but what I had done the afternoon before at two o’clock, Paris time.

You will see from the letter that Mrs. Coffin began by describing the apartment. As it had never been photographed, and Mrs. Coffin had seen my mother for the first time since her return from Europe only a few minutes before describing this interior, she could not have known of the arrangement of our apartment.

This could be explained by suggestion, as my mother knew of it, but my mother, who is used to Paris ways, would never think of calling a floor placed four flights above the entresol anything but the fourth floor, while to a New Yorker, who is not used to the entresol, and who calls the ground floor the first floor, it would be the sixth floor, as Mrs. Coffin says. It seems, therefore, from this fact alone, that Mrs. Coffin has really seen the apartment. Moreover, for almost a year, that is the only time that I have happened to return home at that hour of the day. Mrs. Coffin's astonishment at seeing the porcelain stove, an object unknown in America, shows her usual exactness in this vision at a distance.

During the long years that my family has known Mrs. Coffin we have often amused ourselves by asking her to "see" what was happening to people who interested us or to answer questions which we wrote on bits of paper, closed and sealed, and which she held without looking at them. Her replies have always been clear and, when we were able to verify them, exact.

Very sincerely, etc.,

FRANCIS WARRINGTON DAWSON.

(Letter 1003.)

This letter was accompanied by that of Mr. Dawson's mother, dated New York, October 11th, describing exactly, as dictated by Mrs. Coffin, the apartment in Paris, "on the sixth floor," Mr. Dawson's visit to this apartment, his annoyance over the servant's absence, his hat placed on a table, the search for his papers, the condition of his bureau, his sitting down to write,—in a word, all the details of what he had done in Paris.

This very exact sight at a distance is absolutely spontaneous and incontestable. But what is more singular yet is that this vision went back to the day before, and not to the day and moment itself, so that it expresses a sort of double phenomenon of telepathy in time and space.

Telepathetic transmissions between living people are not so rare as one who is ignorant of them would suppose. The following is worthy of attention:

Commander T. W. Aylesbury, living at Sutton, in the country of Surrey, England, wrote in December, 1882:

At the age of thirteen, I fell overboard from a ship that was approaching the isle of Bali, to the west of Java, and I was almost drowned. After having sunk several times, when I came up to the surface of the water I called my mother, at which the boat's crew was very much amused; and they teased me many times about it, sparing no sarcasm. Several months later, on my return to England, I told the whole story to my mother and said at once:

"While I was under the water I saw you all sitting in this room; you were working on something white. I saw you all—Mother, Emily, Eliza, and Ellen."

His mother confirmed his statement. "I heard you call me," she said, "and I sent Emily to look out at the window."

The time, considering the difference in longitude, corresponded to the hour at which the voice had been heard.

Another letter from the commander completes the story:

I saw their faces,—the faces of my mother and my sisters,—the room and the furniture, above all the old-fashioned Venetian blinds. My eldest sister was seated by my mother's side.

As regards the time of the accident, it was very early in the morning. I remember a ship had capsized the day before and had been tossed up on the shore. The officer gave us the order to go and find it and to bring it back in the morning, but I cannot remember the exact hour. The situation was terrible and the waves broke furiously. We almost turned upside down; I had never thought myself so near my end, and yet I have been in many a tight place. But that accident made such an impression upon my mind that I could not forget a single detail, nor the jokes of the sailors: "Boy, why are you calling your mother? Do you think she can pull you out of the devil's claws?" and other remarks which I cannot repeat.

The inquiry elicited a letter from the commander's sister. She wrote:

I recall the incident perfectly. It made such an impression upon

me that I shall never forget it. We were seated and working peacefully, one evening, when first we heard a feeble cry of "*Mother!*" We raised our eyes and said: "Did you hear some one cry '*Mother*'?" The words had hardly left our lips when the voice called again, "*Mother!*" twice in succession. The last cry was stamped with terror, it was like a cry of agony. We all rose and my mother said, "Go to the door and see what it is." I ran into the street and searched for several minutes, but everything was silent and I saw no one; the evening was fine, without a breath of air. Mother was very much upset by this experience.<sup>1</sup>

These cases of transmission of thought between living people have nothing in common with normal life and are outside the action of our physical senses. From all the evidence, it is the spirit which acts here.

It would be easy to cite many other examples, notably that of a young amazon who, having leaned over too far, to open a barrier, fell from her horse and gave a cry that was heard by five persons seven kilometers away.<sup>2</sup>

I have received ferocious letters from well-meaning ladies, evidently inspired by their spiritual directors, reproaching me for not believing in the Christian dogmas and for admitting the truth of the "ridiculous tales of telepathy, of sensations at a distance, and the announcements of death," and I have, at this moment, noted one of them especially, sent by a lady of Salins, which is almost insulting and which reached me in the same post that brought me the following (Letters 913 and 914 of my collection), which contradict and singularly complement each other.

Letter 913 declares that everything about telepathy is false, that it is inexcusable of me to take these accounts seriously. "It has been impossible for me to continue reading your book '*L'Inconnu*,' it is so ridiculous; it is truly grotesque!" Letter 914 says:

<sup>1</sup> *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 365.

<sup>2</sup> *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 363.

For the inquiry which you have undertaken I have made it my duty to bring a personal contribution to that most important work of yours, "*L'Inconnu et les problèmes psychiques*," a basis for the science of the future.

In the winter of 1878 I was living at Aurillac. I had left my wife and daughter at San Servan, Ille-et-Vilaine.

On December 22d, while I was in a café, at about half-past eight, I was seized with intolerable anguish. My suffering was so great that I went out and returned home, where I wrote my wife a letter which began as follows:

"Sunday, December 22, 9 o'clock.

"I was in the café, with my usual companions, when I suddenly rose and left, although they begged me to remain. I had heard an irresistible call. You must have been thinking of me, earnestly calling me, perhaps with anguish. Is it pain? Is it danger? Oh, tell me what you wanted of me at that hour! I came home in great distress, all upset. There was a pressing call: I needed to be alone to write you and confide my sorrow to you."

The rest of the letter does not concern us.

On receiving this letter on the morning of the twenty-fourth, my wife was astounded. She wrote at the head of my letter, "The day of the baby's accident."

This is what had happened at Saint Servan:

At eight o'clock in the evening of the twenty-second, my daughter, aged six weeks, was put to bed with a hot-water bottle at her feet. Her mother went to bed shortly after. A few minutes later the infant gave cries of distress, and they discovered that the hot-water bottle had leaked and the child, its feet scalded, was twisting in convulsions of pain.

My wife was distracted, and did not regain possession of herself until after the doctor came, which was certainly more than an hour later.

The coincidence of these events and their perfect agreement can be established, thanks to the dating of my letter,—December 22d, nine o'clock.

I had dined, as was my custom, from seven to eight, at the café; I had taken a hand at cards: the time required to take me to the café,

about 159 meters from my apartment, that necessary to settle myself for writing, everything shows that I heard the call at about half-past eight at the earliest.

The child had been put to bed at eight o'clock, and the scalding water could not have had an effect later than half-past eight, for otherwise the water, having cooled, would not have instantly caused the blister it did. My wife no longer remembers if, in her distraction, her thoughts actually turned to me or if she called me. She is convinced she did, but her actual recollections have been destroyed.

Such as it is, this experience, so clearly proved by my letter of December 22d, seems to me literally exact.

I will add that the nature of my mind, and that of my occupation, lead me toward the study of scientific realities much more than toward events of the mysterious order of the psychic world. I have never had any other experience of this nature.

GIGON.

Sous-Intendent of the First Class.

Does not this curious tale show the greatest similarity to that of Monsieur Arbussoff (Chapter IV, page 71) and that of Monsieur Garrison (*ibid*, page 75)? All reveal the powers of the supra-normal soul. Let us continue.

Here are some more cases concerning which it is impossible to doubt, showing telepathic transmission of thought. I am taking them from a letter which was sent me from Passavant, Haute-Saône, by Dr. Poirson of the faculty of Paris.

I am sending you accounts of three events of a somewhat different order, but which may be useful to you in your studies on psychic phenomena. I can guarantee their authenticity, as I have the habit of attributing no importance to events of this order unless I have observed them myself.

A About two months ago, happening to be in Belfort, a quarter of Paris, I began to think suddenly and with singular insistence of one of my colleagues of the Jura, of whom I do not think once a year, as I have no relations with him except in a professional way. Moreover, these relations date from thirteen years ago, and I have

not seen him since. A few minutes later I found myself face to face with him in a square, and as he had come on a bicycle, down a street, at right angles to my own, it was impossible that I should have seen him from a distance. That is a fact: I do not explain it, but it struck me.

B As I am a doctor by profession, I am often disturbed at night. A great many people pass before my door: but if some one comes who is *going* to ring, I awake of my own accord while he is still twenty meters from my house; I know beforehand that he is going to ring.

I have verified this not once but a hundred times in the past twelve years. In order to be entirely exact, I must say that if I am not asleep—which often happens—I am entirely incapable of foretelling if a passer-by is going to stop or not; I must say also, that if I am sleeping very heavily, after an especially fatiguing day, the phenomenon does not occur.

C I have among my patients a hysterical young woman in whom I can induce hypnotic sleep and suggestion with extraordinary ease. It has often happened that I have fixed the hour of her awakening and of her rising, which she observes with remarkable exactness. This does not seem at all extraordinary to one who practises a little hypnotism, but here is something else: One day this person's husband, who was impatiently awaiting his wife's awakening, was seized with the whim of setting forward the hands of the watch that was placed, as usual, on the table by the bed. As it was only half-past six in the morning and he had half an hour to wait, he turned the hands forward to half-past seven. He was surprised to see his wife rise quickly at the very moment when the large hand touched the hour of seven. This man came himself to inform me of what had happened. I was incredulous and wished to verify it, and in fact, I have verified it several times.

I must say that this person, when asleep, with her eyes closed, easily reads the time from my watch, even if I vary it, *but only* if I myself am looking at the hands. In the same way, she easily names any object which I grasp behind her, *but only* when I take it in my hands.

All this represents facts to be explained. I leave you the task of interpreting them; they could be confirmed for you by those con-

cerned if they were not, in mentality, a little behind the point of view held by us; they consider me somewhat of a sorcerer, and would certainly not wish to be mixed up with these stories.

You can make any use you please of my letter. I authorize you to publish my name, for I am not afraid of the laughter of the ignorant, and I enjoy that of imbeciles.

I am, etc.,

DR. POIRSON,

Passavant, Haute-Saône; October 9, 1916.

(Letter 3482.)

The first of these three cases is not unusual, and it is one of those which lead us to consider the transmission of thought from brain to brain, like a wave of ether. The second leads to the same conclusion. The third shows a suggestion operating despite a trick. The transmission of thought is evident, especially in the case of the doctor who altered the hands of the watch. Everybody knows that we often meet, apparently by chance, a person of whom we are thinking. We find examples of it everywhere. Dr. Foissac, among others, points out<sup>1</sup> some of these coincidences which have particularly struck him. But they are not rare, although they have not been analyzed until now. They prove psychic radiation.

Cases of telepathic sight and hearing are more frequently met with.

Among the numerous observations which have been sent to me, I will quote the following case in which Madame Barthés, the widow of Dr. Barthés, of Ivry, actually saw from a distance an accident which fortunately had no serious consequences. The event took place in 1874 in Rumania.

February 12, 1917.

The doctor had left on horseback to make his rounds, and his wife had gone to pass the afternoon with some friends. Suddenly, while they were talking, she saw her husband fall from his horse into

<sup>1</sup> *La Chance ou la Destinée*, p. 589.

the road, and she gave a cry of fright. They laughed at her, quite naturally, but when the doctor returned in the evening, his wife, still under her impression of the vision and to the great astonishment of the rider, asked if he had hurt himself. He told her that having slowed his horse to a walk, after a rather stiff climb, he had passed the bridle over his arm in order to roll a cigarette, when the animal suddenly stumbled, fell on its knees, and flung the rider to the ground, where he had hurt his face, his shoulder, and his arm. The doctor, who was acquainted with telepathy, was not surprised at this vision.

(Letter 4075.)

Our next case of mental vision is of the same order. Lombroso published the following letter, sent him by his colleague in the university, Professor De Sanctis:

I was once at Rome with my family, which had remained in the country. As the house had been robbed the year before, my brother was in the habit of sleeping there. One evening he told me he was going to the Costanzi Theater. I had come in alone and was beginning to read when I was suddenly seized with terror. I struggled against it and was beginning to undress, but I remained obsessed by the thought that the theater was on fire and my brother in danger. I put the light out; but, growing more and more disturbed, I lit it again, contrary to my usual custom, and decided to await my brother's return before I went to sleep. I was truly frightened, just as a child might be. At half-past twelve I heard the door open, and what was my astonishment when my brother told me about the panic that had been caused by the outbreak of a fire, which had coincided with the hour of my anxiety.

A very remarkable case of the transmission of thought is this, which was reported by Dr. Quintard to the Society of Medicine at Angers:

A child of seven, Ludovico, possessed a gift for solving problems

<sup>1</sup> Whom I exhibited at Paris in 1880, and whose reputation spread over the whole world.

similar to that of the celebrated Inaudi.<sup>1</sup> The child's father finally noticed one day, first, that he hardly listened to the reading of the problems that were given him, and, secondly, that his mother's presence was the one condition necessary for the success of the experiment.

She always had to have the required solution under her eyes or in her mind. From this he deduced that his son did not calculate but divined, or, to be more exact, that the mother transmitted her thought to him; and he resolved to make sure of the matter. Consequently, he asked her to open the dictionary and ask the boy which page she was looking at, and the boy answered at once: "It is page four fifty-six," which was correct. Ten times he repeated this and ten times we obtained the same result.

When a sentence of any length was written on a tablet it was enough for it to pass under the mother's eyes for the child, when questioned, even by a stranger, to be able to repeat the whole of it.

All these observations unite in proving to us that communication exists between mind and mind.

A case of vision and also of exact *hearing* from a distance, in a dream, has been reported to me by one of my correspondents, Monsieur Maurice Rollinet, who had it from Monsieur Doutaz, the curé at Domdidier, canton of Fribourg, Switzerland. Here it is, somewhat abridged:<sup>1</sup>

It was in the middle of November of the year 1859. At the time I was eighteen years old. I went to bed and to sleep.

I do not know how long Morpheus had rocked me in his arms, when a strange vision appeared before my mind. I saw the sorrowful face of my dear old father, speaking to me from my old home, which was twenty-four kilometers from the town near Fribourg where I was living: "My dear Joseph," he said, "it is with great sorrow that I am writing to tell you that your poor sister, Josephine, is dying in Paris."

<sup>1</sup> I have published it in the *Annales des Sciences psychiques* of October, 1910.

I was awakened by this vision but said to myself at once: "Ah! bah! it is a dream!" At that I went to sleep again.

But behold, the same vision appeared again, exactly as at first, with the same sorrowful look and the same words: "My dear Joseph," etc., "but your mother does not yet know the sad news."

"This time," I said, jumping out of bed, "I no longer believe it's a dream," and under the painful impression of a sorrowful reality, I dressed and looked at my watch: it was half-past twelve.

When day had come I set out for the college. As I had some material to get from my room, I went up to the house, which was left in the care of an old concierge. I had barely entered when I saw the good old man coming toward me, holding a small package in his hand. He said to me: "A gentleman who has just arrived from your home has asked me to give you without delay this present sent by your father, for it is of the utmost importance." I opened the package at once. It was accompanied by a letter from my father, written in great haste; I read: "Dear Joseph, it is with great sorrow that I am writing to tell you that your poor sister Josephine is dying in Paris. But your mother does not yet know the sad news. The telegram reached me at about ten o'clock this evening. I did not think I ought to tell your mother, for the moment. It is now eleven o'clock. At half-past twelve our deputy will leave for the Grand Council. I will put this in the package which your dear mother prepared for this occasion. Try to arrive here without fail to-morrow evening. It is impossible for me, at my age, to fulfil this sorrowful duty. You, alas! will represent us."

This account is accompanied by the following certificate, signed by the narrator.

The undersigned declares, on his conscience, that the account is perfectly exact and that his memory of this event is as clear as if it had taken place yesterday.

JOS. DOUTAZ, CURÉ,  
Domdidier, April 18, 1918.

It is utterly impossible here to plead a chance coincidence

between this dream and the event, and we are forced to admit that the father's thought was carried to the son, with the very text of the letter which he was sending to him.<sup>1</sup>

We see that everything unites to prove the value of the thesis upheld here: *The action of the soul is independent of the body.*

The following instance of telepathetic sensation has been described by Dr. Foissac ("Chance ou la Destinée," page 599) as having been experienced by himself. At the time the importance of these events was never suspected:

When I was a medical student and interne at Dupuytren, I dreamed that I saw my father attacked with an illness which was bringing him to the grave. I awoke in great distress, which I tried to overcome, telling myself that I had left my father the Sunday before in perfect health; it was now Wednesday. I told myself that it was really a weakness to grow anxious over a dream, and I resolved to pay no attention to it. But the image of my dying father was continually before my mind and, although I was ashamed of my weakness, in order to escape from this obsession I left for Saint-Germain, where I found my father ill of inflammation of the lungs, which carried him off in five days.

Telepathy appears under all forms. It is not rare for the daily papers to receive echoes of observations of this sort. "The Daily Telegraph" of August 23, 1906, published, among others, the tale of one of its correspondents. His little daughter, aged three, was saying her prayers and refused, that evening, to follow her usual custom and pray for a happy ending to the voyage of her grandmother, who had left Russia for England. "No," she repeated, "I shall not pray this evening that Grandmother will arrive safely, *because she has arrived.*"—"What did you say?"—"Yes, I saw the boat in the harbor and she is very well." The correspondent added

<sup>1</sup> Compare with a similar communication between my father and mother (*L'Inconnu*, p. 513).

that she had made a note of the date, and that when she received word from her mother, she learned that that lady had really arrived, as this child had seen in her dream the day before she had refused to make her usual prayer. She observes that this power of seeing things at a distance, in dreams, is in her family, and that she herself saw one night the explosion on board of the *Great Eastern*. Her husband made considerable fun of the dream when she told him, but he was obliged to acknowledge the truth of it the next morning when the papers arrived.

A telepathetic vision, in a dream, from Strasburg to Paris has been described to me by an old friend, Madame Dobelmann, in the following words:

I do not know, dear Master, whether or not I have mentioned to you an instance of telepathy which I experienced in January, 1901. We were already living in Paris when, at the end of January, we were called to Strasburg, my husband and I, for the funeral of my poor invalid mother. Our son was not able to go also, because of the laws of exception of that place. I was much affected, as can be imagined, by the swarm of memories and by the weather (the air was full of whirling snow), so that I had very agitated dreams at night. One night, especially, I was overcome with sharp distress and dreamed that I saw my youngest son caught between two rows of planks which had fallen on him, unable to free himself and calling me, "Mama!" I spoke of it to my sister, while I was still very much oppressed by this nightmare. But neither she nor I dreamed of attaching any importance to it. A few days later, on our return to Paris, the servant who received us said: "Monsieur Julien is much better, he is at his work."—"What, has he been ill?"—"Why, yes, he had to stay in the house several days, for he hurt his leg. Did n't he write you?"

On my son's return we questioned him, and he told me that he had had an accident, for a pile of boards had fallen on him; but it had been nothing serious, and it would have been useless to frighten us. "But I knew it," I said. "I dreamed about it all one night; and the curious thing is that the place did not at all resemble your

wood-yard. You were in the midst of planks, unable to get up, in a great unfamiliar yard, and the sun was shining brightly."—"That's correct," replied my son; "the sun was shining on that day and it did not happen in my place but in a neighbor's yard, which is just as you have described it without having ever seen it. But I have no recollection of having called you."

Had my son called me at night in his sleep? It is not impossible, for he was accustomed to dream out loud.

I must add that this is the one and only time that such a thing has happened to me.

(Letter 2320.)

VALERIE DOBELMANN,  
12 rue Linne, Paris.

We see what variety exists among all these sincere, simple, and authentic tales. They reinforce one another and prove to us that our body does not contain all the reality that exists.

Here is another example of the vision at a distance, in a dream, of a very precise incident.

One of my relatives, Madame Izouard—of Marseilles, where her family has been well known for more than half a century—told me of a very curious dream which I begged her to describe in a few lines. She has done so in the following letter.

December 13, 1901.

DEAR MASTER:

I was living at Marseilles when this event took place at Sorgues, a small town in the department of Vaucluse. I saw in a dream one of my friends in the hands of a man who was cutting off her beautiful hair, and I awoke very much astonished.

A few months later I learned that the lady whom I had seen undergo this disagreeable operation had been through a severe illness, and they had had not merely to cut her hair, but to shave the entire head. My dream had occurred at the same moment, which is why I have kept an unforgettable memory of it.

(Letter 1201.)

V. IZOUARD.

Distance does not exist for the spirit. We have brought up the question in order to learn whether the souls of the seers are transported to the places seen, or whether the person seen acts at a distance upon the seer, or whether there is not a simultaneous sensation on both sides. But what is space to thought?

The sight of an accident, an illness, a death at a distance is not so rare a thing as might be imagined. We shall have occasion farther on to examine a large number of exact and precise cases of the vision of death. Let us describe, in connection with telepathy, the following striking observation. I have taken it from a book by Mrs. Crowe, "The Obscure Sides of Nature."

A certain Mrs. H——, living in Limerick, had a few years ago a servant named Nelly Hanlon, whom she esteemed very much. Nelly was a most responsible person, who rarely asked for a holiday, and Mrs. H—— was all the more disposed to grant her request when she asked for a day off in order to attend a fair a few miles away. But Mr. H——, learning on his return of Nelly's plans, said they could not do without her, as he had invited guests to dinner on that day, and Nelly was the only one to whom he could trust the keys of the cellar. He added that business matters would probably not permit him to return in time to go after the wine himself. Mrs. H——, who did not wish to disappoint Nelly, to whom she had given her consent, said that she herself would take charge of the wine for that day, and Nelly set off in the morning, overjoyed, promising to return in the evening if it was possible and at latest on the following morning.

The day passed without incident; no one thought of Nelly. When it was time to go after the wine, Mrs. H—— took the key and went toward the cellar staircase, followed by a servant who carried the basket for the bottles. She had hardly begun to descend the steps when she gave a great cry and fell in a faint. They carried her to her bed, and the girl who accompanied her told the other terrified servants that they had seen Nelly Hanlon at the foot of the staircase, dripping with water. When Mr. H——

arrived they told him the same tale: he scolded the servant for her foolishness, and Mrs. H——, who had been well cared for, regained her senses. As she opened her eyes, she sighed deeply and exclaimed. "Oh, Nelly Hanlon!" and as soon as she had recovered enough to speak, she confirmed what the servant had said: she had seen Nelly Hanlon at the foot of the stairway, dripping as if she had just come out of the water. Mr. H—— did everything in the world to convince her that it was an illusion, but in vain. "Nelly," he said, "will soon return and will laugh at you."

Night came, then the morning, but no Nelly. Two or three days passed. They made inquiries and found that she had been seen at the fair, and that she had left, toward evening, to return home. From this moment all trace of her disappeared. Finally her body was found in the river, but they never knew how the tragedy had occurred.

It is reasonable to suppose that the servant, as she was drowning,—without doubt accidentally,—went back in her mind to her master, to whom she was very much attached. This telepathetic view is especially remarkable for its precision and clearness.

These mental visions at a distance sometimes take on a symbolic form which is not at first understood. I have received the following letter about a dream that occurred at Berry, 240 kilometers from Paris:

During the night of August 29th–30th I was particularly moved by a dream. We had a young friend who had been married for five years to a government official. The young couple were living at Neuilly, and their second child, then about fifteen months old, was in a very disturbing state of health because of intestinal trouble, so that hardly a ray of hope remained to the parents.

My imagination was therefore rather concerned with this little creature, who, as a matter of fact, and thanks to great care did survive and is now a delightful little boy.

This being disposed of, here is my dream:

I was in the room of my young friend; she was standing, clad in

a dressing-gown, her hair almost down her back, her eyes flowing with tears, her whole personality showing the most profound distress. Meanwhile she held mechanically, and as if from habit, a child whose head and thin little body drooped languidly over her shoulder. This child, the image of suffering, was alive and uttering feeble, plaintive moans. Soon my attention was attracted by two men, bearing a bulky object, which they placed in the middle of the room. At first this object appeared to me to be a child's coffin and I was disturbed to think that after all the sick child was still living and in his mother's arms. After a period that I could not determine, it seemed to me that the funereal coffin grew slowly larger, until it became capable of holding a large body. In fact, the two men soon placed in it a long corpse, wrapped in a white sheet.

The young wife redoubled her tears and wracking sobs, and with her free hand pushed back those with her who tried vainly to lead her away from this melancholy sight. She refused fiercely to go: children, family, nothing existed any more for her but the beloved dead person, whom they were about to carry away and whom, she said, nothing in the world could replace.

Like many dreams, mine ended in confusion, and on my awakening there remained with me only a painful impression, with the very clear recollection, however, of the details of the principal scene, and I told my servant, while I helped her arrange the room, that something had certainly happened to our friends, whom she knew well. I thought that the third child, whom they were expecting, would arrive in the world before its time.

The morning of the next day, September 1, my husband entered my room holding in his hand a mourning letter and, very much agitated, still hoping that it was all a mistake, he stammered rather than read an invitation to the funeral services of our friend, aged thirty-six years, who had died August 30, 1892.

The unfortunate man had succumbed to an attack of cholera, a victim in his full youth and happiness to the terrible scourge which, during the summer of 1892, as you can remember, touched a few of the townships to the west of Paris.

During the few short hours in which they despaired of saving the sick man, his young wife (and I knew that such had been her

longing) had thought of the doctor-friend my husband was to them, as one who, she believed, could have found means to save him.

Who will explain this mysterious sympathy? The truth is that, with my mind, I had actually seen our friend put into his coffin, and that everything had happened as I have described it. The very evening of August 30th, as he had died between four and five o'clock in the afternoon, the body had been placed in the coffin, as a sanitary measure, and that at a rather late hour in the evening.

A. FERON,

Dun-sur-Auron, Cher.: June 6, 1899.

(Letter 671.)

How is it possible for us not to be convinced by all these experiments, at once diverse, positive, and harmonious?

Apropos of vision at a distance, I have received from a correspondent (Monsieur Egisto del Panto, of Sesto Fiorentino, Italy) no less curious a note than the following:

On taking, one day, the train from Toulouse to Paris, I observed in my compartment a middle-aged gentleman of very distinguished appearance, with whom I soon fell into conversation. We discussed philosophy, socialism, religion, and he let me understand that he was very religious and that he had become so through a frightful misfortune which had befallen him some time before.

He told me that it was the first time he had talked to a stranger of this terrible unhappiness which had come to him. All his family, if I remember rightly, had been swept away by a flood at Toulouse. Well, this gentleman, who seemed to me a professor, told me that several days after this catastrophe, he had seen in a dream the spot where the body of one of his drowned children lay under the water, and that when he went the next day to look for it, it was found *in exactly that spot*. It is impossible to admit that this honest middle-aged man of superior intelligence and education, with tears in his eyes, should have told me a false story.

(Letter 1013.)

Here is a very remarkable example of vision at a distance, in a dream, of a most unusual accident. I take it from the

work "Phantasms of the Living," Volume I, page 338, and from its French translation, "Les Hallucinations télépathiques," page 107. Canon Warburton of Winchester wrote under date of July 16, 1883:

I had left Oxford to pass a day or two with my brother, Acton Warburton, at that time a barrister. When I reached his home I found a message from him on the table: he excused himself for being absent and told me that he had gone to a ball in some part of the West End and that he intended to return a little after one o'clock. Instead of going to bed I sat and dozed in an arm-chair. At exactly one o'clock I awoke with a start, crying out, "By Jupiter! he has fallen!" I saw my brother, who came out of a drawing-room on to a brilliantly lighted landing, catch his foot on the first step of the stairway and fall head first, breaking the fall with his elbows and hands. I had never seen the house and I did not know where it was. Thinking very little of the accident, I went to sleep again. A half-hour later I was waked up by the abrupt entrance of my brother, who exclaimed: "Ah, there you are! I nearly broke my neck. As I was leaving the ball-room I caught my foot and fell full length down the stairway."

Such is the canon's tale; he declares, at the same time, that he has never had hallucinations.

It seems to me that this is not, properly speaking, a telepathetic message from the brother of the narrator (although he may have thought of him suddenly with intensity), but rather a case of mental vision, caused by this telepathic excitement, especially as the Reverend Canon Warburton adds later that he saw a landing brilliantly lighted and a clock and tables arranged for refreshments, which corresponded to the actual fact.

I have published a case very much resembling this (also a fall down a staircase) in "L'Inconnu" (Volume XXXI, page 479) and another of the same sort (Volume XLVI, page 432).

We shall especially study this curious fact of mental vision

in the following chapter. It will prove with even more positive evidence than the preceding chapters the existence of transcendent powers of the soul.

These sights at a distance, these telepathic impressions, can be observed equally well outside of dreams, or at least in half-waking conditions. Let us read, for example, the following observation of the barrister Richard Searle, sent to the Society for Psychical Research on November 2, 1883:

One afternoon I was sitting in my office in the Temple writing out a memorandum. My office is placed between one of the windows and the chimney; the window has a view of the Temple. Suddenly I noticed that I was looking through the lower pane, which was about at the level of my eyes, and I saw the head and face of my wife. She had fallen backward, her eyes closed, her face livid, as if she were dead. I shook myself, tried to get control of myself; then I got up and looked out through the window: I saw only the houses opposite. I came to the conclusion that I had grown drowsy and then fallen asleep. After having taken a few turns about the room to rouse myself thoroughly I went on with my work and thought no more of the incident.

I returned home at my usual hour. That evening, while I was dining with my wife, she told me that she had lunched with a friend living in Gloucester Gardens, and that she had taken a little girl with her (one of our nieces, who was staying with us), but that during lunch or immediately afterward the child had fallen and cut her face so that the blood had spurted out. My wife added that she herself had fainted. What I had seen through the window came back to my mind, and I asked her at what hour it had happened. She answered, at a few minutes after two. It was at the very moment of my vision. I must add that it is the only time my wife has fainted. At the time I told the event to many of my friends.

RICHARD SEARLE.

In confirmation of this incident Mr. Paul Pierard, of 27 Gloucester Gardens, London, writes:

Some ladies and children had met at my house one afternoon. Mrs. Searle, of Home Lodge, Herne Hill, had come with her little niece Louise. As they were playing a noisy game and running a good deal about a table, little Louise fell from her chair and hurt herself slightly. The fear that the accident was serious so upset Mrs. Searle that she fainted. The next day we met Mr. Searle, who told us that the afternoon before, while he was looking over some business in his office, 6 Pump Court, the Temple, he had felt a curious impression and had seen the image of his unconscious wife as clearly as in a mirror. This vision had come at the moment of the accident. The fact is undeniable.

It certainly seems that there was here an instantaneous communication between the two minds, those of the husband and those of the wife.

Mental vision, through telepathy, of events taking place at a distance of ten, twenty, fifty, a hundred, or two hundred miles, or even more, is not doubted by those who have studied this subject.

Here is an example related in February, 1901, in the proceedings of the English Society for Psychical Research, and which the investigators of this subject have seen many times since.<sup>1</sup> This is a case of very exact vision at a distance of 230 kilometers. The writer, Mr. David Fraser Harris of the University of Saint Andrew's, tells of it himself in the following words:

A few years ago, an urgent matter of business prevented me from returning to London at the end of the week. As I did not care to spend Sunday in Manchester, I went on Saturday afternoon to Matloch Bath, resolved to spend my Sunday quietly and to return home by a morning train on Monday.

When I reached my destination, a little family hotel near the station, I asked at once for tea, and went into the drawing-room to warm myself, as it was a very cold day in January, with quantities of snow, and the thermometer marked a respectable number of degrees below zero.

<sup>1</sup> Sage, *La zone frontière*; Chevreuil, *On ne meurt pas*, p. 45.

I found that, at the time, I was the only guest in the hotel, and while I waited for my tea I settled myself comfortably in a big arm-chair before a cheerful fire. It was not yet dark enough to light the gas, nor light enough to read. I turned my back on the window and thought of nothing in particular. I was in a state of passive tranquillity, when all at once I lost the sense of where I was. Instead of the wall and the pictures that were hung on it, I saw before me the front of my house in London; my wife was standing on the door-step and speaking to a workman who held a big broom in his hands.

My wife seemed much distressed, and I felt an instant certainty that the man was in a wretched condition of poverty. I did not hear their conversation, but something told me that the unfortunate man was asking my wife to help him. At this moment the servant brought the tea and the vision vanished. The impression made on me by this vision was so profound, I was so convinced that I had seen something real, that after I had finished my tea I wrote my wife to tell her what had just happened to me and to beg her to find out about this man and to help him as much as possible.

Now, this is what had taken place in London. A young boy had come and knocked at the door of our house. He had spoken to the servant and had offered for a penny to sweep the snow that covered the sidewalk and the house door-step. While the boy was talking, a poor devil in tatters came up, who said: "I beg you to give me the preference. This child will probably spend for candy the penny you give him, while I need it to buy bread. I have a wife and four children, all ill; there is nothing to eat, no fire," etc. The servant begged the man to wait while she went to tell my wife, who came to speak to the unfortunate fellow. He repeated that he had been ill, that all his family was in the most wretched poverty, but that before appealing to public charity he wished to try to find some sort of work. It was this scene which I had beheld at the very moment when it came to pass. It had been transmitted to me, probably through the impression which the misery of this poor man had made on my wife's mind.

Here is the end of the story. My wife promised the man that she would go to his home in the evening and see what she could do. She found he had told the truth. My wife gave what she could in

food, clothes, money, and fuel. It is useless to add that my letter which reached her Monday morning caused her the greatest surprise. A few days later I saw the man myself; he was exactly the one I had seen in my vision. Later he found a position as milkman and has distributed milk in our quarter for at least two years.

DAVID FRASER HARRIS.

Is there not in this actual observation an absolute proof of a power of the soul which has nothing in common with the material eye, the retina, the optic nerve, or the brain? Was it not the *spirit* which alone acted here? Was it not psychic transmission at a distance? For the observer not only saw the scene but even perceived the nature of the conversation between his wife and the beggar.

Psychic, mental communications between living people often take on an auditory form, as we have already noticed. One hears a voice, an urgent call, and this voice, this call corresponds to a desire, an intention, a plan, a sort of far-away order, which it is wise to obey. Here is a remarkable case, experienced by Dr. Nicolas, Count Gonemys, of Corfu.<sup>1</sup>

In 1869 I was a doctor, with the rank of major, in the Greek Army. By order of the minister of war I was attached to the garrison of the Isle of Zante. As I approached the island where I was to occupy my new post (I was about two hours from the coast) I heard an inner voice say unceasingly to me in Italian, "Go and see Volterra." This phrase was repeated so often that I was stunned; although I was in good health at the time, I was alarmed by it, because I believed it an auditory hallucination. There was nothing to make me think of Monsieur Volterra, who lived in Zante and whom I did not even know, although I had seen him once ten years before. I tried to stop my ears, to talk with my fellow-travelers, to no avail: the voice continued to make itself heard in the same manner. Finally we made land. I went straight to the hotel and occupied myself with unpacking my trunks, but the voice did not cease to torment me. A little later a servant entered and told me

<sup>1</sup> *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 306.

that a gentleman was at the door and wished to speak with me at once. "Who is it?" I asked.—"Monsieur Volterra," was the answer. He entered all in tears, full of despair, and begged me to follow him, to see his son, who was very ill.

I found the young man in a delirium of madness, naked, in an empty chamber, having been given up by all the doctors of Zante five years before. His aspect was hideous and rendered more frightful by continual paroxysms, accompanied with whistlings, howlings, bayings, and other animal cries. Sometimes he twisted himself on his stomach like a serpent; at other times he fell on his knees in a state of ecstasy; at times he talked and quarreled with imaginary beings. The violent periods were sometimes followed by prolonged and complete syncope. When I opened the door of his room he flung himself upon me with fury, but I remained motionless and seized him by the arm while I looked at him fixedly. At the end of several seconds his glance lost its fierceness, he began to tremble and fell to the floor, his eyes shut. I made some magnetic passes over him, and in less than half an hour he was in a hypnotic sleep. The treatment lasted two and a half months, during which I observed in him more than one interesting phenomenon. Since his cure, the patient has never had a relapse.

A letter from Monsieur Volterra to Count Gonomys, dated Zante, June 6, 1885, contains a complete affirmation of what has just been told concerning the Volterra family. The letter concludes as follows:

Before your arrival in Zante, I had no relations with you, although I had passed many years at Corfu as deputy of the legislative assembly. We had never spoken, and you had never said a word to my son. We had never thought of you or asked your help until I came to see you when you arrived at Zante as an army doctor, and begged you to save my son.

We owe his life first to you, then to hypnotism. I think it my duty to assure you of my sincere gratitude, and to sign myself

Your very affectionate and grateful

DEMETRIO VOLTERRA, COUNT CRISSOPLEVRI.

*Additional signatures:*

LAURA VOLTERRA [wife of Monsieur Volterra].

DIONISIO D. VOLTERRA, Count Crissoplevri.

ANASTASIO VOLTERRA [the recovered invalid].

C. VASSAPOULIS, Witness.

LORENZO MERCATI, Witness.

DEMETRIO, COUNT GUERINO, Witness.

Another case of hearing at a distance:

Dr. Balme of Nancy was caring for the Countess of L——, who was suffering from dyspepsia. She came to him for consultation and he never went to her house, which was situated outside of the town. Three days after one of her visits, on May 19, 1899, when he crossed his antechamber after returning home, he heard these words: "How ill I feel, and no one to help me!" Then he heard the sound of a falling body. The voice was that of Madame de L——. When he tried to verify his impression, he found that no one in the whole house had seen or heard this lady. He retired to his workroom, collected his thoughts and, having placed himself in a light state of hypnosis, he transported himself to the lady's presence. He saw all her actions and gestures and noted them minutely.

Madame de L—— came to see him and told him her impressions, which agreed on all points with those of the doctor. "After you had retired to your chamber," he asked her, "what was it you seemed to be searching for about you?"—"It seemed to me that some one was looking at me," she answered.

This case, which is worthy of having been watched by an experienced observer, led Monsieur Primot to the following reflections:

It certainly seems to have been a telepathic call which came from the invalid,—an appeal which was explained by her distress, and which was translated by the recipient into

the form of an auditory impression exercised upon his sub-consciousness. Dr. Balme replied to this by placing himself, through an effort of autosuggestion, in a state of hypnosis sufficient to make possible the exteriorization of his psychic center of perception, and by that very means his telæsthetic excursion to his patient's home. This interpretation is confirmed by her declaration that she had felt his presence. "It seemed to me," she said, "that some one was looking at me." In other words, there was on one side transmission of thought or sensation—that is to say, telepathic action, from the invalid to the doctor—and on the other side, in response to the transmitted thought, exteriorization by the doctor, in a state of semi-somnambulism, and the transference to the neighborhood of the patient of his psychic center of perception,—that is to say, telæsthetic action.

Is this word "transfer" exact and does it represent the actual conditions of the phenomenon? Perhaps the psychic organism has no need to be transferred from one point to another in order to see and feel effectively despite distance. But events took place as if he had really transferred himself and that is all that we can affirm with certainty. At bottom it makes little difference, for in whatever manner one interprets them they are none the less a striking and living proof of the extraordinary faculties and powers that belong to the psychic organism.<sup>1</sup>

Such hearing at a distance as we are now about to consider is inadmissible if one is not willing to recognize that the mind, the soul, our psychic entity (whatever may be the word we use) acts outside the body and the limits of the senses.

The author of the account, Mr. Rod Fryer ("Hallucinations télépathiques," page 293), writes:

January, 1883. A strange event took place in the autumn of the year 1879. One of my brothers was away from home, when one

<sup>1</sup> Primot, *Psychologie d'une conversion*, p. 448.

afternoon, at about half-past five, I was astonished to hear myself called distinctly by my name. I recognized the voice of my brother so clearly that I ran all over the house to find him; but as I did not find him, and knowing that he was forty miles from there, I ended by believing it an illusion, and thought no more of it. When my brother arrived, six days later, he told me that he had just escaped a very serious accident. As he was getting off the train his foot had slipped and he had fallen his entire length on the platform. "What is very curious," he said, "is that when I felt myself falling I called you." This fact did not strike me at the moment, but when I asked him at what hour it had happened he named an hour which exactly corresponded with that in which I had heard him.

When he was questioned, Mr. John E. E. Fryer, the victim of the accident, wrote as follows:

Newbridge Road, November 16, 1885. I was making a trip in 1879 and had to stop at Gloucester. As I got off the train I fell, and an employee of the railroad helped me to rise. He asked me if I had hurt myself and if any one was traveling with me. I answered, no, to both questions and asked him why he was so much interested. He answered: "Because you called out the name 'Rod.'"

When I reached home I related the incident, and my brother asked me the hour and the day. He then told me that he had heard me call him at that moment. He was so sure that it was my voice that he had searched carefully over the house.

The coincidence is so striking that its corollary follows with certainty. This voice crossed space as if through a telephone.

These are all just so many incontestable phenomena of telepathy, of psychic transmission, which show transcendent powers of the soul quite different from those of which we have learned through physiological psychology—sight and hearing at a distance by means of psychic waves.

I do not wish to repeat here what I have already said about the transmission of thoughts. The fact of mind-reading has been proved many times by serious experiments. Here is

one more case reported by Dr. G. de Messimy, and observed by him in a patient in a state of somnambulism:

My subject's lucidity went so far as even to read the thoughts of those present. . . . Having placed twelve members of the society before the subject . . . we asked each one of them to think freely of a chosen flower, without telling its name to any one. . . . Then turning toward the subject, we asked him to name out loud the flower each of these persons had thought about, and he named them all, without the least hesitation and without making a single mistake, as if he were reading from a book of human thought.

That is one experience from among a hundred of the same sort.<sup>1</sup>

The transmission of thought is as certain as the transmission of heat, light, electricity, and solar magnetism.

The telepathic vision is produced without the help of the eyes. Distance and material obstacles do not obstruct it.

It is as indifferent to time as it is to space. One sees a present, past, or future event. This psychological fact makes use of the power of the spirit, independent of its organism.

If, in opposition to the deduction affirmed here that these presentiments, these telepathic sensations prove the existence of the soul independently of the body, one put forward the hypothesis that these normal faculties may belong to the brain and not to a mental principle, and that they no more prove the individuality of the soul than does the dog's sense of smell or the instinct of the carrier-pigeon, we should answer that an attentive analysis of the facts brings every free mind to a contrary conclusion, for it concerns the exercise of the *thought* and not of the physical organism. We are here entirely in an invisible psychic world. Whether one attributes these perceptions to the "unconscious," to the "sub-conscious," or to the "subliminal," etc., the name matters

<sup>1</sup> See, among others, Dr. Dupouy, *Sciences occultes et physiologie psychique* (Paris, 1898), p. 125.

little. What we feel here is a spiritual entity in action; it is the *soul*.

It is not the retina nor the optic nerve, nor their connections with the brain that are employed. All the imaginable functions of any brain substance whatever cannot read the mind of another, nor perceive an event which is taking place at the antipodes, nor a scene which has not yet come to pass.

Are these transmissions carried out through ether? If they can be compared to light, as phenomena of the vibratory order, they nevertheless differ from it because light diminishes according to the square of the distance, while thought appears to be transmitted integrally, with the same intensity. Does an appropriate milieu serve for the transmission?

The modern theory of ether waves has been proved, but has the old Newtonian theory of the emissions themselves been really disproved? Do not certain emissions manifest themselves? Is not the repelling action of the sun in its favor? Has not the aurora borealis a solar emission as its origin? Do not the ions and electrons traverse space?

We are going to examine, in the following chapter, irrefutable proofs of mental vision, outside of telepathic transmissions; but it is very difficult to decide, in many cases, whether telepathy, the correspondence of thought, is entirely foreign to this vision at a distance. Here, also, among a hundred other cases, is a vision of death at a time when this seemed most unlikely.

The author of the following letter tells how he saw, in a dream, the death of his father:

Les Moutiers: October, 1911.

For two years I have intended to write you about the following event, which resembles in many points those which you relate in your works. I shall be obliged to you if you do not publish my name.

In January, 1909, I was a notary at Saint-Martin-des-Noyers, Vendée, and I had just been negotiating for the practice at Moutiers-

les-Mauxfaits, where my parents were living, of which I have since become the incumbent.

On January 9, 1909, I had come to Moutiers to spend a few hours with my parents, whom I left in good health. A few days afterward my mother sent me word of herself and my father. They were both well. On the night of January 30th-31st, I dreamed that I arrived at my parents' home. In the drawing-room I saw a crowd of people leaning over an improvised bed and I saw my father stretched out on a mattress which had been placed on boards.

I began to weep, which awoke my wife, who was sleeping by my side. She, in turn, woke me and asked what was the matter with me. I answered: "It is nothing, I have just had a senseless dream; I dreamed that Papa was dead."

We fell asleep again without anxiety, after having noticed that it was half-past five in the morning.

The next day I learned that my father had been taken ill at eleven o'clock the evening before and had died at half-past five, at the precise moment when I had had this nightmare: they had laid him out on a bed like that which I had seen in my dream, and in the drawing-room, as the apparition had shown me.

What rôle did telepathy play in this vision at a distance? Our mass of documentary evidence is really too rich. The tree of the new science has a quantity of branches, each one of which demands a special study.

Here is another case of vision at a distance, remarkably precise for a child of seven, which was sent to Professor Richet by Dr. Jean, a major in the medical service during the late war.<sup>1</sup> He wrote:

About ten years ago I had under treatment, in my village, at Cogolis, Var, a young patient about seven years old. One morning I was urgently summoned to see the little invalid. The frightened mother told me that the child had had a sudden paroxysm of delirium. He had awakened, as usual, and all seemed to be going well, when at about ten o'clock he rose up in his bed, terrified by a sudden

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1919, p. 20.

hallucination. He saw water everywhere and began to cry for help, for his father was drowning, he said. His father was away from home. He had gone to Nice, where his brother lived, and was to spend several days there. When I arrived the child was calm, but insisted that he had seen his father drown.

A telegram from the brother soon urgently called the widow (for such she really was) to Nice, where she learned that her husband had been drowned at about ten in the morning, in trying to save his brother, who had been seized with a cramp while swimming in the ocean. His last words had been, "our poor children."

One more occurrence. A teacher in the department of the Var, who asked me not to print his name, wrote me:

One morning, on awaking, one of my relatives said to his wife, who was lying beside him: "I must get up at once, I have just seen that some thieves have entered our fields. They are eating and drinking. I'm going after them."

"But you are mad," said his wife. "How are you able to see all that from here? Lie down."

"No, no! I saw it."

He persisted, took his gun, ran into his field, and brought back as prisoners to the town hall two tramps who had broken their way in.

F., at S., Var, January 23, 1912.

(Letter 2217.)

What part does the transmission of thought play here? Without doubt, the thieves must have been thinking about the proprietor and must also have thought about not being caught. On the other hand, it may have been a case of vision at a distance, without telepathic action, and we could have included it in the following chapter. All the cases in this collection of evidence are closely related.

We usually imagine that all observations of telepathic communication date from our own epoch. This is an error. Thus, for example, we can read in a work printed in 1752

(“Dissertations,” by Langlet-Dufresnoy, Volume II, Part 2, page 88) this sentence: “In dreams objects appear to us in far-away places, through the affinity of the spirit with the external air. *Persons a hundred leagues away have known of the death of their friends at the moment of their decease.*”

We can see from this that facts recorded by Petrarch and other observers were already accepted by certain philosophers of the eighteenth century, just as we accept them to-day. We do not admit their interpretations. Our own are doubtless worth a little more. But let us not deceive ourselves too much in regard to their intrinsic value.

We imagine also that such strange instances are rare, most rare, doubtful, and uncertain. That also is an error. My conversations, during half a century, have shown me that at least one person in ten knows, either for himself or from those near to him, of a case of telepathy, of premonition, of a warning of death, a sight of the future, in a word of psychic action; but in general—I do not know why—they conceal them, they veil them as one would something that cannot be admitted. This is all the result of a false education and imaginary fears.

Telepathy has more foundation, a more universal and solid base than has any religion. The facts on which has been founded the Christian religion, with its different sects (Catholicism, Protestantism, Orthodoxy, etc.), or those that are at the basis of Judaism, of Islam, of Buddhism, and the other religions that divide humanity, have been less established, less carefully observed, less completely demonstrated, than the psychic facts which we are studying in this work. It is therefore easily understood how certain minds, anxious to reach the truth, should have placed their hopes in the positive studies we are pursuing here, as others have placed theirs in religion.

One word more. In the same way that the spectral analysis of light permits us to discover through the light-waves the

chemical constitution of bodies lodged in the atmosphere of the stars, millions of millions of miles from our eyes, it is not impossible that an analysis of psychic radiations should permit us to enter one day into communication with the life and thoughts of beings inhabiting these distant regions.

The fact of the communication of thought by mental suggestion at very great distances, which is verified to-day, indicates the possibility of a sort of radiation of the human consciousness, from one star to another, by means of specially subtle waves.

## VII

### VISION WITHOUT EYES—THE SPIRIT'S VISION, EXCLUSIVE OF TELEPATHIC TRANSMISSIONS

Events are of most use when they contradict rather than when they support the established theories.

SIR HUMPHRY DAVY.

**I**F events that cannot be disputed, proving the action of the will without the intervention of speech or of any external sign, as well as the transmission of thought at a distance, show that there is in us a mental being, thinking, willing, and carrying its action beyond the boundaries of our organic senses, the no less certain proofs of *mental vision* are going to bring us the same evidence, independent of these events but confirming and completing them.

This special subject is in itself so rich and so backed by evidence that when I was studying it, a few years ago, I was led to consecrate to it a whole volume which is not yet published. I shall select here a few significant documents, exclusive of those concerning the telepathic transmissions that we have just examined, which, nevertheless, can at times be linked to them. We have here, for our study, a curious category of special events.

This is surely one of the unknown faculties of the soul that it is most interesting to examine. Certain beings are endowed with it, in their normal state, when they are not dreaming or in a state of natural or artificial somnambulism, but it is especially under the conditions of sleep that we can observe these phenomena.

This vision at a distance, whether it be direct, or through

reading the thought of the brain, seems to me evidence of the existence in us of a lucid, immaterial, distinctly personal element. To pretend that brain matter secretes thought is sufficiently audacious; but to assert that the brain sends out thought to seek that of other men, to comment on it and to understand it, is even more extravagant. It is to confound the effect with the cause, for here again the thought shows itself as cause and not as effect. Its personal activity is evident.

If there is an assemblage of words qualified to make a man of science roar with indignation, it is assuredly this: "*Vision without eyes*," but with the forehead, the ear, the stomach, the tips of the fingers, the feet, the knees, by the inner vision, through opaque bodies, or at the distance of many kilometers. What an untenable assertion and what a paradox! The forehead, the stomach, the hands, the feet, the knees are not organs of vision: vision does not operate through them; it is the mind that sees.

The biologist who knows the marvelous optic apparatus of the eye, so excellently adapted to the reception of images, cannot admit that these images can be perceived without this suitable mechanism, this masterpiece of ancient organic evolution, from the rudimentary eye of the trilobites of the primordial geological ages up to man.

For my own part, I was unwilling for a great many years to undertake any examination whatever of this question, despite all that was affirmed by my friends the psychologists, and of what I myself had come across in the works on hypnotism. An astronomer is the last person who would be disposed to undertake the study of such a problem, and I could not help thinking of the somnambulists of the country fairs as well as of all the tricks of the pretended readers of thoughts, whose drawing-room exhibitions amuse us.

Nevertheless, after my investigation of 1899 into psychic phenomena, I was led to publish, in the eighth chapter of my

work "L'Inconnu," forty-nine examples worthy of belief of vision in dreams, from a distance, and I chose the part of studying freely, and without any preconceived ideas, this most important subject. In this book I was able to make the following statement: "It is possible to see without eyes, hear without ears, not from hypersensitiveness of the sense of sight or hearing, for these records prove the contrary, but by an inner, psychic sense, a mental sense."

Vision from a distance and "second sight" are irrefutable evidence of this transcendent faculty belonging to the soul and not to the molecular, chemical, and mechanical agency of the brain.

If we open the dictionaries we shall find nothing opposite the words *second sight*, *double sight*, *clairvoyance* but the most complete skepticism with entire ignorance of their phenomena.

The events which we are about to examine confirm the premises which I published twenty years ago. The objections that we have all brought forward, attributing these phenomena to mistakes, illusion, trickery, pretense, fraud, juggling, and anything else one can imagine, disappear in smoke and from now on let the truth shine forth in all its brilliancy.

The same thing is true of perception by the sense of touch, which is admissible only in certain special cases.

The thesis which I maintain here is of the utmost importance from the philosophic point of view, for it results in the suppression of the false principle of Aristotle, of Locke, of Condillac, and of the Sensationist School. "*Nihil est in intellectu quin prius fuerit in sensu*," or, in other words, "Everything that exists in our consciousness comes to us through our senses." But if it is possible to see without eyes, the seeing is done by inner psychic faculties, by an unknown force, independent of sense and normal vision. In this way the understanding receives impressions that have not reached us through the senses.

We shall prove that several cases of sight at a distance or of hidden things are not due to the reading of the thought in the brain of another; however, in these cases also, mind-reading is again mental vision. I am not very fond of neologisms, and it seems to me that too many new words are being created in the psychic sciences, which are still so rudimentary; but as we are speaking here of the sight of things that are hidden from our eyes, the word *cryptoscopy* seems to be pointed out to indicate this sort of study (*χρυπτος*, hidden, *σκοπεῖν*, see).

The first actual observation of this curious psychological subject, which caught my attention long ago, is the circumstantial account given by the famous encyclopedia of Diderot and d'Alembert after the word *Somnambulism*.

This account is guaranteed by a witness whom we are almost surprised to find here, the Archbishop of Bordeaux. Here is the very tale of the encyclopedist:

This prelate told me that when he was in the seminary he had known a young priest who was a somnambulist. As he was curious to understand the nature of this malady, he went every evening to his chamber as soon as he knew the priest was asleep, and observed what happened. Well, this priest arose, took some paper, and composed and wrote sermons.

When he had finished a page, he read it over aloud, from one end to the other (if we call "reading" this action which was done without the eyes); and if something displeased him, he cut it out and wrote the correction in above, with much good sense.

I had seen the beginning of one of these sermons, that for Christmas. It appeared to me well done and correctly written; but there was one surprising correction. Having put in one place "this divine infant," he thought, on reading it over, that he had better put the word "adorable" instead of "divine." In order to do this he erased the last word and placed the first exactly above it; afterward, he saw the word *ce* [this] could not go with *adorable*; therefore he very cleverly added a *t* to the preceding letters, so that one read *cet adorable enfant* [this adorable child].

The eye-witness of these facts, in order to assure himself that the somnambulist made no use of his eyes, thrust a cardboard under his chin in such a way as to shut off the sight of the paper on the table: the somnambulist continued to write without noticing it.

I am quoting this account, which is already old, especially in order to recall to the attention of my readers the innumerable instances that have since been attested, of sight at a distance, independent of the visual organ, *by subjects in a state of hypnotic sleep, either natural or induced*. It dates from the year 1778, and I read it in 1856 (in Diderot's own part of the country).

These examples of sight in the darkness, by somnambulists or the hypnotized, are not so much rare as completely ignored. Many persons know about them. For my part, I had occasion to meet,—in 1866, at the Château of Clefmont, in the Haute-Marne,—a young girl of twenty years who, without knowing anything about it, often got up during the night and continued in complete darkness some work begun during the day, either dressmaking or embroidery. We may compare this visual power to that possessed by cats, by bats, by owls, by screech-owls, but in their case it would not be mental vision. These animals have a peculiar retina, and several of them are blind during the day. We can also ask ourselves, as the intercepting screen intercepts nothing, if this vision does not penetrate through opaque bodies as the eye of photography does with the help of the X-ray. That would be a rather daring hypothesis. We shall see that it does not apply to the following experiences.

Let us remain for the moment in the eighteenth century. Science is indeed slow in its advance.

In 1785, at the time of Mesmer, the Marquis of Puységur made some curious and painstaking experiments in artificial somnambulism, produced by hypnotism. Let us recall one among them.

He had hypnotized a young lad, fourteen years old, named Amé. Here is what he wrote concerning him:

In replying to my question as to where the seat of his trouble was he told me that a year before he had strained himself, carrying some stones against his stomach, and that for six months a humor had been gathering which caused him continuous pain.

"Do you believe you will recover soon?" I asked him.

"Yes, Monsieur," he answered, taking my hand. "Day after tomorrow, at half-past four in the afternoon, I shall be cured." The result of this information was that I had to hypnotize him only twice,—that is to say, the next day at half-past ten, and a second time the day after.

He had severe pain in his head. Questioned as to whence came the pain, he answered, "From the stomach."—"Is there communication between the stomach and the brain?"—"Yes."—"What is it?"—"It is a tube."—"What route does it take?" For his only answer he indicated the path of the great left sympathetic nerve. When asked what he saw his pain with, he answered, "With the tips of the *fingers*."—"So you have to touch yourself to know about your pain?"—"Yes."

The next day the young man gave certain information about the "distinct magnetic properties of the different fingers of the hand." We do not need to examine this question here. But let us listen to Puységur:

What this boy told me about the varying powers of the fingers to produce more or less of an effect upon an invalid, struck me particularly. Monsieur Mesmer had told us the same thing, and certainly this young boy could not have had the least idea of it. If this phenomenon actually occurs, we shall know of it with certainty only because of the agreements in the reports of the somnambulists.

As for the vision of the somnambulists, it differs a great deal. Little Amé, for example, said he needed his fingers to see, or rather to feel where his trouble was. He is the only one who has told me of this peculiarity; all the rest can understand themselves very well without this means and make free use of the word "see" instead of the

words "know" or "feel" such or such a thing. We must remember, however, that these are peasants speaking. When I have happened to put educated, or partly educated, persons into a state of hypnotic sleep, I have always heard them complain of the poverty of the language to express their sensations, and make use of the expression "to know," "to be quite sure" of what they were telling me, without being able to find words expressive enough for their ideas.

Whatever may be the sort of sensation which the most simple class of men designate by the expression "see," when in a state of somnambulism, I believe that the phenomena of our vision when in a natural state can give us only a slight idea of it. Our vision is nothing but a sensation which we procure from external objects. It is by the path of the nerves that all our sensations come to us; and of all our nerves only that which we call the *optic* can, by its construction, procure for us the sensation of sight. All external objects, none the less, present themselves equally to the other nerves; but unless there is immediate contact, they produce no effect whatever. If, therefore, in the state of somnambulism, things happen differently; if the somnambulist, although his eyes are tightly closed, walks, avoids the objects with which he meets, reads, writes, and, in short, does all he can and even more than he can in his natural state, he certainly must be able to see,—not by the optic nerve, as it is concealed, but by means of other nerves which have become so sensitive that they bring to his soul a sensation absolutely similar to that of vision. How does this vision operate? What are the nerves which procure it in this singular state? This I do not venture to determine; but quite certainly the phenomenon exists, as without it the somnambulists would not see.

But I do not believe that any one will be able to deny them this faculty.<sup>1</sup>

So speaks the Marquis of Puységur, friend of Mesmer. We shall see later that this identification of sight with touch will be taken up by other experimenters, apparently without their suspecting the existence of these early accounts. As for me, I shall not discuss any explanatory hypothesis at present,

<sup>1</sup> Puységur, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire et à l'établissement du Magnétisme animal* (Paris, 1786 and 1809), p. 95-107.

and I shall be satisfied to say with Newton, "*Hypotheses non fingo*." Let us first examine the facts themselves,—these facts still so much debated to-day.

These observations have continued during the hundred and thirty-four years that separate us from the previous era. A great number are without interest, only partially verified, full of illusions and errors; but others have undeniable value. They prove that there exist processes of understanding different from the normal processes.

My readers are already familiar with examples of this sort, published in my book "*L'Inconnu*." Some of them are so characteristic that I cannot help giving a brief account of them here.

We can see (page 496, XLIII) the undeniable anatomical observation of an operation, the removal of the breast, performed by Dr. Cloquet upon Madame Plantin, who, in a hypnotic state, felt absolutely no pain, and talked tranquilly with the operator, while her daughter, Madame Lagandée, also in a hypnotic state, saw the interior of her mother's body. The mother died the next morning and the autopsy proved, down to the least details, the exactitude of this mental vision.

"Do you think," asked the doctor, "that we can keep your mother alive for long?"—"No, she will die early to-morrow morning, without pain and without suffering."—"What are the affected parts?"—"The right lung has shrunk up; it is surrounded by a membrane like glue; it swims in a quantity of water. But it is especially there," said the somnambulist, pointing to the lower corner of the shoulder bone, "that my mother suffers. The right lung no longer breathes; it is dead. The left lung is sound; that is how my mother lives. There is a little water in the envelop of the heart [the pericardium]."—"How are the organs of the abdomen?"—"The stomach and the intestines are healthy; the liver is white and discolored on the surface."

The next day, in fact, the invalid died, and an autopsy was performed. Madame Lagandée, in a hypnotic sleep, repeated in a firm and unhesitating voice what she had already told Messieurs Cloquet and Chapelain. The latter then led her into the drawing-room that adjoined the room in which they were to perform the autopsy, the door of which was tightly closed, and there, following the knife in the surgeon's hand, she said to those who were staying with her: "Why do they make an incision in the middle of the chest, since the effusion is on the right?"

The information given by the somnambulist was found to be entirely correct, and the official report of the autopsy was written out by Dr. Dronsart.

The narrator, Brière de Boismont, added that the witnesses of this event are all alive and occupy an honorable position in the medical world. Their communications have been interpreted in different ways, but a doubt has never been raised as to their veracity.

Nevertheless, I have seen grave "scholars" burst out laughing while listening to these "cock-and-bull stories."

So we have here an undeniable record of mental vision. We could add to it the story of that chambermaid who, having been put into a hypnotic sleep when her master had gone down to the cellar after a bottle of wine, cried out that he had just slipped on the stairs and had fallen. When he came up he found his wife aware of his fall and of the details of his subterranean trip: the somnambulist had related them as they had happened. ("L'Inconnu," page 499.)

The wife of a cavalry colonel, who was hypnotized by her husband, became a somnambulist; during the course of the treatment an indisposition obliged the husband to ask an officer of his regiment to help him. This went on for only eight or ten days. Some time after, during a hypnotic séance, the husband, having put his wife into a hypnotic sleep, asked her to think about this officer, of whom they had had no

news. "Ah, the unhappy man!" she cried. "I see him! He is at X——. He wants to kill himself! He is taking up a pistol! Run quickly!" The colonel mounted his horse, but when he arrived the officer had already committed suicide. (*Ibid.*, page 500.)

We have also seen the story of a young girl who was operated upon in 1868 at Strasburg by Dr. Kœrbelé, who had described in minute detail to this incredulous surgeon a cyst on the ovary, which was later found by the operator and agreed exactly with the description.

These numerous and widely different experiences, which have multiplied since the time of Mesmer up to our day, constitute a veritable library, which I do not wish to expatiate upon. But despite all the reserves, all the discussions, all the negations, all the battles of the academies of medicine of all countries, these experiences are instructive. I have followed them, under all sorts of conditions, for more than half a century.

I shall follow, in this recital, the chronological order.

When I was about twenty, at the age when you think you ought to conquer the world and when you feel an unquenchable desire to understand and solve everything, I was very much interested in a rather odd man, the writer Henri Delaage, a mystic dreamer, an occultist initiated into the sect of Saint-Martin, the "unknown philosopher," a grandson of Choptal, who was one of Napoleon's ministers. His conversation was always picturesque and often instructive. For a long time, he had studied very attentively the phenomena of hypnotism. Here are some of the events of which he knew at first hand, and of which, for that matter, he has spoken in his works:

Alphonse Esquiros, who was amusing himself one day in hypnotizing his own mother, asked her this question: "Does chance exist? Could you, for example, determine the chances in a lottery?"—"I do not think it would be hard," she answered.—"Try!" Here

the hypnotized woman seemed to make a great effort; her struggle brought a slow and difficult response. "I see a number," she said at last.—"What is it?"—"Eighty-nine. It is good; it is going to appear."—"Do you see others?"—"No."—"Why?"—"God does not wish it."

The number 89 did, in fact, appear at the next drawing.<sup>1</sup>

The formulas change. This occurred about 1848. To-day we should no longer say, "God does not wish it," but simply, "I see nothing more."

This may all have been due to chance alone. But we shall see further on, in the chapter on "Knowledge of the Future," a premonitory reading of four numbers by Barton Larry. Here there are 2,555,189 chances against 1!

Delaage reports also the following happening, which took place at the home of the Vicomtesse de Saint-Mars, with the famous Alexis, a clairvoyant subject, at the time very famous, who had been hypnotized by Marcillet:

Victor Hugo was present at this séance, with his habitual curiosity, and had prepared at his home a package, hidden in the midst of which was a single word printed in large characters. The package was first turned about in all directions by the somnambulist, who, at the end of a moment, spelled out "*P-o-l-i-poli*. I do not see the next letter, but I see those that come after: *i-q-u-e*—eight letters—no, nine—*t-politique*; that is surely it. The word is printed on light-green paper; Monsieur Hugo has taken it from a pamphlet which I see at his home." Marcillet at once asked Victor Hugo if it were true, and the poet hastened to do justice to the lucidity of the subject. From this time on, second sight counted Victor Hugo among the number of its most illustrious defenders.

In our epoch, we call this exercise "thought-reading," and we think we have found an explanation in this! Let us ad-

<sup>1</sup> Henri Delaage, *Les Mystères du Magnétisme*, p. 114.

mit, if we wish, a transmission of cerebral waves; but is not that mental vision?

Delaage told this story in the book that I have just mentioned. He continues it in the following account, which brings on the scene one of our contemporaries of the last century whom I also knew:

Alphonse Karr, one of the men whom it would seem almost impossible to mystify, because the sharpness of his wits is proverbial in Europe, has related what occurred to him with the somnambulist Alexis:

"I had come accompanied by several of my friends, at the home of one of whom we had dined. On leaving the house I had broken a branch of flowering white azalea, and I had stuck this branch in an empty champagne bottle.

"The man with whom we had dined said to the somnambulist, 'Do you wish to come to my house?'—'Yes'—'What do you see in my drawing-room?'—'A table with papers, plates, and glasses on it.'—'There is also something on this table which I placed there especially because of you: try to see it.'—'I see a bottle,' said Alexis. 'There is some fire; no, it is not fire, but it is like fire. The bottle is empty, but there is something which shines. Ah! it is a champagne bottle! Something is above it, it is the stopper—the end that is in the bottle is thinner than the other end. It is white, it is like paper—wait—' and he drew a bottle with a branch of azalea, and exclaimed: 'Ah! it is a flower, a bouquet of flowers. What beautiful branches.'"

In these two experiences it is difficult not to agree that the somnambulist *saw at a distance without his eyes*, either in the brain of Victor Hugo or of Alphonse Karr, or in some other manner. Let us continue a little longer to read Delaage's little book, which is almost an official report of this interesting period. Let us remember the facts, without troubling about the theories:

The press of October 17, 1847, contained a long article on a

hypnotic séance in which the somnambulist Alexis had read not only closed books, through several pages, but even concealed letters; in a word, he had shown that the magnetic fluid, by illuminating with a supernatural splendor the subject which had been magnetized, permitted the spirit to pierce through the most opaque objects with an ease that left far behind it all the power with which the imagination has endowed magic.

This séance was endorsed with the name of Alexander Dumas and took place at his country house in the presence of honorable men who had attested the truth of the facts related in the written report by signing their names to it.

The astonishment was general. Dumas, curious to produce the phenomena of which he had been a witness, let us persuade him to, himself, magnetize Alexis. The spirit of the somnambulist told him the history of a ring that had been given to him; told him the day and the hour when the man who had confided it to him had become its possessor; then, like those invincible birds which cleave the air, his soul borne on the wings of another's will, he described with admirable precision Tunis and its environment, of which the name alone was known to him in his waking state: in a word, space and time had been conquered. A great number of papers copied the account of these séances; others protested. As they were not able to attack the honor and uprightness of the men who certified that they had seen these prodigies with their own eyes, they made haste to ridicule them, by representing them as honest men whose simplicity had been exploited. They declared that with the help of skilful ingenuity Robert Houdin produced the same marvels every evening in the rooms of the Palais-Royal. Unfortunately, the illustrious prestidigitator had already written a letter to the Marquis de Mirville, in which he admitted the powerlessness of his art to produce these prodigies, and in which he certified on his honor that these phenomena were not produced by any subtlety of a clever sleight of hand.

Here is an extract from this letter:

"During a séance at the home of Marcillet, the following event took place:

"I unsealed a pack of cards which I had brought with me, and the case which I had marked so that it could not be changed. I shuffled them. It was my turn to deal. I dealt with all the precautions of

a man skilled in the finesse of his art. It was a useless precaution. Alexis stopped me by pointing out a card which I had just placed before him on the table. 'I have a king,' he said. 'You know nothing about it, as the trump card has not yet appeared!'—'You will see,' he answered. 'Continue.' I did in fact turn up the eight of spades, and his card was the king of spades. The game was continued in a rather curious manner, for he told me the cards that I ought to play, although my own cards were at the time hidden under the table and tightly clasped in my hand. For each of the cards I played he put down one from his own hand without turning it over, and it was always in perfect agreement with the one I had played myself.

"I therefore returned from this séance as astonished as I well might be, and persuaded that neither chance nor skill could have produced such marvelous results.

"Be good enough to receive, etc.

"ROBERT HOUDIN,

"Paris: May 15, 1847."

The celebrated prestidigitor in this way vindicated hypnotism from the attacks of which it remained the perpetual target, by declaring publicly that his art was powerless to realize this sort of miracles. He proclaimed his convictions in obedience to his conscience.

Thus spoke Delaage. Assuredly the somnambulist did not see with his eyes the cards that were held hidden under the table by a fellow-player, who had already been warned, and whose value as a critic cannot be disputed.

It is not uninteresting to record this reminiscence of the souvenirs of Delaage, despite his ideas and his old-fashioned opinions. I have been far from sharing all of these opinions. Thus, for example, he wrote (page 144): "To the number of privileges lost by man after the original sin, we must place in the first line the possibility of having intercourse with spirits." But who to-day can admit original sin? A little further on he declares that the doctrine of the divinity of Christ cannot be attacked. He is a very good Catholic,

though, as to cabalistic mysticism, which is hardly orthodox.

We no longer speak the language of this epoch (1847-67); we no longer use the words "fluid magnetism," "devil," "soul borne on the wings of another's will," "supernatural divination,"—expressions that have fallen into disuse; but *we study the same problems.*

The difficulty, in this study, is to remain impartial and to keep an absolute independence. This does not generally happen. Each one brings to such an examination preconceived ideas which vitiate the freedom of the reasoning.

Apropos of seeing a hand of cards, when they are hidden, we may read the following in the work of Podmore ("Apparitions and Thought-Transference," published in 1894 and reprinted in 1915. It is this latter edition which I am considering):

The celebrated Alexis Didier pretended to read when blindfolded with cotton and a tight bandage, played a game of écarté by naming the cards turned down on the table, deciphered the words in a closed envelope, or in the books that were brought him, and revealed what had been shut up in packages. His success was so great that the famous prestidigitator Robert Houdin visited him in 1847 and declared himself convinced. But Alexis was a professional and had an associate in the person of his hypnotist, Marcillet. There can hardly be any doubt that all these events ought to be attributed to the exercise of a normal vision, operating under unusual and imperfectly understood conditions. It is probable that in experiments of this sort the subjects themselves were often unconscious of the means by which the knowledge reached them and in complete good faith declared themselves to be in possession of supernatural powers.<sup>1</sup>

Frank Podmore, a well-known psychic author, one of the founders of the Society for Psychical Research, is convinced that all these phenomena, including apparitions, are explained

<sup>1</sup> *Apparitions and Thought-Transference* (London, 1915), p. 175.

by thought-transference, and he explains them all by this theory. According to him, Alexis received the communication through his hypnotist, Marcillet, or from his partner, who without trickery, but by looking, innocently transmitted their cerebral impressions.

An American psychist no less well known than Podmore, James Hyslop, professor at Columbia University, has also considered this same game of cards, and here is his interpretation: <sup>1</sup>

Alexis Didier mystified even Robert Houdin, the prince of prestidigitators and illusionists. Didier was employed by a man who had the reputation of a gentleman. He apparently read cards turned face down upon the table, sentences out of a closed book, etc. But in the absence of any verified report as to the precautions taken to exclude fraud, we have really no reason to see in it anything extraordinary: it is simply an example of the way in which a credulous public can be duped.

Thus, Podmore and Hyslop imagine that Victor Hugo, who studied Alexis in order to get positive information, Alphonse Karr, whose keen and critical spirit were alike known to me, Alexander Dumas, Henri Delaage, Robert Houdin, were poor observers and let themselves be duped. "It would appear from them that Marcillet saw the cards, read the notes, and communicated it all to his subject, either by skill or by unconscious transmission of thought." But it was not at all in this fashion that these things came to pass.

They have also supposed that there were tricks of sleight of hand. This is an inadmissible supposition, according to Robert Houdin himself. The trick of which I have spoken is well known, for that matter, and I have seen it performed many times in my own drawing-room, by the successors of Robert Houdin, Cazeneuve, and Jacobs. In this game of cards, the prestidigitator *always conquers his adversary*, with-

<sup>1</sup> *Enigmas of Psychical Research* (Boston, 1906), p. 274.

out any mystery of second sight. But in this case the game is prepared; the cards are placed in a certain order; the prestidigitator shuffles, but very skilfully, without changing the order; the partner cuts, but the former has prepared the cut; and in fact it is all very simple for such tapering fingers as those of Jacobs, and even for thick fingers like those of Cazeneuve. In my drawing-room I have had such good observers as Admiral Mouchez, Félix Tisserand, directors of the Observatoire, General Parmentier, Hervé Faye, eminent scholars, who, despite their scientific titles, played cards very well (I have never known how), stupefied by the fellow-player who at once took their tricks and knew their card every time in advance. But this trick of cards cannot be carried out with a pack bought from a shop, and still unopened, and as for affirming that Marcillet was the confederate of Alexis, that is a pure supposition, untenable to those who have known of the powers of Alexis in a state of hypnosis (of which one can learn, among other sources, from the *Memoirs of Lafontaine*).

It is quite true that the methods of observation have not always been scrupulously accurate and that the conclusions have not always been well weighed; but that is not a reason to reject everything and to refuse to separate the good grain from the chaff. The supra-normal faculties of Alexis cannot be disputed.

On the whole, to Podmore these cases of mental vision are transmission of thought. For Hyslop the particular case is very doubtful; the other cases which he has examined seem to him both certain and inexplicable by any theory, including telepathy, and he has a tendency to attribute them to communications from the souls of the dead. "Spiritualistic elements are generally associated with clairvoyant incidents."

I do not wish to maintain any hypothesis, for the observations are not yet sufficient; science is not made in a day, and

astronomy wandered for millions of years before reaching the truth. It seems to me that what is necessary before everything is to establish the absolute reality of still disputed facts. It is not impossible that either the transmissions of subconscious thoughts or telepathic cerebral waves are concerned in these cases.

This sight of the cards, while in a state of hypnosis, cannot, despite all negations, be contested. It has often been verified. We find in a certain number of accounts, worthy of all confidence, the corroboration of card-players who played with their eyes tightly closed.

In his "*Lettres sur le magnétisme et le somnambulisme*," published in 1840, Dr. Frapart wrote what follows to a friend:

I have already told you that Monsieur Ricard had promised to bring to my house, provisionally, Calyste, his best somnambulist, to put him to sleep before the persons whom I should invite, and to make him play cards with his eyes bandaged: then, if he was in good condition, to put him through other experiments quite as incomprehensible and marvelous.

So yesterday the séance promised by Monsieur Ricard took place, in the presence of sixty persons, all of whom, except for Dr. Teste, were incredulous. I will tell you about what happened.

As soon as Calyste was asleep, or seemed asleep—for I know of no positive sign of sleep—two strangers each laid a handful of cotton wadding on his eyes and over these a large silk handkerchief, the ends of which were brought forward toward the nose and tied. Then we made sure that the bandage was tightly tied, well placed, and that along its lower border—an all-important precaution—the cotton formed a thick pad which was an impenetrable obstacle to sight. At once eight packs of cards were brought in, still intact; we chose one by chance, tore open the envelop, and began. Monsieur Ricard did not touch the somnambulist, did not speak to him, and it would have been impossible for him to see the hand of the person who was playing. When matters had been arranged like this,

everything went on as if between two skilful and wide-awake persons. In this way the somnambulist named the cards which he held and those of his adversary.

Such is the fact. Three persons took turns, each of them playing two games, so that a hundred cards passed before Calyste, who often named them and always saw them, as he always played what it was best to play.

Was this experience the result of sleight of hand?

But we were all of us upon our guard, and we scrutinized everything, fingered everything, analyzed everything. For example, did the bandage have some imperceptible fissure? No, for it was composed of two handfuls of cotton wadding and of a silk handkerchief which skeptical and skilful people had adjusted.

Was the bandage adjusted in such a fashion that the somnambulist could see below it? Besides the cotton placed over the eyes beneath the bandage, some had been pushed in from below, under the bandage, so that the cotton formed a wad.

Had the cards been prepared? No, for the cases of all the packs still carried the revenue stamps.

Did not the somnambulist recognize the cards by touching them? No, for he named those of his adversary without touching them.

Did not the hypnotist have some means of communication with the somnambulist? No, for the hypnotist did not speak, did not move, did not look at the cards, and did not touch Calyste.

Finally, was it possible for some one by some sort of means to show Calyste the proper play from his own hand? No, for every one remained silent in anxious expectancy, which was soon followed by astonishment and admiration.

Therefore, we were as certain as it is possible to be that we were not deceived in regard to the bandage, the cards, the somnambulist, the hypnotist or the adversary himself.

We see that this experience antedated that of Robert Houdin, reported by Delaage. We can cite many others, all of which resemble one another in this sense, that those who deny the whole thing, as a foregone conclusion, can always pretend that the experimenters were tricked by those more

skilful than they. Such idle discussions would waste our time.

A very skeptical magistrate, Monsieur Séguier,<sup>1</sup> went incognito to the house of Alexis. "Where was I at two o'clock this afternoon?" he asked.

"In your study. It is cluttered with papers—twists of tobacco—drawings—and little machines. There is a pretty little bell on your desk."

"No, there is no bell on my desk."

"I am not mistaken. You have one—I see it—to the left of the writing-table—on the desk."

"By Heaven! I must go to the bottom of this thing!"

Monsieur Séguier rushed home and found a little bell on his desk which Madame Séguier had placed there during the afternoon.

<sup>1</sup> Séguier was not a man to let himself appear a fool. For nearly forty years, from 1811 to 1848, he, as First President, had been at the head of the Paris law courts. "He was quite at home in the palace and let it be clearly seen," wrote Monsieur Henri Robert. Under Louis Philippe he was a little old man, dry and lively. He heard the advocates with visible impatience. The *mortier* over his eyes, as if he were in ambuscade behind his desk, he seemed to lie in wait for the litigants. He interrupted the lawyers, criticized them, contradicted them sharply, altered their pleadings, and was pitiless toward those who showed themselves mediocre or whom he considered to be so. He also distributed praise: "Monsieur Paillet pleaded yesterday in a perfect manner; I say it to the honor of all the bar." He had once replied to a minister of Charles X, Monsieur de Peyronnet, "The court executes judgments, but does not perform services." One day, at the opening of an audience, he said: "I do not see Monsieur Gicquel. Advocates should never do anything but attend to their affairs." "Mr. President," the barrister who was just arriving all out of breath, answered from the back of the room: "I was at the *Cour de cassation*, occupied in defending one of your judgments."—"It was needless; my judgments defend themselves." "Which has not prevented them from just being reversed." At another time a barrister asked for a delay because his child had just died. The learned and pompous Séguier refused and added: "The day on which the presiding judge was married or lost his wife he came to the audience just the same, and when a priest loses his father he ought to say mass none the less. We will hear the barrister who is present at the audience."

Such is the simple account. Vision at a distance! Here there was evidently no reading of the mind of the questioner, or suggestion, of thought; which does, however, seem to be the case in the instance that follows.

Delaage tells how the Comte de Saint-Aulaire, the well-known diplomat, after having called hypnotism "foolish trash" came to make honorable amends. He wagered he could prove it was impossible for Alexis, in spite of his pretensions, to read a well-concealed paper, and he went to him with a thick envelop, substantially and skilfully fastened and sealed.

"What is there under this fold?" asked the ambassador.

"There is a paper folded four times."

"And on this paper?"

"A half-line of writing."

"Can you read it?"

"Certainly. And when I have read it you will retract what you have written?"

"I do not think so."

"I am sure of it."

"If you succeed I will promise you henceforth to believe whatever you wish."

"Then believe at once, for you have written, 'I do not believe.' "

The fame of this seer is readily understood, and we can understand how Delaage should have written his special little book (1847) "*Le sommeil magnétique expliqué par le somnambule Alexis.*" We may read some curious statements in it: "Plunged into an artificial sleep, man sees through opaque bodies, from considerable distances."—Signed, Father Lacordaire." And this other: "*If there exists in the world a science which makes the soul visible, it is undeniably magnetism.*"—Signed: Alexander Dumas." This work is concerned solely with the powers of Alexis.

The second sight of the somnambulist Alexis, hypnotized by Marcillet, has been appreciated by all those who have studied these questions. Here is one of his most remarkable revelations. The testimony is almost official,—that of the manager of the Mont-de-Piété who in this capacity had been the victim of a robbery, the author of which was discovered and arrested largely through the revelations of the famous medium. The account is contained in a letter that Monsieur Prévost himself sent to the editor of the paper “*Le Pays*,” in the following words:

It was in 1849, in August, that one of my employees disappeared, carrying with him a large sum.

The most active search of the police was without success, when one of my friends, Monsieur Linstant, a lawyer, went to consult Alexis, without letting me know of his plan.

“The sum stolen,” said the somnambulist, “is very considerable. It almost reaches two hundred thousand francs.”

That was correct. Alexis continued, saying that the dishonest clerk was named Dubois, and that he saw him at Brussels, at the Hôtel des Princes, whither he had gone.

Linstant left for Brussels. He learned on his arrival that Dubois had indeed stayed at the Hôtel des Princes, but that a few hours before he had left the city.

Alexis declared that he saw Dubois at the gambling-house at Spa, that he was losing a great deal of money and that when arrested he would not have any left.

That very evening the narrator set off, but at Brussels he was so delayed by the legal formalities he had to go through in order to arrest his thief that he arrived at Spa only to learn that the man he was after had left the city a few days before.

When he had once more returned to Paris, he went again to see Alexis.

“You have n’t much patience,” he told me. “To tell the truth, Dubois went to Aix-la-Chapelle. He continued to play, for he had lost heavily; just now he has returned to Spa, where he will lose in play the little that remains to him.”

I wrote immediately to the authorities of Brussels and Spa, and a few days later Dubois was arrested at Spa. He had lost everything in gambling.<sup>1</sup>

We see that not only was the medium able to read, with his eyes closed, a book that was out of his sight, but he could even follow from a distance the peregrinations of a thief.

This Alexis had such an extraordinary reputation as a seer, that the hypnotist Lafontaine, who had often had disappointments with his unprepared subjects, sent from Lyons to Paris for him, so as to be sure of succeeding in his exhibitions. We find the confirmation of these tales in the memoirs of Lafontaine (Volume II, page 160 to 171). They merely repeat what has been published above.

What surprises us most is that this "mental vision" should have for so long a time been acknowledged, and that hardly any one now admits it. Ignorance is universal. I should not like to suppose a lack of honesty.

The naturalist Alfred Russell Wallace describes<sup>2</sup> fourteen séances of Dr. Edwin Lee at Brighton, in private houses, with this same Alexis Didier. In each of these séances, the latter played cards with his eyes bandaged, often named the cards of his opponents as well as his own: he also read many of the cards written by the visitors and put inside envelops. He deciphered no matter what line asked him in no matter what book, eight or ten pages farther on than the open page, and described the contents of a quantity of boxes, cases, and other receptacles.

Dr. Lee also reports a game of cards between the celebrated Robert Houdin and Alexis, and added the following:

Houdin drew a book from his pocket and asked Alexis to read a line in a special spot eight pages farther on. The clairvoyant stuck

<sup>1</sup> Alphonse Primot, *La psychologie d'une conversion du positivisme au spiritualisme*, p. 152.

<sup>2</sup> *The Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*, p. 95.

a pin in to mark the line and read four words that were found on the corresponding line on the ninth succeeding page.

Houdin declared that this was astounding and the next day signed this declaration: "I cannot refuse to affirm that the facts related here are scrupulously exact; the more I have reflected, the more I have found it *impossible* to class them among the tricks which are the objects of my art."

Russell Wallace points out (page 90) other cases of vision vouched for by Dr. Gregory in his work "Letters on Magnetism." For example, some persons on their way to the séance to see these phenomena, bought in some shop, chosen by themselves, a few dozen printed mottos shut up in nutshells. They put the shells in a sack, and the clairvoyant drew out one and read the motto enclosed in it. The nut was broken and examined; dozens of mottos were read correctly in this way. One of these mottos contained ninety-eight words.

Wallace adds that as he has in his hands the depositions of Dr. Gregory, Dr. Mayo, Dr. Lee, Dr. Haddock, and hundreds of other men no less well qualified to observe and no less honorable, affirming similar facts, we cannot suppose that all these persons were the victims of tricks it was impossible to detect, especially in the case of skeptical doctors who had come to diagnose what had happened and a master of sleight of hand as clear-sighted as Robert Houdin. Either every one of the manifestations of second sight reported by observers (and they can be numbered by thousands) is the result of trickery, or we have the irrefutable proof that a certain number of persons possess an inner sense that ought to be studied. If ordinary sight were as rare as second sight, it would be as difficult to prove its reality as it is to establish the existence of this marvelous faculty. The evidence of the latter's existence is absolutely conclusive, to whoever examines it, and who does not let himself be deceived by the childish

idea that we can separate *a priori* what is possible from what is not possible.

These experiments have been made a hundred times, especially between 1820 and 1860. We have only to read the pages of Dr. Bertrand (the father of Joseph Bertrand, the celebrated perpetual secretary of the Academy of Sciences) of Pététin, of General Noizet, of Lafontaine, of Dr. Comet, and of numerous experimenters of this epoch in order to be convinced of their value and of their absolute authenticity. One of the most active, Dr. Frapart, desired especially to convince one of the pontiffs of official science and a declared adversary, Dr. Bouillaud, professor of the Faculty of Medicine, and sent him a sort of imperial mandate. The great man replied in the same tone, that he had a perfect right to be incredulous and that it was not the fanatic Frapart who should give him orders. He wrote:

As for this new subject of hypnotism, of which you speak, and which seems to you destined to bring about the great work of my conversion, I do not in the least refuse to witness its miracles. However, if, after I had seen them, I should happen to reply to you with this famous doctrine of a philosopher of my own sort; "I believe because you have seen, *but if I had seen I should not have believed,*" if, I say, I should reply to you in this way, how could you object? The experience of which you tell me could not, indeed, prove a physical *impossibility*, such as sight without eyes; and, as I have said at the Academy, in such cases it is best to follow the example of the Academy of Sciences when it is informed that the square of the circle has been found.

Considering the at once upright and aggressive character of Frapart, we can imagine that this sentence did not fall on deaf ears: "If I had seen I should not have believed, because it is a physical impossibility." Therefore, he began to jeer at it without much regard for the official character of the learned professor, who replied in his turn:

This is my last word: *I don't believe—and never shall believe—that one can see without the aid of one's eyes.* It is not at all, as you say, because the thing is extraordinary that I do not and will not believe in it; it is because it is supernatural, and, what is more, against nature. I believe, on the other hand, in many extraordinary facts. If I do not believe in these, it is not because I do not understand them, it is because they are evidently, clearly, physiologically *impossible*.

To these arguments Frapart replied, in 1838, as all men of sense reply to-day:

It does not become any one, even the greatest genius, to define the limits of the possible, because the possible is as infinite as space and time; and although we have, so to speak, surrounded it with our theories, at each instant it surpasses them and laughs at us. Moreover, does not experience teach us that what seems impossible to-day will perhaps be evident to-morrow? For instance, the discovery of America, also of gunpowder, also of the circulation of the blood, also of galvanism, also of the compass, also of printing, also of lightning-conductors, also of aërostats, also of vaccine, also of medicaments, etc. And does not reason tell us that there is nothing absolutely false but what is contradictory or absolutely true but what is evident?

Therefore we can say that it is obviously impossible to recognize a triangle without three angles, or a stick without two ends, because these things are contradictory, but we cannot say that it is obviously impossible to watch a man who reads by the nape of his neck, or another who hears by the epigastrium, or a third who sees things a hundred leagues away, a fourth who foretells the future, a fifth who is insensible to pain, a sixth who describes his own sickness or that of others, finally a seventh who has the instinct for remedies.

No, no one can say, under pain of offending reason, that these facts are evidently impossible, because no one has the right or the power to say to the possible: "Thou shalt go no further."

It is true that these phenomena are very extraordinary; for all that, are they more extraordinary, more marvelous, more inexplicable than those which we notice every day? In nature, is not everything

mystery? is not everything marvel? But there are marvels that are known to every one, and there are others that are uncommon. We imagine we understand the former, for we see them unceasingly, and we deny the latter because we see them only rarely; and, for all that, we explain neither the one set nor the other; we verify them, that is all.

This reasoning of Dr. Frapart's, at the time not understood, was, according to all the evidence, superior to the systematic blindness of Dr. Bouillaud, despite the official superiority of the latter over his modest confrère. The Academy of Medicine, of which he represented the dominant idea, remained obstinately on the side of truth.

Professor Bouillaud, who was a member of the Academy of Medicine, of the Academy of Science, and of all the most accredited learned societies, was a particularly remarkable type of those very small souls shut up in the narrowest possible brains that one can imagine, firmly set in their religious beliefs and absolutely incapable of reasoning freely. He was the hero of the anecdote which I related in "L'Inconnu," concerning the invention of the phonograph. On March 11, 1878, I was present at the meeting of the Academy of Sciences, that day of hilarious memory, when the physicist Du Moncel presented Edison's phonograph to the learned assembly. When the presentation had been made the apparatus began to recite docilely the sentence registered on its record. Then we saw an academician of ripe age, his mind imbued, saturated even, with the traditions of the classical culture, revolt nobly against the audacity of the innovator; we saw him hurl himself upon Edison's representative and seize him by the throat, crying out: "Wretch! we are not going to let ourselves be duped by a ventriloquist!" This member of the Institute was Monsieur Bouillaud. The most curious part of it is that six months later, on September 30th, at a similar meeting, he esteemed it an honor to declare that *after a mature examination* he was convinced that there was nothing to it but

ventriloquism and that "we cannot admit that a vile metal can replace the noble apparatus of human phonation." The phonograph was to him only an acoustic illusion. Such people are "fastened to the rear of the chariot of progress" and delay everything by impeding its forward march and succeeding in hiding the light under a bushel, for their official titles impose upon the sheeplike masses.

This great man was the physician of Arsène Houssaye, and we can read in the "Confessions" of this charming writer that he was responsible for the death of his delightful wife and their child,—and also of the second wife.

Such is the "scientific reasoning" of certain scholars. We could wish that the title of Member of the Institute conferred intelligence upon its elect and opened their minds.

These remarks called forth by Bouillaud could be applied to his colleagues in the Academy, Chevreuil and Babinet, in regard to the problem of physics.

My regretted friend Dr. Macario wrote in 1857<sup>1</sup> that "vision through opaque bodies and at unlimited distances, which is not admitted by scholars and which is contrary to all the known physiological laws, as well as inexplicable, seemed nevertheless to be certain"; and he noted the following as confirming it:

Dr. Bellenger was convinced of this by repeated experiences. Many times he has written out in his home, without any witness, a sentence on a sheet of paper which he has folded and refolded and placed inside two or three wrappings, carefully sealed. The somnambulist has been able to read the enclosed sentence through the opaque sheets, or to write it on the back of the envelop.

This phenomenon had already been verified in 1831 by a commission of the Academy of Medicine. In fact, one reads in its reports: "Monsieur Ribes, a member of the Academy, presented a catalogue which he drew from his pocket. The somnambulist (it was Monsieur Petit d'Athis, hypnotized by Monsieur du Potet), after several

<sup>1</sup> *Du Sommeil, des rêves et du somnambulisme*, p. 195.

efforts which seemed to tire him, read quite distinctly: "*Lavater. It is very hard to understand men.*" These last words were printed in very small characters. They placed under his eyes (which, of course, were shut) a passport; he recognized it and called it a "pass-man"; they substituted for the passport a permission to carry arms which, as we know, almost exactly resembles a passport, and they showed it to him on the blank side. Monsieur Petit could only recognize that it was a framed piece of paper, very much like the other. They turned it over, and after a few minutes of hesitation he said what it was and read very distinctly these words: "By law," and at the left, "Permission to carry arms." They showed him an open letter; he said he could not read it, as he did not understand English. It was in fact, a letter written in that language.

All these experiments greatly fatigued Monsieur Petit. They let him rest a little, then, as he was fond of cards, they suggested that, in order to rest himself, he should take a hand at cards. Monsieur Reynal, former inspector of the university, played a hundred points at piquet with him, and lost. Several times they tried unsuccessfully to trick him into a mistake by changing the cards.

A law student, Monsieur Paul Villegrand, paralyzed on the left side, who was put into a hypnotic sleep by Dr. Foissac, also read with his eyes shut. The lids were kept constantly closed by the experimenters in turn; they handed him a new pack of cards, breaking the revenue stamp and shuffling them, and Paul recognized the king of spades, the ace of clubs, the seven of diamonds, the queen of diamonds and the eight of diamonds.

They presented him, while his eyes were held shut by Monsieur Ségelas, with a volume which Monsieur Husson had brought with him. He read the title, "History of France," but he could not read the intervening lines and he read on the fifth only the name "Anquetil," which was preceded by the preposition "by." They opened the book at page 89 and he read on the first line "the number of his—" he passed over the word *troupes* and continued: "at the moment when they thought him the most occupied with the pleasures of the carnival," etc.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It was this same Villegrand who convinced Broussais. The latter wrote secretly a little note, placed his fingers on the lids of the somnambulist, gave the note to Dr. Frapart, who afterward gave it to Ville-

These facts, which were clearly established in the report drawn up in the name of the Academy of Medicine by Monsieur Husson, carry with them the sanction of science and impartiality. But, strictly speaking, it could be maintained that the somnambulists had seen these sentences in the minds of the experimenters. That may be true so far as concerns some of the experiments made by the Academy, but this explanation cannot be applied to the following facts, for here the experimenters did not themselves know the sentences which they caused the somnambulists to read:

Quite recently, one of my friends, Dr. N——, who is surely incapable of wishing to impose on any one, found himself at an evening reception where there were many artists and men of letters; all these persons knew one another intimately. Among them was Alexis, the celebrated somnambulist. Monsieur Marcillet hypnotized him and this is what occurred. My friend Dr. N—— went into an adjoining room to find a book with its leaves still uncut; then, without opening it, he asked the somnambulist to read such and such a line on such and such a page. The somnambulist hesitated, seemed to make a great effort, then asked for a pen and wrote the line indicated; at that they cut the leaves of the book, found the page and the line, and every one, transfixed with astonishment, learned that the experiment had succeeded perfectly; only the sentence in the book was written in English, and the somnambulist, in transcribing it, had translated it into French. It was a curious fact that, a few minutes later, this same somnambulist could not read the word "Paris," written in large letters on a sheet of paper that had been folded twice.

Here we surely cannot invoke the transmission of thought, as no one had opened this uncut book.

Thus spoke Dr. Macario, more than half a century ago. That which they sometimes accuse us of affirming a little audaciously has been known for a long time. If I have quoted these old affirmations of 1850, 1840, 1830, and even 1786 (Puységur) and 1778 (Encyclopedia, Vol. XXXI), it is in order to show that these psychic phenomena have been proved grand, who read unhesitatingly the three lines written there. (See Moutin, *Le Magnétisme humain*, p. 290.)

for many years—we might say for many centuries. But let us continue. The mine is rich.

I, for my part, have often had occasion to hear accounts of “mental vision” and to verify them personally.

In the course of the summer of the year 1865 I stayed, during a month of vacation at Sainte-Adresse, on the slope of Cape la Hève, to the west of Havre (5 rue des Pêcheurs), and I had opposite me a celebrated doctor who bore the rather astronomical name of Comet. His wife had given him curious examples of this power. She was subject, at certain periods, to somnambulism, during which she read with her eyes shut, through opaque bodies, named the smallest objects that were shown her shut up in the hand, divined thoughts, saw unexpected actions taking place in the apartments adjoining hers, named exactly the days and hours on which her next attacks were to seize her, and prescribed the medicines that were to cure her.

We can read the history of Madame Comet’s cure by means of her hypnotic revelations, as well as the account of the sight of her internal organs, in the “Lettres sur le magnétisme,” by Dr. Frapart, which can leave no doubt about the actuality of these events. The observations of Dr. Comet are followed by similar declarations made by Dr. Alphonse Teste, also about his wife. All these inquiries date from the year 1840. The author wrote that it would be necessary to wait fifty years before science officially recognized the value of them. He was mistaken. In 1890, the prejudices due to ancient ignorance were not dissipated. And they are not now.

Time passes quickly, for that matter, and humanity is slow in its progress. I said on the first page of this work that I had begun this study more than half a century ago. The lines which we have just read, and the year 1865, are the proof of it.

Among the numerous experiments which can help us in

the solution of the problem we are studying here, I shall cite a very curious one reported in one of his works<sup>1</sup> by Dr. Gibier, a former interne of the Paris hospitals. It took place in April, 1885, and he has often repeated it before witnesses, whom he names. This reading, independently of the organs of sight, was done in a state of hypnotism (the modern name for magnetism and mesmerism). Here is the account of the experiment:

The subject was a young woman of about twenty, of Jewish descent. Once she was asleep, and in an intermediate state of amaterialization, which was not lethargy, nor somnambulism, nor even a talking trance, but rather what the professional hypnotists call "lucid somnambulism," I put a pad of cotton over each eye; then over them a large, thick napkin or silk handkerchief that was tied behind the nape of the neck. The first time I attempted the test of which I am speaking, I was very much astonished at its success: I must say that at the time I did not have the experience which a long series of investigations have since given me, and, I must add, long and continuous studies of the question as well.

I took from my library the first book that I laid my hand on: I opened it by chance. When I had held it a moment, the cover uppermost, without looking at it, about two centimeters above the hair of the hypno-magnetized young woman, I asked her to read the last line of the page on the left. After a moment of waiting she answered: "Ah, yes, I see—wait." Then she continued: "Identity leads to unity, for if the soul—" She stopped and added: "I can't do more; that is enough; it tires me." I yielded to her and turned over the volume. It was a book on philosophy, and the first line, less two words, had been perfectly seen and read by the *amaterialized invisible* spirit of my sleeper.

It is quite natural to be prudent about admitting the truth of such statements. For a long time I myself attributed the success of these experiments to simple trickery, and I had had direct proof of it, in my own house, especially one day when

<sup>1</sup> *Analyse des choses* (Paris and Philadelphia, 1890), p. 137.

a very elegant woman of the world, playing the rôle of medium, had found means, under the pretext of indisposition, to go and rest an hour in my library, and had profited by it in order to consult an ancient book so as to be able to read it later, in a state of pretended somnambulism (reading from such a page and such a line in such a book). But it is quite certain that trickery is not practised to-day, and that there cannot even be a question of it in the experiences which I have just offered as examples. Do not let us be wilfully blind.

We shall admit that these are most varied experiences, and that they all prove the existence of mental vision by means of a psychic faculty independent of normal vision. We have, indeed, an embarrassment of riches from which to choose the proof of these phenomena.

Let us compare some other experiences.

Let us open, for example, that carefully verified work of Sir Oliver Lodge on "Human Survival" (page 110) and quote the curious spiritual communication of Stainton Moses (which I abridge):

Mr. Stainton Moses, professor at the University College of London, had acquired the habit of writing automatically, like a medium, in the solitude of each morning. A great number of writings that have been obtained in this way have been published and are familiar to those who study these problems; but the following incident is of a surprising character and offers a singularly striking example of the power of vision at a distance.

The present text was obtained by Mr. Stainton Moses, when he was at a séance in Dr. Speer's library and his hand wrote automatically, in supposed conversation with invisible speakers. Here is this episode.

Stainton Moses, speaking to the so-called spirit: "Can you read?"

Reply: "No, friend, I cannot, but Zachariah Legray as well as Rector can."

S. M.: "Is one of these spirits here?"

Reply: "I will go and find one."

(They wait some time.)

"Rector is here."

S. M.: "Can you read?"

(The writing changes.)

Reply: "Yes, friend, but with difficulty."

S. M.: "Will you write for me the last line of the first book of the *Æneid*?"

Reply: "Wait—

"*“Omnibus errantem terris et fluctibus ætas.”*"

Stainton Moses verifies the quotation, which is exact, but thinks at once that he may have known and unconsciously preserved it in his memory. He therefore asks another question:

"Can you go into the library, look at the next to the last volume on the second shelf, and read me the last paragraph of page ninety-four? I do not know what the book is and I am even ignorant of its title."

After a short lapse of time, Mr. Stainton Moses, still writing automatically, himself traced the following words: "I shall prove by a short historical recital that the papacy is a novelty which arose gradually and has grown great since the primitive times of pure Christianity, not merely since the apostolic age but even since the lamentable union of the Church and State by Constantine."

The volume in question was found to be a curious work bearing a rather fantastic title: "*Antipopopriestian, an attempt to liberate and purify Christianity from popery, politikirkolatory and priest rule,*" by Roger.

If that is not reading by the spirit, what is it?

Now, who was it who read? Was it Stainton Moses himself, unconsciously? But how? Was a spirit distinct from himself directing his hand? Let us limit ourselves here to

verifying the fact; it was the spirit which read, it was not the material eye.

Let us recall, in this connection,<sup>1</sup> the experiences of Sir William Crookes, consisting in the reading of sentences unknown to him and to the medium. This medium, a lady, gave communications by means of a little board to which a pencil was attached and which, conducted by her hand, slipped over a paper.

I hoped to discover the means of proving that what she wrote was not due to the unconscious action of her brain. The planchette, as it always does, affirmed that although it was put in action by the brain and arm of this lady, the *intelligence* which directed it belonged to an invisible being, who *played upon the brain of the lady* as on a musical instrument and in this way moved her muscles.

Therefore, I said to this intelligence: "Do you see what there is in this room?" "Yes," wrote planchette. "Do you see that newspaper and can you read?" I added, putting my finger on a number of "The Times" which was on the table behind me, but without looking at it. "Yes," answered planchette. "Well," I went on, "write me out the word which is now covered by my finger and I will believe you." Planchette began to move slowly and, not without great difficulty, wrote the word "however." I turned about and saw that this word was covered by the tip of my finger.

When I made this experiment I had carefully avoided looking at the paper and it would have been impossible for the lady, even if she had tried, to see a single one of the printed words, for she was seated at a table, the paper was on another table behind me, and my body hid it from her sight.

These readings by mediums seem to indicate the action of exterior intelligences.

A very characteristic supra-normal vision was given to Monsieur Maxwell, doctor of medicine, general advocate of the court of appeals at Bordeaux, by a very sensitive subject,

<sup>1</sup> See *Les Forces naturelles inconnues*, p. 447.

Madame Angullana, whom he had just hypnotized for experimental purposes.<sup>1</sup>

Madame Angullana pretended to have gone out of the house.

I begged her to go and see what Monsieur B——, one of my friends who was well known to her, was doing. It was twenty minutes past ten in the evening. To our great surprise she told me that she saw Monsieur B——, half-clad, walking barefoot over stone. This seemed quite senseless to us. Nevertheless, I took occasion to see my friend the next day. Although he was well versed in phenomena, Monsieur B—— appeared greatly astonished and said these very words to me: "Yesterday I was not well. One of my friends, who lives with me, advised me to try the Kneipp cure and urged me so insistently that, in order to satisfy him, I tried it for the first time yesterday evening, walking barefoot over cold stone."

To these observations I will add the following recent one, which we owe to the celebrated American physicist Edison, and the value of which as a critical experiment cannot be contested by any one. Here is a report written by himself.<sup>2</sup>

The man of whom I am going to speak was sent to me by one of my oldest friends, who said to me by way of introduction: "This man Reese is able to do certain strange things. I should like you to know him. Perhaps you will be able to explain his powers."

I appointed a meeting. Reese arrived at my laboratory on the day set. I had some of my workmen called in, in order to experiment with them. Reese asked one of them, a Norwegian, to go into an adjoining room and write on a bit of paper the maiden name of his mother, her place of birth, and several other things. The Norwegian did so, folded the paper, and kept it in his closed hand. Reese told us the exact contents. He added later that the young man had a ten-crown piece of money in his pocket, which was true.

After he had made several similar experiments with other employees, I asked him to make one like them with me. Then I went into another building and wrote these words:

<sup>1</sup> See Maxwell, *Les Phénomènes psychiques*, p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> See *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, May, 1916.

"Is there anything better than hydroxid of nickel for an alkaline battery?"

I was then experimenting with my alkaline electric battery, and I was a little afraid of not being on the right path. After having written the above sentence, I took up another problem and gave all my attention to solving it, so as to throw Reese off the scent if he was trying to read in my mind what I had written. I then came back into the room where I had left him.

The moment I entered the room he said: "*No, there is nothing better than hydroxid of nickel for an alkaline battery.*"

He had read my question exactly.

I do not pretend to be able to explain this faculty. I am convinced that the needs of civilization will produce some great discovery by means of men endowed with this power. The rare seers of the present generation will become the multitude of the coming generations. The normal intelligence of the future will rapidly develop and complete the work of the normal intelligence of to-day.

About two years after the experiences which I have just related, the door-boy of my laboratory entered and told me that Reese was in the waiting-room and wished to see me. I took my pencil and wrote in microscopic letters, "Keno," folded the paper, and put it in my pocket. Then I told the boy to bring in Reese.

"Reese, I have a scrap of paper in my pocket. What is written on it?"

Without an instant's hesitation he answered, "Keno."

Some time after the experiments made in my laboratory, Dr. James Hanna Thompson, a well-known alienist, arranged for a fully representative séance at his home. He went into his library, wrote some words on little sheets of paper, and hid them. Reese remained, talking, in the drawing-room until Thompson returned and then said to him:

"At the back of the drawer to the left of your table is a bit of paper on which is written the word 'opsonic.' Under the book lying on your table there is a bit of paper bearing another word 'ambi-cepter.' On another little paper is written the word 'antigen.'"

The information given by the seer was entirely correct. Thompson was stupefied, and confessed that he yielded to the evidence.

A few years ago I undertook a series of experiments to attempt to

transfer the thought of one person to another by all sorts of means, but without the least result. Also, I tried to solve the phenomenon by the help of an electric apparatus fastened to the head of the operators. Four among us first stayed in different rooms, joined by the electric systems of which I have just spoken. Afterward we sat in the four corners of the same room, gradually bringing our chairs closer together toward the center of the room, until our knees touched, and for all that we obtained no result.

But Reese has no need of any apparatus or of any special condition in order to function.

So spoke Edison. All those who experimented with him testified to the same things, particularly Monsieur Schrenck-Notzing, who made a special study of it.

A curious episode in the life of this "seer" is an encounter he had with the law, in which, having been accused of fraud, at the end of the trial he invited the judge to write some words himself upon a paper and to keep the paper in his hand. He then read everything that had been written by the judge. Needless to say, he was acquitted.

I have gathered together these instances of "mental vision" by the hundreds.

One of the most remarkable is assuredly that of Professor Grassert of Montpellier, who, having hidden four lines written by himself, in a thick envelop tightly sealed, saw these lines read three hundred meters away, by Dr. Ferroul's medium ("*Annales des Sciences psychiques*," 1897; page 322).

We have here a mine of unsuspected riches. I shall also mention in this place the following tale which was brought to me by my learned colleague of the Astronomical Society of France, M. H. Daburon, with this profession of faith: "I know of no more captivating matter than the study of the soul, undertaken in your work '*L'Inconnu*,' and I wish, with all readers in love with truth, that this great work

might have successors. Also, it interests me to point out to you, if you do not know it already, the following fact, which is an extract from the correspondence of the Duchess of Orleans, Princess Palatine." Here is this letter:

About ten years ago a French gentleman who had been a page to the Marshal d' Humières, and who had married one of my ladies in waiting, brought with him to France a savage from Canada. One day while they were at table the savage, his face convulsed, began to weep. Longueil, as the gentleman was called, asked him what was the matter with him and if he was in pain. The savage only wept more bitterly. Longueil insisted and the savage said: "Do not force me to tell you, for it is you it concerns, and not me." When he was urged more than ever, he ended by saying, "I saw from the window that your brother had been murdered in such a spot in Canada." Longueil began to laugh and answered: "You have gone mad!" The savage answered, "I am not at all mad; write down what I am telling you and you will see if I am mistaken." Longueil wrote it down, and six months later, when the ships arrived from Canada, he learned that his brother's death had occurred at the exact moment and in the very spot where the savage had seen it in a vision through the window. This is an entirely true tale.

Versailles, March 2, 1719.

The Princess Palatine did not pass as one easily duped, at the court of her husband, the Duke of Orleans, regent of the kingdom; and at the time of the regency Paris and Versailles were assuredly far from mysticism. The fact reported here ought to be considered authentic. How did the Canadian seer see "in the air"? As one reads in a crystal ball or in a glass of water; that is to say, it was the spirit of the soothsayer which was operating. It does not seem that any other conclusion can be drawn from these observations.

Gratien de Semur, a remarkably skeptical writer and a scoffer who had ridiculed the story of Pliny's ghost, as well as that of the assassin of Cicero, published in 1843 a very amusing book, entitled "*Traité des erreurs et des préjugés*," in

which he made an exception of a telepathic sensation which had occurred in his own neighborhood. (He was far from suspecting the future creation of this word and the value of these sensations.) Here is his account, with his commentary:

In our childhood we had often seen, in our family, a lady about forty years old, who was named Madame de Saulce. Her husband was a rich planter in Santo Domingo. Both of them had come to live in France at the time of the Revolution. Monsieur de Saulce made many trips to the islands, during which he left his wife in Paris. Madame de Saulce was a very good woman, quite simple, not at all nervous, having no belief in those foolish imaginings that easily affect us. During her husband's last trip she was at a gathering one evening where she was playing a game of cards. All at once she cried out, falling back in her seat, "Monsieur de Saulce is dead!" Every one hastened to her and pointed out that such a vision must certainly be false, and her reason once more resumed control. Nevertheless, when she was alone, she could not entirely shake off the presentiment that stifled her, and she waited for news of her husband with fearful anxiety. She received reassuring letters, but their date preceded the day of her vision. Finally a letter came from Santo Domingo, sealed in black, a letter which was not addressed in Monsieur de Saulce's handwriting. The letter was from another planter and sent to a third person, to lessen the violence of the shock: Monsieur de Saulce was dead, murdered by negroes on the very day on which Madame de Saulce had received the terrible blow. This double event, attested by more than twenty persons of good standing in the community, was one of those which most impressed me during my early years. Ten years had passed since then, when we saw Madame de Saulce again, still dressed in the eternal mourning to which she had vowed herself.

The narrator adds:

What can we say about such happenings? Nothing can prove their reality or their falsity; we must believe or not believe. Nevertheless, we can apply to them the conclusions drawn from similar examples, which such an authority as Sully has put beyond all doubt. "It is

only too certain," wrote Sully in his Memoirs, "that Henry IV had a presentiment of his cruel destiny. The more closely he saw the moment of the coronation approaching, the more he felt fright and horror redouble in his heart. He would come and unfold it all to me, in that state of bitterness and despondency for which I used to blame him as for an unpardonable weakness. His own words will make a quite different impression from anything that I could say. 'Ah! my friend,' he said, 'how this coronation displeases me! I do not know what it is, but my heart tells me that some misfortune will come to me.' He would sit down as he said these words, and give himself up to all the blackness of his thoughts, tapping his fingers on the case of his spectacles and musing profoundly."

Sully's declaration alone would be enough to keep us from doubting the presentiment which made Henry IV feel in his heart the point of the dagger which was to kill him; we can, however, support it by other authorities, almost equally reliable. L'Estoile and Bassompierre, in their Memoirs, report the same incidents. Let us hasten, nevertheless, to add that the rare examples of justified presentiments ought to be received only as exceptions.<sup>1</sup>

Such is the tale of Gratien de Semur, and we feel that he published it reluctantly. His recollections have their place in this book. He is more disposed to deny everything than to accept anything. These two extremes are false. Reason invites us to follow an independent path, at an equal distance from the two usual human errors.

Here are still other observations, no less curious:

Professor Gregory of Edinburgh had visited a friend in a city thirty miles distant, and had there met a lady who had been hypnotized by this friend, and who was unknown to Professor Gregory. He found that she described all the details of his house with striking precision. The idea then came to Gregory to make the following experiment:

He asked her to go to Greenock, about forty-five miles away, where his son was. She saw and described him exactly even though she had never seen him nor heard him spoken of, and she described

<sup>1</sup> *Erreurs et préjugés*, p. 137.

the cottage where he was busy playing with a dog. This dog, she said, was a very young Newfoundland, black, with white spots. The boy and the dog seemed to be having a very good time together and the dog stole his hat. There was a gentleman there reading a book, not very old but with white hair, a Presbyterian clergyman. As Gregory asked the medium to go into the house, she described the drawing-room, the dining-room, the kitchen, where a young servant was preparing dinner and a leg of mutton was roasting over the fire but was not yet done. There was also another servant. The gentleman came to the door, the boy continued to play with the dog, and then ran to the kitchen, which was on the upper story of the summer-house, and began to eat.

The professor immediately wrote down all the details he had received and sent them to his friend, who recognized most of them as correct. There could not have been, he noticed, any transmission of thought, as he was not familiar with the place where his son was and where the hypnotized woman had been sent.<sup>1</sup>

Many observations similar to the preceding ones are here on my work table. But we must know where to stop. The result of this research is *the affirmation that the human being can see without eyes, with the spirit*.

But I will confess that, in admitting this transcendent sight, I am in disagreement with scholars whom I have known personally and sincerely esteemed, among others Alfred Maury, of the Institute (see my Memoirs). He does not admit this faculty; he believes in a hyper-sensitiveness of the sense of sight, which has been verified by him in somnambulists,<sup>2</sup> and which does indeed exist, but which we cannot generalize about and which does not at all apply here.

In certain cases we can assuredly compare this function of the sight to the visual power of the nocturnal animals, which see very well in the dark, such as cats, owls, screech-owls, moths, the reptiles that live in caverns, the deep-sea fishes, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Hyslop, *Enigmas of Psychical Research*, p. 278.

<sup>2</sup> *Le Sommeil et les Rêves* (1878), p. 205.

Light has its degrees and seems never to descend to zero.

Certain men are nyctalopes.

Such was the Emperor Tiberius. When he chanced to awake during the night, he could make out all the objects in his chamber; his eyes were very large: "Erat prægrandibus oculis," we read in Suetonius, "qui cum mirum est, noctu etiam et in tenebris viderent; ab breve et cum a somno potuissent deinde nebescebant."

The Abbé Mussaud, a professor at the college of La Rochelle in 1820, author of a curious little book called "Roman I'optique," reports that he knew a lady in that city whose eyes had this quality and who could see quite well in the darkness, not merely for a few moments, as Tiberius did, but for a long time, distinguishing even a pin on the ground. Her eyes also were very large. Nevertheless, this visual power was not permanent, and showed only at certain periods of suffering and languor.

On January 3, 1899, when I was dining with my friend Bartholdi, the great sculptor, the daughter of Dr. Chaillou, Madame Peytal, told me that her cousin Mademoiselle Varanne was gifted with this faculty. They heard her reading aloud one night and discovered her sitting on her bed, without a light, reading a pamphlet by Paul-Louis Courier, which she had taken from the doctor's library. She was a somnambulist.

I could name from among my scientific correspondents a learned and distinguished lady, gifted with extraordinary psychic powers—Madame d'Espérance, a member of the Astronomical Society of France—who, in addition to these qualities, sees, writes, and draws in total darkness. At the time of her classical studies, when she was a young girl, she had written a composition during the night, in a state of somnambulism, without suspecting it.<sup>1</sup> Her colleague and friend,

<sup>1</sup> See her work, *Au Pays de l'Ombre*, p. 63.

Madame Hœmmerlé, the translator of Carl du Prel, knew of more than one similar example.

Dr. Liébault, who has dealt rather thoroughly with this question in his learned work on "*Le sommeil provoqué et les états analogues*" seems to admit only a hypersensitiveness of the organ of sight, and quotes on this subject some experiments made by himself—as well as by A. Bertrand, Encontre, Macario, Archambault, Mesnet,—upon somnambulists who read in the dark, thanks to the dilation of the pupil of the eye and the accumulation of the power of attention in the optic nerve. This power of seeing at night is unlimited, but it applies to only a small part of our problem; it does not apply to the description either of a house far away, or of a scene taking place a thousand kilometers distant, or to reading in a closed book, or to the greater part of our examples.

The hypnotized subjects who see without eyes and imagine that they see with their foreheads, with the epigastrium, or with a foot, are under an illusion: it is their spirit which sees.

They sometimes also pretend to see with the ear. Lombroso relates that in 1892 he had to struggle, in his medical practice, with a phenomenon which he had never met with before. He writes:

I had under my care the daughter of a high official of my native city; this person was often seized, at the age of puberty, with a violent attack of hysteria, accompanied by symptoms which neither pathology nor physiology could explain. At times her eyes lost the power of seeing; on the other hand, the invalid *saw with her ears*. With her eyes bandaged, she was able to read several lines of print which were held to her ears. When we placed a magnifying-glass between her ear and the sun she felt what resembled a burn on her eyes and cried out that we wished to blind her. She prophesied, in particular, with mathematical exactitude, everything that was going to happen to her. She said once that in a month and three

days she would feel an irresistible desire to bite. I watched over her, tried to distract her, and put all the clocks in the house behind time in order to deceive her about the hour, and despite that, at the appointed day and hour, she was seized with the desire to bite, and did not grow calm until she had shredded with her teeth several kilograms of paper.

Although these facts were not new, they were none the less singular, and inexplicable by any of the established physiological and pathological theories.

We have good reason to say that the new world which we are exploring here is even more surprising than that of Christopher Columbus! As for seeing by means of the ear, it seems to me that that is an essentially psychic phenomenon, to which the acoustic nerve is as foreign as the optic nerve.

Why should it be the forehead, the nose, the chin, the stomach, the navel, the leg, or the foot with which they saw rather than their mental being, gifted with an inner organ, a sort of organ of actual dream? The X-rays pass through the body. Place yourself entirely clothed before the radiographic screen and your skeleton will appear on the screen.

What is this inner faculty? Can we attribute it to the brain? Or ought we to see in it a faculty of the soul, independent of organic anatomy? Let us ask the question again.

The brain is undeniably associated with all our thoughts. The sentiment of the purest truth, the spirit of sacrifice, complete abnegation, mystic adoration of the divinity,—all that we can imagine as most detached from the material,—become thought only by means of the human being and the help of the brain. But the brain is not the author of these thoughts: it is only the instrument. If I wish to lift my arm, if I wish to take an oath, if I deliberate, it is my spirit which acts. The cause of the action is in it and not in the nervous and muscular system which obeys it automatically. It is our

spirit which thinks, wills, seeks, loves, decides. It is not our molecular cerebral system.

Mental vision takes place by means of the spirit, of the soul. The faculties at work here are still unknown to us. I supposed at first that the brain might be the cause of all these phenomena, that it emitted invisible waves which were transmitted at a distance, and that these manifestations did not prove the individual existence of our mental being. But this hypothesis is entirely insufficient, for the personal action of the spirit is clearly revealed in this analysis.

We have stated above that many experimenters, and not the least of them, attribute this supra-normal faculty of reading a hidden text to a foreign spirit which communicates with the experimenter through the medium. This is not inadmissible. But it is going far afield after an explanation, it is putting off the difficulty; and what would be the nature of the unknown spirit?

As many of my readers know, I have outlined this same hypothesis in several of my works,—merely as an hypothesis, of course, for it is far from having been proved. It is against the principles of scientific method to create more or less imaginary explanations. It tries to remain always in the sphere of what is known. But it is forced to declare itself inadequate before incomprehensible events, and after having substituted the physiological theory of hallucinations for a complete denial of the phenomena, it finds it is still unsatisfied, and is obliged to seek for something else.

It seems, however, that our own spirit, such as we know it, does not always offer a truly satisfactory explanation, and that occult forces may be concerned.

My different works have established, by a positive train of reasoning, generally accepted, that the universe is a dynamism and that the atoms are regulated by immaterial forces.

Frank Podmore, a well-known psychic author of whom we have already spoken, is convinced that all these phenomena,

including apparitions, are explained by the transmission of thought, and refers them all to this theory. I confess that for my part I cannot see any transmission of thought in the act of the seminarist of Bordeaux, writing his sermon in total darkness and with his eyes masked by a screen; or in the somnambulist describing an internal malady and seeing, from a closed chamber, the details of the dissection of her mother's body; or in Alexis, reading the cards before they had been turned and playing, in spite of a tight bandage, games which he always won; or in a medium following a thief from Paris to Brussels and to Spa; or in the experience of Stainton Moses writing out a sentence taken from a book with which he was not familiar; or in that of Crookes with the unknown word that was divined, etc.

We are very far from knowing everything. We do not pretend to explain everything. "Know thyself," said Socrates. This ought still to be our motto. We do not know our inner selves any better than we did two or three thousand years ago.

But our soul does not seem so simple as we are taught. Polypsychism is not a vain word. What are the divisions of the personality? What are the unconscious, the subconscious, the subliminal?

A rather ancient and indisputable example of vision at a distance, certified by a great number of witnesses, whose assertions have been discussed at length, is offered us by the historian Philostratus, in his life of Apollonius of Tyana, a contemporary of Jesus Christ. When he was at Ephesus he saw, with his inner vision, the assassination of the Emperor Domitian at Rome.

We know how this extravagant and bloody tyrant died. It was his own best-loved freedmen, who decided with his wife, the Empress Domitia Longina, that he was as dangerous in his friendships as in his hates, and murdered him in his own home. The vision of Apollonius took place at the very mo-

ment when the tragic attack was being made. Here is the astonishingly circumstantial account given. Philostratus tells us:

It was at noon. Apollonius happened to be in one of those little parks on the outskirts of Ephesus, speaking on grave philosophical subjects before hundreds of listeners. At a certain moment his voice dropped as if he had been seized by a sudden and profound emotion. Nevertheless he continued his discourse, but more slowly, visibly troubled by the rush of ideas which were turning his mind from those with which he was occupied. Then he stopped completely, words seemed to fail him, as with a man who seeks to see the issue of an event. Finally he cried out: "Be of good courage, Ephesians! The tyrant has been killed to-day. What am I saying? To-day? By Minerva! he has just been killed at this very instant when I stopped speaking." The Ephesians thought that Apollonius had lost his mind, they wished ardently that he might have spoken the truth, but they feared lest some danger might come to them from this speech. "I am surprised," said Apollonius, "if you do not yet believe me: Rome herself does not yet know all about it. But now she is learning of it; the news spreads; already thousands of men know it. It makes twice that number of men—four times as many—the whole people wild with joy. The noise of it will come even here. You need not believe me until the moment when you are informed of the event, and put off, until then, the sacrifice you should offer the gods on this occasion; as for me, I am going to render thanks to them for what I have seen."

The Ephesians remained incredulous; but soon messengers arrived to announce the good news and bear witness to the correct divination of Apollonius, for the murder of the tyrant, the day on which it had occurred, the hour of noon, all these details agreed perfectly with those which the gods had shown him the day of his discourse to the Ephesians.

Thus speaks Philostratus.

At this period no more was necessary to cause Apollonius to pass for a demigod. Moreover, when Pope Pius V was made a saint, the same "miracle" was attributed to him—

that is, the sight from a window of the Vatican of the Battle of Lepanto, October 7, 1571, and his exclamation to those around him: "Let us go to the altar to give thanks to God; our army has just won a great victory."

History is full of these examples of second sight. Comines, the chronicler of Louis XI, reports that at the hour when Charles the Brave was killed at the Battle of Nancy the king was hearing mass in the church of St. Martin of Tours, and that the king's chaplain, Angelo Cato, later Archbishop of Vienna, said to him, while giving him the pax to kiss: "God gives you peace: your enemy, the Duke of Bourgogne, has just been killed and his army is in flight."

These tales of Apollonius, of Pius V, of Comines and of a hundred others, have suffered the fate of all human things. In the eighteenth century people quite simply denied them. In the nineteenth they were merely hallucinations. To-day, after all the facts have been brought together, it is impossible for us to refuse to admit this vision at a distance, since we know with certainty of a great number of similar cases.

These events are more ancient and more numerous than we think. But we are generally ignorant of them.

Thoughts travel across space. How? Emission, or waves? From the sun to the earth there circulate the electric particles, flung out from the central star, which produce here the phenomena of magnetism, of the aurora borealis, of telephonic disturbances. They are emissions. A flung projectile carries with it a certain energy. The transmission of sound-waves through the atmosphere, or of light-waves through the ether, waves which in themselves are neither sonorous nor luminous, come from a source of energy. How is gravity transmitted through space? This force is prodigious: with its hands it upholds all the worlds: the earth which weighs five septillions, nine hundred and ninety sextillions of tons; Jupiter, three thousand times larger; the sun, three hundred thousand times heavier than our globe; all the stars, each one

of which is a sun. From the greatest to the smallest these worlds act and react upon one another, and Sirius, at eighty-three thousand millions of kilometers from here, exercises a distant influence upon our planet itself. What is the nature of this physical telepathy? Waves of gravitation do not exist. It is possible that thought has no common measure with matter, space, and time, of which, after all, we can have no precise idea. Our brain cells bathe in the unknown; we are unconsciously related to all that exists, to all natural forces, known and unknown, by an inextricable network of waves and vibrations, and thought itself is an agent acting through space.

In these accounts there is no imagination, nor illusion, nor trickery. They are as exact as a meteorological or an astronomical observation. These studies have the rights of citizenship in science.

Our spiritual being, our mental being can see without the eyes of the body. I have brought these accounts together, during many years, in order to be convinced myself, and as I suppose that my readers are as hard to satisfy as I am, I continue to lay before them the result of my researches.

We have only an embarrassment of choices among these reports, which are as varied as they are undeniable. Here is one more which I should regret not to include, as a no less convincing proof of our argument. This "mental vision" was published by Dr. Fanton, of Cannet, Maritime Alps, in the "*Annales des Sciences psychiques*" for the month of December, 1910. It concerns a young woman, passionately devoted to dancing, who after various occurrences, became abominably hysterical, entirely shameless, and seriously ill. She lived at Marseilles and her husband was at Geneva. Here is the incident:

Dr. Fanton, who was caring for her (October, 1885), received a telegram from her husband saying that he was leaving Geneva that

very evening by the seven o'clock train, which ought to pass Culoz at nine, reach Lyons at ten, and Marseilles the next day toward five o'clock. On the envelop of the telegram one could make out the words "Minister of War," although they were partly covered by a spot of ink.

It was seven in the evening when the doctor was called by the patient's family for a violent crisis. However, he did not hurry about answering, and took the time to eat his evening meal, in the course of which, he said, they served him an *omelette aux fines herbes*.

His patient's home was about three hundred and fifty meters from his own. "On my arrival," he said, "I saw eight persons about the invalid who were witnesses of the following events and of whom six are still living."

She had just said to them: "He does n't hurry about coming. At last, he is making up his mind." And a little later, "He is at the door, he is ringing." At once the bell sounded. On my entry into the room the sick woman received me with a great burst of laughter and addressed me thus: "Ah! you don't hurry when I send for you! You send word that you are not at home, and yet you have supper and eat an *omelette aux fines herbes*."

She continued: "It is useless for you to seek excuses. I know what you were doing. You had better give me that telegram from Alfred which you have with you; he might as easily have sent it to me." At the end of a moment the sick woman repeated in a loud and very intelligible voice the whole of the telegram which was still lying at the bottom of my pocket and of which no one but myself knew among those present. This scene took place with such rapidity that I was completely taken aback by it, and the witnesses themselves were so thunderstruck that I was a moment in recovering myself before telling those present that what the patient said was correct and showing them the telegram which I had received half an hour before.

How was Madame A—— able to know the contents of that telegram, when she had not been warned of her husband's return and still less of the hours and itinerary of his journey? That is what we attempted to explain, without being able to do so. All at once a new outburst of laughter, still louder and gayer, broke from the invalid, interrupted by these words: "He is sleeping, he is staying

in the train. He will not get here. No! No!" Then the laughter passed into suffocation and ended in a stammering, in which we made out, quite clearly: "He is asleep, he is staying on the train, he will not get here." It was then nine o'clock.

In the morning, at about the hour when the train was due which was to bring her husband, I went to meet him with two of our friends. I especially urged all those who remained with the invalid to notice very exactly and in the smallest detail, all that might happen during our absence, and in the same way we others proposed to notice all our acts and gestures. The husband was not on the train from Lyons and we returned to my patient.

A little after our departure a telegram had come from Grenoble saying that the husband would not arrive until the afternoon, as he had missed the train.

I left her at about eleven o'clock.

In the afternoon I went to meet her husband; before he had seen any one, and without letting him suspect anything, I questioned him. I learned from his own words that at nine in the evening he had passed through Culoz, without awakening, in a car for Chambéry, and that he had awakened in the latter town. When he found he would reach Marseilles seven hours late, because of this change in his journey, he had telegraphed. I made him repeat this tale in the presence of several persons who had watched with his wife the night before, and we were able to prove, by the tale we told him in our turn, that she had followed him during his trip, the vicissitudes of which she had described to us.

At that time Dr. Fanton was not familiar with the subject which we are studying here and was veritably thunderstruck. We know, to-day, that this power of the soul is undeniable: we can see by means of the spirit, not only by means of the optic nerve or the retina.

Let us also listen to Dr. Osty, concerning certain facts recently studied by him:

In February, 1914, Madame Camille, who was exercising the profession of a medium at Nancy, gave, during a hypnotic sleep, indications which resulted in the recovery of the body of Monsieur

Cadiou, who had been missing since December 30th, without there having been, until then, the least hint as to the cause of his disappearance. There was at once a great noise in the papers. Police and magistrates could not conceal their annoyance. The "strong-minded," the shrewd, those whose superior intelligence shone in their expressions, did not hesitate an instant to accuse the somnambulist of being an accomplice, paid by those interested to *mislead justice*.

Professor Bernheim, interviewed by a reporter of the "Matin," declared that divination did not exist. "I have never been able to establish," he said, "in the course of my long career, phenomena of vision at a distance or of divination; all my scientific education revolts against the existence of such phenomena and until there is serious verification I shall contest the truth of them."

Nevertheless, nothing was more certain than this hypnotic revelation.<sup>1</sup>

A month later, on March 19, 1914, Monsieur André Rifaut, the caretaker of the château of Boursault, disappeared. Men ransacked the woods and the lakes formed by the overflowing of the Marne. The police and a company of the Rheims militia made an active search, but the judicial inquiry remained without results.

Then the brothers Rifaut did as the Cadiou family had done and had recourse to several mediums, who, with one accord, declared that the caretaker had been murdered and thrown into the water. Madame Camille, who was one of the three, spoke thus, on March 24th, according to the "Journal":

"You are seeking for a relative. I see him. After having exchanged some papers with a man clad in a uniform, he goes on into the night along a deserted road. There is a river a little farther on. He approaches his home. A man comes up and strikes him on the back of his head with a club. The unfortunate man falls, stunned. His murderer picks him up and goes to throw him in the river. I see his body. It will be found in a few days, far from this spot."

On April 12th, the body of Monsieur Rifaut was picked up by some fishermen, who found it floating down the current at Jaul-

<sup>1</sup> It happens that the case is decided on the day on which I am correcting this proof (October 29, 1919).

gonne, Aisne. Dr. Petit, the coroner, formally decided there had been death by violence. According to his evidence, the caretaker of the château of Boursault had been struck down, the skull had been driven in, and the unfortunate man was dead before he was thrown into the water.<sup>1</sup>

The following fact is perhaps even more striking:

On March 1, 1914, Dr. Osty received a letter which told him that in the little commune of Cher, an old man of eighty-two, Monsieur Etienne Lerasle, had disappeared and that all search for him had been vain. Madame Morel, who lived in Paris and was possessed of second sight (I myself have had occasion to consult her), to whom the doctor had brought a silk handkerchief that had belonged to Monsieur Lerasle, followed the walk he had taken through a wood and saw him stretched out dead on the ground, having stopped, worn out, and, in fact, determined to die. It was the second of March. For fifteen days his family and the village people—eighty men—on the demand of the mayor had explored the forest without finding anything. From the detailed directions of the medium, they followed the paths described by her and reached the corpse in the attitude in which she had seen it: she had followed him as far as that, tapping with his cane, as was his habit, and stretching himself out near a great tree and a brook, never to rise again.<sup>2</sup> Madame Morel had never heard either of this good man or of this country about Cher; her psychic power—which we mention here as one of the proofs of the existence of our mental element, independent of the physical organism—was able to reach the old man leaving his home, see the past, and feel the future. All this was not shut up in the fold of the silk handkerchief, assuredly, but the handkerchief served to establish a communication between the medium and the man to be discovered. There is here neither telepathy nor transmission of thought: no one knew anything. There was vision at a distance, without eyes, as in all the examples mentioned in this chapter.

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, April, 1914.

<sup>2</sup> For all the details, including the plan of the wood and of the walk, see the *Annales des Sciences psychiques* of April, 1914. See also the very competent works of Monsieur Duchatel on *psychometry*.

These are facts of observation that we cannot confound with the usual banalities of the "extra-lucid seers" and the fortune-tellers by cards. Let us exclude nothing and examine everything. We see without eyes. Cryptoscopy ought to be admitted as a new branch of the tree of science.

Is it known that a blind person can see, read, draw, paint? Here is an example observed in 1849 at the village of Saint-Laurent-sur-Sèvres, Maine-et-Loire, by a doctor who names his witnesses:

A doctor of the neighborhood had gone to visit two convents in this village, one of men and one of women. "We were received," he writes, "in the most cordial manner by Father Dallain, the Superior of the former, who also had authority over the second. After we had walked about in the two convents, he said to us: 'I now wish to show you, gentlemen, one of the most curious things in the ladies' convent.' And he had an album brought in in which we admired some very perfect water-colors. There were birds, landscapes, and marines. 'These very successful drawings,' he said, 'have been made by one of our young nuns who is blind.' And this is what he told us about a charming bunch of roses, one bud of which was blue. 'Some time ago, in the presence of the Marquis of La Roche-Jaquelein and several other visitors, I called in the blind nun and asked her to sit down at a table and draw something. We spread out colors for her and gave her pencils, brushes, paper, and she at once began on the bouquet which you see. While she was working they several times placed an opaque body, cardboard or board, between her eyes and the paper and the brush continued to move with the same regularity. To the observation that the bunch was a little slim, she replied: "Very well, I will make a bud come out from the joint of this branch." While she was working at this correction some one replaced the carmine with the blue; and she did not notice the change, and that is why you see a blue bud.'

"The Abbé Dallain," adds the narrator, "was as remarkable for his science and his fine intelligence as for his great piety, and I have never met any one who has inspired more affection and veneration."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Revue spirite* (1864), p. 72.

From the language of the blind young woman, it is certain that she saw; otherwise she would never have said: "I am going to make a bud grow from the joint of this branch." But what is no less certain is that she did not see with her eyes, for she continued her work despite the obstacle that was placed before it. She saw with the sight of the soul, as the sight of the body had been taken away. After all, the somnambulists see in this way; why should not a blind person see, in a similar condition? Was she not in a state of awakened somnambulism?

As for the color blue, put in the place of the red, she may have been thinking only of the position of the bud or may not have noticed it, or may not have seen it as color.

In the face of all these facts we can no longer deny the possibility, for the human organism, of sight without eyes, through opaque bodies, as well as through time and space.<sup>1</sup>

Those who deny this really make us laugh when they state learnedly that there is nothing here but illusion, error, mystification, hallucinations, and other nonsense; that they know the laws of nature and that the universe does not hide anything from them; that the soul does not exist; that there is no spirit either in man or in the cosmos; and that everything is explained by matter and its properties.

These are very simple-minded "reasoners."

The cases reported in this chapter on sight without eyes, by means of the spirit, are as certain as astronomical, meteorological, physical, geological, and anthropological observations, and others of which the most exacting science is composed; as certain and as irrefutable as the psychic or spiritual phenomena, or those procured through mediums, which have been care-

<sup>1</sup> We can find other no less characteristic events in *Les Forces naturelles inconnues*, especially on pages 510, 515, 517, 518. The progress of science has suppressed the paradox of vision through opaque bodies, by the discovery of the Röntgen rays, a fact that ought to be instructive to impenitent unbelievers.

We shall here approach this grave question not by metaphysical considerations but by the experimental method.

My attention was first called to this phenomenon in the spring of 1870, by the account which we are going to read of an observation made by a person endowed with a clear and judicious mind, the Princess Emma Carolath, who, being very fond of France, used to come to Paris every year and liked to talk with me about these great problems. The unexpected war between France and Germany touched her quick sensibility and the young woman barely survived this international disaster—a preface to the cataclysm of 1914. This letter is one of the last which I received from her, and the premonitory dream is remarkably explicit. I have already spoken of it in my work “L’Inconnu”; it dates from about twelve years before 1870. Here it is, somewhat abridged:

I had just fallen asleep, very anxious over the health of some one I loved, when I found myself carried in a dream to an unknown castle, into an octagonal cabinet hung in red damask. There was a bed in which lay sleeping the person whose health disturbed me. A lamp, hanging from the arch of the canopy, flooded with light the pale but smiling face, framed in thick masses of black hair. At the bed’s head was a picture, the subject of which was so strangely engraved on my memory that on my awakening I could have drawn it: it was a Christ crowned with roses by a heavenly spirit, with verses by Schiller, which I read.

Two years later we went for a country visit to a castle in the depths of Hungary. I stopped, trembling, when I entered the apartment which had been set aside for us: I was in the octagonal cabinet, hung in red damask, before the bed and before the picture of Christ crowned with roses, with the verses of Schiller. This picture had never been copied or reproduced, and it was impossible that I should have seen it otherwise than in the dream—any more, for that matter, than I could have seen the octagonal cabinet.

EMMA, PRINCESS CAROLATH,  
Weisbaden: March 5, 1870.

Since this already far-away period of 1870 my attention has often been called to this sort of event, which I have been led to examine with particular care. The work which I am to-day laying before the reader, therefore, represents almost fifty years of varied observations, and I present it with all the confidence that this slow elaboration justifies.

One can object to this dream, as to other similar ones, that it was not written down and dated by a canceled postage-stamp before its verification,—which would assuredly have been absolute proof,—and that in the mind of the narrator it might have been made to conform to the incident as observed, so that her so-called verification would be fallacious. But this objection has scarcely any value, as, contrariwise, it was this unexpected verification which struck the observer.

We attach no importance to these dreams unless they are realized, and we do not take the precaution to write them down in advance. It can also be objected that we see in dreams many scenes and countries which we never actually see again; that we see only coincidences which have occurred more or less by chance, and that for one coincidence which appears there are a thousand which do not come to pass. To suppose that at sight of a room, a house, a landscape, a sort of sudden and fugitive dream may traverse the brain and give the impression of the *already seen*, is another hypothesis and explanations have been proposed for such apparent exteriorizations. Further on we will discuss the objections and we will examine all the explanations. For the present, let us note that there are different sorts of physiological dreams, and that we are concerned here not with more or less vague dreams, but with *precise visions* which strike the attention enough to be retained in all their details. But let us not discuss it just now. Let us bring forward the facts. The impartial reader will be the best judge. Our duty is to establish the facts liberally and with no preconceived idea. Hy-

potheses do not constitute science: it is observations that do so, in the psychic sciences as well as in the physical and natural sciences.

I do not wish to reconsider here the numerous examples (195) published in "L'Inconnu," showing so clearly a vision of the future. But since that time (1899) I have received a great number of others which may interest readers who are concerned about the same problems.

The *already seen* forms a part of the still unexplained phenomena of the vision of the future which we will study in this chapter as a function of the soul, substantiating its intrinsic reality.

Generally this impression of the already seen is considered an illusion; it has been called "false recognition," "perversion of memory," "paramnesia," "ancestral memory," and other hypothetical names. I invite seekers after truth to meditate on the following assemblage of carefully made observations.

And first of all, there is this one, which alone would suffice to prove the reality of which we have spoken.

The already seen, clearly and literally presented by premonitory dreams, is a fact that cannot be denied, however inexplicable it may still be in the present state of our psychology. Here, for example, is an honest and irrefutable account, by Canon Garnier, a worthy priest of the diocese of Langres,<sup>1</sup> and former professor at the little seminary where, as we shall see, an event of this sort occurred which it is impossible to doubt.

It was in 1846, during the second year of my work in the upper seminary. One night I traveled in spirit during my sleep. The road which I followed—white, smooth, and sparsely bordered with trees—seemed to descend the side of a mountain, by a gentle slope, and reach a plain that stretched away out of sight. The sun

<sup>1</sup> Where I studied Latin from eleven to fourteen years of age. See my *Memoirs*.

was sinking toward the horizon, as it was between four and five in the afternoon, and shed its peaceful light over the country-side, with delicate shadings of color and shadow that are easier to imagine than to describe.

I found that I had suddenly stopped short, without knowing how or why, at a spot where another road cut at right angles that which I was following. For all that, there was nothing unusual about it that could have caught the eye of the traveler, nor even attracted his attention. Nevertheless, I still see myself standing there, straight as a statue, contemplating with especial satisfaction nothing much—one of those country scenes which we see every day.

To the left, I noticed, the road crossed mine and passed around the mountain, where, consequently, there had been built a little wall about a meter high which ran along the road, to sustain the earth.

Along this wall were planted three large trees which threw a dense shade.

About thirty feet from the spot where I was standing, opposite me, in a well-leveled court, there rose, close to the road, a charming little house, white as chalk and bathed in sunshine. The only window, which faced the road, was open: behind the window sat a woman well but simply dressed. Red predominated among the bright colors of her clothes. On her head was a white cap of some very light material with openwork embroidery, of a form that was unknown to me. This woman seemed about thirty years old.

Standing before her was a young girl of ten or twelve years, whom I took to be her own. She was attentively watching her mother, who was knitting and showing her how it was done: she was barefoot, her hair down her back, and was dressed somewhat like the mother. By the side of the young girl were three children rolling on the ground: a small boy who might have been four or five years old was on his knees, showing something to his two little brothers, smaller than he, to amuse them; these were flat on their backs before the eldest, and all three were absorbed in their admiration. The two women had given me a rapid glance when they saw me standing there and looking at them, but they had not stirred. Evidently they often saw travelers passing.

A large dog stretched his length beside them and scratched himself from time to time, to put the fleas to rout.

Through the wide-open door I saw three men seated on benches about a table, two on one side and one on the other, at the very back of the room, playing and drinking. They looked like workmen employed in the neighborhood. They wore the linen apron and the pointed hat of the Abruzzi.

On the other side, at the right, three sheep were browsing on the unappetizing grass; occasionally they butted one another in a friendly way. To the side two horses, one bay and the other white, were fastened to the wall. A pretty little colt wandered here and there to amuse himself, and went toward the table of the players, without doubt to take a lesson and to brush their hair with his nose. The young innocent received a good cuff as his reward.

I also noticed four or five hens and a fine cock with a magnificent tail, the sort of cock whose green-and-black plumes decorate the caps of the Italian mountaineers. These poor fowls were seeking their pittance in the court, where the grass, dried by the sun, hardly covered the white dust.

Such was the simple country scene which I was watching, in complete content, for the space of ten minutes perhaps, and which disappeared suddenly as it had come. Before, I had seen nothing; afterward I saw nothing, and I believed it drowned in the flood of forgetfulness for all eternity.

This is how it came once more to life, and was stamped for ever on my memory and imagination.

I still see this little corner of the earth, as I see the clock-tower of my village.

In 1849 I, with two friends, took a trip into Italy.

Arrival at Marseilles, a step to Genoa, a brief call at Leghorn, Siena, Florence, then a quick advance upon Rome.

We pass through a hamlet in the Apennines. A good coach receives our august persons. Four or five horses draw the coach, and set off like lightning, with a great ringing of their thousand little bells; the *vetturino*, or postilion, wearing an African helmet, or rather harlequin hat, cracks the whip eternally,—as though he would throw his arm out of joint!—brings all the curious into the street, and exhibits his prowess to the eyes of the multitude. There is not

time enough to admire our Lordships; our carriage does not run, it flies.

But after leaving the city all ardor disappears, we sink into a dead calm, we reach the crest of the mountain. There is a halt of five minutes; four proud coursers replace our *Rosinantes*; whip up, coachman!—our carriage flies along with the dust, we descend like a storm, recommending our souls to God. (There was good reason, for I am yet unable to imagine how we ever managed to find ourselves still whole and with all our limbs after so mad a ride.)

Finally the carriage slows down to a reasonable speed and arrives at a relay station without mishap.

During this stop, I look out of the carriage door and sweat comes out on me; my heart beats like a tambourine, and I mechanically put my hand to my face, as if to remove a veil which troubles me and prevents me from seeing: I rub my nose, my eyes, like a sleeper who awakens suddenly after a dream. I really think I am dreaming, and yet my eyes are wide open; I assure myself that I am not mad nor yet the victim of a most singular illusion. Before my eyes is the little country scene which I saw long ago in my dream. Nothing has changed!

The first thought that comes to me, after I get back my wits, is this: I have already seen this. I do not know where, but I am quite sure of it,—that is certain. For all that, I have never been here, as this is the first time I have been in Italy. How does it happen?

Sure enough, there are the two roads that cross, the little wall which holds the earth up at the side of the court, the trees, the white house, the open window; the mother knitting and her daughter watching her, the three little fellows amusing themselves with the dog, the three workmen, drinking and playing, the colt who goes to take a lesson and receives a cuff, the two horses, the sheep. Nothing is changed: the people are exactly those I saw, as I saw them, doing the same things in the same attitudes, with the same gestures, etc. How is that possible? But the fact is certain, and for fifty years I have wondered. Mystery! First I saw it in a dream; secondly, I saw it in actual reality, three years after.

ABBÉ GARNIER, CANON.

(Letter 901.)

Such is the literal text. I have given it in full, instead of in a summary, for each detail is interesting.

If we admit this account—it seems very difficult to refuse to do so, as the author is not a mere nobody, nor a joker, nor an illusionist—we have before us two recorded facts: first, a dream that occurred under known conditions, in a room of the large seminary of Langres, and secondly, a view of this dream in panorama, three years later.

The psychologists who teach that the already seen is an illusion are in error. The scene observed has really been seen in advance.

Without doubt, in fifty years one can imagine a more complete identification of the two scenes, that of the dream and that of the trip; it happens quite naturally in the mind of the narrator. But the foundation remains. There have indeed been two successive sights,—one in a dream, the other in reality,—and the first had too sharply struck the young abbé for there to be any doubt of it.

This story recalls the premonitory dream at Niort of Saint-Maixent with which my readers are already familiar. Monsieur Groussard, curé of Sainte-Radegonde, when he was in school at Niort at fifteen years of age, dreamed that he was at Saint-Maixent (a town which he did not know by name) with his schoolmaster, in a small square, near a well opposite to which was a pharmacy, and that he saw coming toward him a lady of the neighborhood whom he remembered to have seen once at Niort. This lady accosted him and spoke to him of matters which he found so extraordinary that, as soon as it was morning, he told the *patron*, as they called the head of the institution. The latter, very much astonished, made him repeat the conversation. A few days later, having business at Saint-Maixent, the patron took the boy with him. No sooner arrived they found themselves in the square seen in the dream, at two points marked on a map which Monsieur Groussard sent me, and saw coming

toward them the lady in question, who held with the *patron*, *absolutely word for word*, the conversation of which the scholar had told.

These events are more frequent than are often imagined. For my part, I have been told of a great number. Here is one in which an exact sight of the scene to come is shown very clearly:

In June, 1898, I was living with an uncle whom I dearly loved. As his health had become uncertain, we thought we ought to change our apartment for a house with a southern exposure and surrounded by a garden.

The evening before we moved, at eleven o'clock, I was thinking (very wide awake) alone in my room, of the grief I felt in leaving the well-loved apartment, when all at once I saw the garden of our new dwelling as it was at the time, very shady and full of flowers; then it became clearer, it seemed larger, and I saw it as it must appear in winter. The only verdure left was the green arbor of ivy. And at the same time I saw two undertaker's men, one large and one short, going down the path which led to the street.

This vision, which was very intense, struck me greatly at first, then I thought no more about it in the midst of the cares which my uncle's condition caused me. But seven months later, in January, my uncle died, and the day of his burial, a few minutes before the body was taken away, I saw the undertaker's two men, *one large and one small*, going down the path in the same spot where my vision had shown them to me.

Be good enough to excuse, dear master, the great liberty I have taken in writing to you and receive my most respectful salutations.

MARIE LEBAS,

15 rue Corneille, Le Havre.

(Letter 920.)

This letter had evidently but one aim, and that quite disinterested—to let me know of a case of vision of the future which was exactly verified. We can imagine that the author foresaw the death of her uncle; but that is all. To have

seen what came to pass seven months later, the winter landscape, the two funereal men, is outside the scope of rational normality. This *already seen* cannot be explained, as people pretend, as a vision at the moment of the event, for the author experienced it one evening in June, 1898, and the event took place in January, 1899.

The evidences of the already seen are very numerous. The following account was sent me by a reader of an article, "La Glane," in "La Nouvelle Mode," for May 26, 1918:

I dreamed that I was on my vacation, at the place where I usually go, but the room which was given me was different from my own and behind a clothes-press I saw spreading flames. A stupid dream, I forgot it.

Six months later I reached my destination. I was led into a very small summer-house. Although I had never seen it before, I recognized this little corner which was meant for me. The clothes-press, in the same spot, recalled the fire. I spoke of it and they reassured me. For ten years no fire had harmed the neighborhood. I had begun to lose my fear, when, toward the fourth week, the tocsin sounded. An immense fire consumed a farm not far from my dwelling, made worse by the straw and rubbish, and even licked the wall where the clothes-press stood.

AIMÉE ROGÉ.

Once more, these premonitions are neither so exceptional nor so uncertain as is supposed.

In his carefully verified work on "Prémonitory Phenomena" the Italian scholar Bozzano reports the following occurrence which is quite typical as regards the "already seen." The Chevalier Giovanni de Figueroa, one of the best and most renowned fencing-masters of Palermo, relates what happened to himself:

One night in the month of August, in the year 1910, I awoke under the impression of a dream which had been so vivid that I

roused my wife and told her immediately all these strange, curious, and precise details.

I was somewhere in the country, on a white and dusty road, by which I was entering a vast cultivated field. In the center of this field there rose a rustic building with a ground floor for shops and stables. To the right of the house I saw a sort of hut formed of armfuls of leaves and dried wood, and there was also a cart, the sides of which were taken down, and on it a harness for a beast of burden.

Then a peasant, whose face has remained sharp and clear in my memory, clad in dark-colored trousers, his head covered with a soft hat, approached me and invited me to follow him, which I did. He led me behind the building, and through a low and narrow door we entered a little stable, four or five meters square, or more, full of dirt and manure. In this little stable there was a short stone stairway which turned inward above the entrance door. A mule was fastened to a movable trough and, with his hind quarters, obstructed the passage by which one reached the first steps of the stairs. The peasant having assured me that the animal was gentle, I made him move and climbed the stairway, at the top of which I found myself in a little chamber, or attic, with a wooden floor; and I noticed, hanging from the ceiling, winter watermelons, green tomatoes, onions, and green corn.

In this same room, which served as an anteroom, was a group of two women and a little girl. One of these two women was old and the other young; I supposed that the latter was the mother of the child. The features of these three persons also remained engraved on my memory. Through the door which opened into the adjoining chamber I noticed a double bed, very high, such as I had never seen.

That was the dream.

In the following month of October I went to Naples to assist our fellow-citizen, Monsieur Amedeo Brucato, in a duel.

This is not the time to tell of the incidents, the annoyances, and the mishaps that assailed me because of this assistance; I will only say, so far as concerns the dream, that the affair led me into a duel of my own.

This duel took place on October 12th, the day when, with my sec-

onds—Captain Bruno Palamenghi, of the 4th Bersaglieri, in garri-son at Naples, and Francesco Busardo—I went to Marano by automobile, where I had never been in my life and which I did not even know existed. I had barely penetrated a few hundred meters into the flat country when I was sharply struck with the road, broad and white with dust, which I recognized as having seen,—but when, or on what occasion? We stopped at the edge of a field which was not unknown to me, because I had already seen it. We got down from the automobile and went into a field to a path bordered with thickets and plants, and I said to Captain Bruno Palamenghi, who was by my side: “I know this spot, this is not the first time I have come here; at the end of the path there ought to be a house; there, at the right, there is a wooden hut.” It was, indeed, all there, and also the cart with the lowered sides, containing a harness for a beast of burden.

An instant later a peasant in black trousers, with soft black hat, exactly like him I had seen two months before in my dream, came to invite me to follow him into the house and, instead of following him, I preceded him to the door of the stable, *which I already knew*, and, on entering, saw the mule fastened to the trough; then I looked at the peasant, to ask him if the beast was harmless, for his hind quarters prevented me from climbing the little stone stairway, and he assured me, as in the dream, that there was no danger. Having climbed the stairs, I found myself in the attic, where I recognized the watermelons up under the ceiling, the green tomatoes, the onions, the green corn, and, in the little room, in an angle at the right, the old woman, the young one, and the child, as I had seen them in my dream.

In the neighboring chamber, which I had to enter in order to remove my things, I recognized the bed that had so much astonished me in my dream because of its height, and I laid my vest and hat on it.

I had spoken of my dream to several of my friends in the armory, in the fencing-ring, and elsewhere; persons who can all vouch for it: Captain Palamenghi, the lawyer, Tomasso Forcasi, Monsieur Amedeo Brucato, Count Dentale Diaz, and Monsieur Roberto Giannina of Naples were witnesses to my precise knowledge of the spot and the persons who had their place in the events of the duel.

My word as a man of honor will suffice, I believe, to assure the truth of these things; nevertheless, if it were absolutely necessary to have recourse to the evidence of the witnesses I should have no difficulty in writing one by one to the friends I have named and I am sure they would not fail to respond to my wish.

These are the facts; the interpretation of them concerns the scholars.

GIOVANNI DE FIGUEROA.

"This episode," writes Bozzano, "is particularly worthy of attention because its authenticity cannot be held in doubt, as the man who told it is a person who knows the value of a word of honor, and the fact that he told about the dream before its realization excludes the hypothesis that the impression of the already seen could be reduced to a trick of the memory."

Bozzano is a spiritualist and is convinced of reincarnation. For him the life of the spirit reconciles these apparent contradictions.

It does not seem to me that the explanation of the mystery has actually been given. It ought still to be studied.

To see something that does not exist, that will not exist except in the future—three years, three months, or three days after; it makes little difference—is inadmissible to all those who are not familiar with our studies, although it may be certain to us. My records on this point are numerous. Here is another:

Monsieur Pletneff, a government official of Tver, Russia, assessor of the college, wrote me in 1899 (Letter 777) that he had seen in a dream his friend Oseroff carried in a coffin surrounded by relatives and friends, that he was ignorant at the time of where Oseroff was living and of what his state of health was, and that "almost the same day" he had died at Victni-Valotchek, a city of the department of Tver.

This same letter states that one of the chancellors of the

department of Tver, Monsieur Ivan Sasonoff, very much esteemed by the writer of the letter, was passing one day before a house and saw, while he was entirely awake, a stone stairway on the outside *which did not exist*. Monsieur Pletneff, having passed there twice on the same day, made quite sure that this exterior stairway really was not there. But on passing by three or four days later he noticed that they had brought white stones and were tearing down the old stairway in order to build a new one.

Therefore, this non-existing stairway was seen before it was built, and the observer passing by there would naturally have been convinced that he had already seen it.

Here is another event no less odd :

Professor Boehm, who used to teach mathematics at Marburg, was spending an evening with friends, when he was seized with the conviction that he ought to return home. As he was peacefully taking his tea, he resisted this impression, which, however, came back with such force that he was obliged to yield. When he reached home he found everything as he had left it, but he felt himself driven to change the place of his bed; however absurd this mental command seemed to him, he felt that he *ought* to do it, so he called the servant, and, with his help, pulled the bed to the other side of the room. When that was done, he felt quite at his ease, and returned to finish the evening with his friends. They separated at ten o'clock; he returned home and went to sleep. He was awakened in the middle of the night by a great noise and discovered that a heavy beam had fallen, carrying with it part of the ceiling, and was lying on the spot which his bed had occupied.

What is the mysterious force which warns us in this way? Yes, I repeat that all this seems inadmissible—to see what does not exist! The scene observed by the Abbé Garnier in 1849 did not exist in 1846, the young woman was three years younger, one of her children was not born; the uncle of Madame Lebas was not in his grave seven months before his death; the scene of the month of October at Marano did not

exist in the month of August, etc. *But can we deny these facts of observation?*

This work had already gone to press when I received the following letter in response to an oral communication which had especially interested me. According to a generally adopted rule I had begged the author to accompany his account with evidence, establishing the priority of his dream to the occurrence itself.

Paris: September 9, 1919.

As I promised you, I am sending you, under this cover, accompanied by two testimonials, the account of the premonitory dream which you showed a desire to publish. I am very happy to send you this exact observation and beg you to accept, etc.

A. SAUREL.

In 1911 I dreamed I was in a new country-side, in a land that I felt was unknown to me.

On a little eminence, the gentle slopes of which were covered with fresh meadows, I saw a large building of medieval appearance, half small country-seat, half fortified farm. High walls, weathered by storms, surrounded the buildings with their unbroken girdle. Four massive towers, not very high, flanked the corners. Before the principal part and through the meadow there ran a pretty brook, with clear, babbling waters.

Men—soldiers—were fetching water from it. Others were lighting fires not far from stacks of guns ranged along the walls. These men were clad in a curious pale-blue uniform which I did not know, and wore a helmet which seemed to me of a strange shape.

I saw myself clad in the uniform of an officer and giving the orders of the camp.

By one of those odd phenomena which many persons have experienced, I thought, while attending to these affairs: "What an absurd situation! Why am I here and in this costume?"

As this dream had left me, on my awakening, with a very clear and precise impression, I did not cease to be interested in the absence of those incoherent or ridiculous details which people our

sleep, and by this appearance of harmony and logic in the absurd; for absurd it seemed to me, this situation as officer in an unknown army.

During the day I spoke to those about me of this dream and of the blue soldiers which animated it. Then I thought no more of it.

But the war, which overthrew so many existences, made me, after a series of incarnations, a lieutenant of infantry. My regiment happened to be resting close to the front in the Aube. I was taking forward my recruits of the class of 1919.

The battalion had been marching since early morning. The heat which faded the tender green of the tall rye made itself keenly felt by my poor young greenhorns. The cloud of dust raised on the road by the thousands of weary feet did not permit me to see where we were. I had received the order to camp under the walls of "the château," which was, the quartermaster told me, two hundred meters to the right. After having given my orders to the chiefs of section, I went to join the major.

A few minutes later I rejoined my company around the poplar walk which hid the château from me.

The country-side which appeared after I had passed the last intervening tree, struck me immediately. It was the same gently sloping meadow, all gay with the flowers which June scatters everywhere; the walls, the towers—all was exactly like that which I had seen seven years before in my dream. All it lacked were the pretty, noisy brook and the monumental gateway.

As I was noting this difference between the dream and the reality, an adjutant came to ask me where the troop should go to get water. "To the brook," I answered, laughing. The non-commissioned officer looked at me in astonishment. I added: "Yes, if it isn't on this side it must surely be on the other side of the building. Come with me."

When we had rounded the tower at the north corner I saw, without astonishment, the gay brook running over the mossy stones and, toward the middle of the wall, the large gateway just as I had seen it in my dream with its pillars of old brick.

The two leading sections had already solved the problem of water. Stacks of guns stood at the foot of the walls, in the shadow of which many of my men were already enjoying deeply desired rest.

The tableau thus formed was that of the dream of 1911. Nothing sensational took place in this spot; therefore, this dream consisted of nothing but a startling view into the future, showing me, notably, my future situation as an officer, which it was impossible to suspect in 1911.

A. SAUREL.

(Letter 4106.)

This premonitory dream was exceptionally precise. Monsieur Saurel saw, in 1911, an episode of the war of 1914-18, in which he served as an officer. It is a case similar to that related in "*L'Inconnu*" (555)—the case of Monsieur Régnier who in 1869 saw himself figuring in an episode of the war of 1870. In this case, as in all similar ones, the question arises: If one has seen a year in advance, or seven years in advance, or three years in advance, as in the case of the Abbé Garnier which has just been quoted, a scene which was to take place at the time when it did take place, then the free will of man does not exist and the true doctrine is absolute fatalism. At such a date in 1849 the Italian woman had to be in the house on the road to Rome, with three little children, drinking workmen, a gamboling colt, etc.; at such a date in 1870, Monsieur Régnier had to be a soldier facing the Prussians and Bavarians and hurl himself, bayonet in hand, upon the aggressors; at such a date in 1918 Monsieur Saurel had to send the soldiers to get water in front of the unknown tower. And the same is true of hundreds of similar cases of prevision. What remains of our free will, of our personal liberty? Is there not here an absolute contradiction? Is it possible to admit at one and the same time the liberty of our actions and the sight of the future?

This question will be fully discussed in the following chapter. Suffice it to say, at present, that it is extremely subtle, but can nevertheless be solved by the reconciliation of two apparently contradictory terms, by imagining that the human will is one of the factors employed in the production of these

events; that something will always happen, but that it is not inevitable, for all that; and that one sees simply what will happen, thought transcending, suppressing time, time not existing in itself, and the past and the future being able to exist together in an eternal present.

If one refused to admit this reconciliation one would be obliged to admit that Bismarck was not responsible for having falsified the despatch from Ems in order to precipitate France into the German abyss opened before her, and that in 1914 William II had no responsibility for the Austrian trickery in the exploitation of the murder of Sarajevo. Otherwise, we should have to admit that there are no bad men,—profligates, knaves, impostors, murderers,—nor any good men either,—humanitarian, devoted, honest, sacrificing themselves to the moral and intellectual welfare of humanity.

We shall speak of this subject in detail in the next chapter, in connection with the communication which was made me in 1911 by Frédéric Passy.

Because of the astonishment which such experiences as these cause us, we seek for all the hypotheses contrary to the admission of the facts. We imagine, for example, in order to explain the sensation of the already seen, that the impression produced on the retina by a country-side or a scene is simultaneously registered in the memory and in the consciousness, and we suppose that by means of even a very slight delay (the fraction of a second) the storing of the image takes place in the memory before the conscious perception is felt. In this case, the sense of memory having been struck a fugitive instant before that of the real vision, we think that we have already seen the present scene, in some undetermined former time; for even the tenth of a second, as is proved by dreams, can give the impression of a very long time. Another hypothesis assumes that the perception of a scene which one believes one has already seen, can be compared to the optical phenomenon of double refraction,

which causes one image reaching two faces of a prism to be refracted on two different planes: there would be one projection on the plane of the past and one on the plane of the present; for an instant our soul would see double.

These explanations are most ingenious; but, on the one hand, they are not proved—not at all—and remain in the realm of pure imagination, which has nothing to do with scientific exactness; and, on the other hand, the facts contradict them, when they have been previously related, as in the case of the square of Saint-Maixent, which was seen several days in advance by a young scholar of Niort who was not familiar with it (see page 228); of the child seized with croup, an event seen the day before (“L’Inconnu,” page 550); of the despairing patient of Dr. Liébault (see page 309); of the election of Casimir-Perier (page 270), etc. In these cases the explanation just given lacks common sense. Perhaps it is sometimes applicable, but rarely, if it is true at all.

We must therefore look for something else.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Ribot of the Institute has further treated this subject in his work on “Les Maladies de la Mémoire.” He writes:

It sometimes happens, in a foreign country, that the sudden turn of a path or of a river brings us face to face with a landscape which it seems to us we have seen before. When we are introduced for the first time to a person, we feel that we have already met him. In reading new thoughts in a book we feel that they have already been presented to the mind.

The author thinks that this illusion is explained by the following hypothesis:

<sup>1</sup> A great number of authors have analyzed this subject without approaching the solution, such as Dugas, Lalande, Vignoli, Wigan, Maudsley, Anjel, Binet, Fouillé, Piéron, Vaschide, Soury, P. Lapie, but none have divined it with the exception of Bozzano and C. de Visme. See *La Revue des études psychiques* for 1901.

The impression received evokes from our past similar impressions, vague, confused, barely glimpsed, but they suffice to make us believe that the new state is a repetition. There is at bottom a quickly felt resemblance between two states of consciousness which lead us to identify them. It is an error, but it is only partly an error, because there is indeed in our past something which resembles a first experience.

This explanation is certainly not satisfactory. It does not explain any of the events which I have just described. The author remarks elsewhere, very honestly, that it does not apply to such cases as the following which he gives:

A sick man called Sander, on learning of the death of a person of his acquaintance, was seized with an indefinable terror, because it seemed to him that he had already experienced this impression. "I felt that already, some time before, while I was lying here in this same bed, X—— had come and told me, 'Muller died some time ago.' He could n't die twice!"

Monsieur Ribot must have been very much embarrassed to explain physiologically these curious facts. He has also quoted the following example, which much resembles the former:

Wigan in his book on "*La Dualité de l'esprit*," which he pretends to explain by the two hemispheres of our brain, reports that while he was present at the funeral services of the Princess Charlotte, in the chapel at Windsor, he had all at once the feeling of having already been a witness of the same spectacle. The illusion was fugitive.

No hypothesis is acceptable. People used to suppose that the illusion of the already seen might be one of the unconscious memories inherited from our ancestors, who might have known what we see at present. This also is inadmissible.

Assuredly, any explanation is almost impossible. Monsieur Ribot qualifies these coincidences as the actions of "false

memory." But that is not an explanation. He mentions, further on, the following incident, taken from a work by Dr. Arnold Pick, which is no less inexplicable:

An educated man, who was very intelligent about his illness and who has given a written description of it, was attacked, toward the age of thirty-two, by a peculiar mental state. If he was present at a fair, if he was visiting some spot, if he met some one, this happening with all its circumstances seemed so familiar to him that he felt sure he had already gone through the same experiences, had been surrounded by precisely the same persons, or the same objects, with the same sky and the same weather, etc. If he undertook some new work it seemed to him that he had already performed it and under the same conditions. This feeling sometimes occurred the same day, or at the end of a few minutes or hours, sometimes the following day only, but with perfect clearness.<sup>1</sup>

That is evidently a pathological case.

"In these phenomena of false memory," writes Monsieur Ribot, "there is an anomaly of the mental mechanism which escapes us." But this designation "false memory" explains nothing to us. The learned physiologist, nevertheless, tries to understand, and he has good reason to try. "We can admit," says he, "that the mechanism for the localization as to the past works backward," and he proposes the explanation which follows:

The image thus formed is very intense, of an hallucinatory nature; it imposes itself as a reality because nothing rectifies this illusion. As a result, the real impression is thrown into the background, with the indistinct character of memories; it is localized in the past, wrongly if we consider things objectively, rightly if we consider

<sup>1</sup> Apropos of memory, Monsieur Ribot cites assuredly one of the most curious examples that has been observed: an imbecile recalled the day of each burial made in the parish for thirty-five years. He could repeat with unvarying exactness the name and age of the deceased, as well as those who had worn mourning. Outside of this mortuary register he did not have an idea; he could not answer the simplest question and was not even capable of remembering it.

things subjectively. This hallucinatory state, in fact, while very vivid, does not efface the real impression, but as it springs from it, as it has been produced by it too late, it must appear like a second experience. It takes the place of the real impression, it seems the most recent, and such it is, in fact. To us, who judge it from without and in accordance with what has come to pass externally, it is false that the impression was received twice; to the sick man, who judges according to the ideas of his consciousness, it is true that the impression was received twice, and within these limits his statement is incontestable.

We will confess that these "explanations" of the learned professor explain nothing at all. There is here a series of psychic phenomena that are very different from one another, and to which the same theory could not apply.

To Monsieur Ribot the memory is in its essence a biological fact, and by accident a psychological fact. As the number of brain cells is somewhere between six hundred millions and twelve hundred millions, and that of the brain nerves has been reckoned at four or five thousand millions, the brain can be considered as a laboratory full of movement, where a thousand labors go on at the same time: the memory-impressions are surely numerous enough. But certain impressions are, as we have just seen, *psychic rather than physical*. If it is only by accident that memory appertains to the psychic world, this accident is perhaps the one thing essential to the discovery of the invisible world, just as the apparent disorders, the disturbances in the universal gravitation, are the most fertile source of discovery in astronomy. We have had proof of this in the discovery of the planet Neptune, through the perturbations of Uranus, in that of the companion of Sirius, etc. No, the already seen is not a physiological fact of the brain; it is a metaphysical phenomenon, the realization of what has been already seen.

Let us now enter fully into the problem of the knowledge of the future.

## IX

### KNOWLEDGE OF THE FUTURE

Will sit by the side of destiny as the  
directing power.

GOLDEN VERSES OF PYTHAGORAS.

**W**HAT we have been considering relative to the *already seen* is the natural introduction to that which follows. We shall now study observations verifying the premonitory visions that establish the *knowledge of the future*.

I have published under this title, in "La Revue,"<sup>1</sup> of March 1 and of April 1, 1912, the principal documents proving that, under certain conditions, the future has been seen and known in advance. Many writers have taken up this subject since the publication of these documents—and have reproduced them without always taking the trouble to mention my work; but that is an insignificant detail. What particularly interests us here is to know that the future has been known, described, announced, often with detailed precision, and that, therefore, there is in the human being a psychic principle endowed with faculties independent of the properties of matter, a soul as distinguished from the body.

I shall first point out the case of premonition by dream which I published in 1911, in the "Annales des Sciences psychiques," then in "La Revue," of which I have just spoken. Here is the curious account:

Monsieur Frédéric Passy, the venerable member of the Institute whose long career has been so honorably consecrated to the cause of pacifism as opposed to the imbecility of human

<sup>1</sup> Formerly the *Revue des revues*, now the *Revue mondiale*

war,<sup>1</sup> came to see me one fine day in the month of January, 1911, having valiantly climbed my five flights despite his eighty-nine years. It was one of his last visits and the incident described surely merited its selection by him.

"I did not find it in your 'L'Inconnu,' " he said, "and I feel sure it will interest you, as it comes from a scrupulous writer, a man of incontestable integrity, the Quaker Etienne de Grellet. I am giving you his account, as I have copied it down, of his trip into Russia. During his stay at St. Petersburg the Countess Toutschkoff told what follows to the Quaker traveler:

"About three months before the entry of the French into Russia the general her husband was with her on their estate in Toula. She dreamed that while she was in a hotel in an unknown city, her father entered, holding her only son by the hand, and said to her these exact words:

*"Your happiness is ended, your husband has fallen. He fell at Borodino."*

"She awoke in great distress, but seeing her husband near her she realized that it was a dream and succeeded in falling asleep again.

"The dream occurred again and was followed by so much melancholy that it was long before she recovered.

"The dream occurred a third time. At this she experienced such anguish that she awoke her husband and asked him, 'Where is Borodino?'

"He did not know. In the morning they both began to search, with their father, on the map of the country, but failed to find it. At that time it was a very obscure spot, but it became famous through the bloody battle which was fought near it. Nevertheless, the impression which the countess had received was profound and her anxiety was great. Then the theater of the war moved away; but soon it approached again.

"Before the French armies reached Moscow, General Toutschkoff was put at the head of the reserve army. One morning the father

<sup>1</sup> As for me, I have consecrated myself to the same protests since my first work (1862), when I was twenty years old. Quite uselessly, also, so universal is human stupidity.

of the countess, holding her young son by the hand, entered the room in the hotel where she was living. He was sad, as she had seen him in her dream, and he said to her:

“‘He has fallen, he has fallen at Borodino.’

“She saw herself in the same room, surrounded by the same objects with which she had been surrounded in her dream.

“Her husband had, indeed, been one of the numerous victims of the bloody battle waged upon the banks of the river Borodino, which gave its name to a little village.”

(An exact copy)

FRÉDÉRIC PASSY.

This premonitory dream, so tragically precise, is assuredly most characteristic.

Can it be supposed that it had been formulated afterward in the mind of the narrator? No, as its realization had aroused in him an unforgettable emotion, and three months before its realization they had searched for this place on the map of Russia.

It presents all the qualities of authenticity. But then, as I have remarked, if the death of the general at Borodino was seen several months in advance, were this death and this battle therefore inevitable? And in such case what becomes of free will? Napoleon, then, was forced to make the fatal Russian campaign and was not responsible? Are human liberty and responsibility only an illusion?

We shall later analyze these undoubtedly confusing consequences. What shall we think? Fatalism seems in discord with all human progress. But it is a mistake to suppose that fatality and determinism are identical.

In regard to this a young girl of Naples, Mademoiselle Vera Kunzler, sent me in the month of April, 1917, a letter full of distress because of some sentences of mine which she had read concerning the incontestable cases of the *sight of the future*, begging me to explain how it was possible to reconcile these carefully observed facts, which I vouched for, with free

will, our sense of liberty, and our responsibility. She was all the more insistent because she was still under the shock of a profound emotion, caused by a tragic prediction which had recently been realized in her own family.

I replied to her that fatalism and determinism are two doctrines absolutely different from each other, and that it was necessary not to confuse them, as is generally done. In the first, man is a passive being who awaits events which are inevitable. In the second, on the contrary, man is active and forms a contributing cause. One does not see what *must* happen but what will happen. Something will always happen. It is this something which we see, without its being inevitable, for all that. The distinction, it is true, is extremely subtle, but it seemed to me that her young soul of seventeen years, pure and free of all preconceived ideas, and of a sensitiveness which in her correspondence struck me as particularly delicate, would perceive this distinction, if she gave it the necessary attention. I begged her at the same time to let me know of the prophecy which had been realized and which had so profoundly troubled her.

Here is her letter, which I reproduce textually:

DEAR GREAT MASTER:

How happy I was to receive your kind letter! It was doubly welcome, first because it came from you, and after that because it brought me a little light on the ideas which are whirling in my brain. I have spent a good deal of thought on your letter, and I have well understood what you had the goodness to explain to me: what will happen may be seen, but is not inevitable. It has brought me infinite relief, for I felt myself going mad over the thought that we are no longer masters of anything at all, not even of our own minds.

You would like to know, dear Master, what the event is which led me to believe in predestination. I will tell you of it as best I can.

It was in the spring of 1910, seven years ago. At the time we

were very intimate with a German lady, named H  l  ne Schmidt. She was a medium of extraordinary power, and as Mama was very much interested in spiritualistic s  ances, she asked her one day to hold one of these s  ances.

I was not present, for at the time I was a little girl, about twelve years old, and I was at school, but Mama and our old servant have often described the incident to me.

H  l  ne Schmidt had only to place her hands upon the table for it to begin at once to rock violently. You know, Master, the manner of communicating with spirits, if there are spirits. When the table, a large and heavy dining-table, which it would have been impossible to lift by muscular force alone, began to rap regular blows, indicating that a spirit was present, Mama asked its name; it named itself by the alphabet, saying it was called *Anton*. The medium was absolutely unacquainted with this name and she had no knowledge either, who was in question when it was mentioned. Anton, I will add, was Anton Fiedler, an Austrian, the first husband of one of my aunts, a sister of Mama's, who had married as a second husband Adolphe Riesbeck. H  l  ne Schmidt was even ignorant of the existence of all these people. As this Anton Fiedler had been my aunt's nearest relative, Mama thought of asking something about her future. To the first question, "Will Riesbeck always keep his fortune?" the spirit answered brusquely, "No."

"In how many years will he lose it?"

The table struck two blows—"Two years."

Mama then asked, "Will he live long after having lost his fortune?" and the reply was clear and precise, "Five years." Then Mama wished to know how he would die, but the spirit answered only that my uncle would die *suddenly*. To the questions as to whether he would die of sickness, accident, suicide, shipwreck, or as the victim of a crime it answered, "*No.*" It was impossible to know how he would die: at that time no one thought of war, otherwise a question concerning it would also have been asked. All that we were able to obtain from Anton Fiedler was the reply to this inquiry: "How old will Riesbeck's son be when he dies?" And the table answered very distinctly: "Seventeen years." Then everything ceased.

Dear Master, I do not permit myself to comment; I tell you

simply what happened. Mama did not at once tell this to my aunt, for fear that she would repeat it to her husband. For that matter, she did not believe in such things. Unfortunately, everything that had been foretold happened with the most frightful precision: In the spring of 1912—that is to say exactly two years after the prophecy—my uncle Riesbeck lost his fortune on the stock exchange in a daring speculation. Some time after, Mama told my aunt, who was and still is at Geneva, of the prophecy which had been made to her and told her the second part of it.

My aunt replied, as any one else would have replied in her place,—that it was all nonsense and that we must not have faith in it.

Nevertheless, the second part of the prophecy has also been realized. Mama and I often spoke of this séance and I said to her: "If the spirit spoke the truth, my uncle ought to die at the beginning of the year 1917."

Well, Master, Adolphe Riesbeck died at the front on February 12, 1917,—a sudden death, a bullet in the head,—when my cousin Mario was nearly eighteen. And this death of which the spirit could not tell us precisely, which was not sickness, nor accident, nor crime, nor any of the known deaths, this death was death in battle, of which no one was thinking then.

I am sending you in this, dear Master, a portion of a letter which my poor aunt sent us at the time of her husband's death. It is written in German, but I believe you know that language, and I shall ask Mama to add her signature to my letter.

I hope this strange prophecy brings a modest contribution to your researches. I promise myself the greatest pleasure in reading the book which you have said you would publish after the war on the "Prevision of the Future."

I am happy, dear Master, to know that everything is not inevitable, for the thought which tormented me was this: The death of my dear uncle was predestined, when the bullet which was to kill him was not even cast.

Pardon me for trespassing on your precious time, and it is the thought of this which often restrains me from writing to you as I should love to do. But on my part I have been very happy to answer your request. All that I write you is absolutely true.

I salute you, Master, respectfully and *caramente*, an Italian word which you will surely understand.

Your goddaughter of the Astronomical Society of France,

VERA KUNZLER.

I certify that my daughter's account is exact in all its details.

E. KUNZLER.

It would be superfluous, for my readers, to add any comment to this account, the complete sincerity of which cannot be doubted. The feelings of profound anguish and infinite curiosity expressed in the first letter which the narrator sent me had already convinced me of it. We have here a typical example of the prevision of the future.

As for its apparently paradoxical agreement with determinism, we are going to speak of that.

Such facts can no longer be denied. All negation would be a flagrant proof of ignorance—or of another state of mind even less excusable.

In this connection, the premonition of General Toutschkoff and my commentary having been published by "La Revue" of March and April, 1912, Frédéric Passy sent me the following letter:

Neuilly: April 27, 1912.

MY DEAR FLAMMARION:

I am among those who hesitate to believe in the possibility of the premonitions of which you speak in your articles; because I see in them a negation of that liberty which no longer exists if events are absolutely determined in advance. For all that, I myself furnished you with one of the incidents which you have cited.

I must tell you that you will find another in the book of Monsieur G. Lenôtre, "The Marquis de la Rouerie and the Breton Conspiracy of 1790-1793."

Madame de Saint-Aulaire—the daughter of Monsieur de Noyan, one of the conspirators—announced one morning to her father, who did not in the least believe it, that he would be arrested and taken before the revolutionary tribunal in Paris, but that she would suc-

ceed in saving his life. The incident is vouched for not only by her—who died long afterward—but by her son, at the time about fifteen years of age, who was to be an important personage under the Restoration and under Louis Philippe as a member of the French Academy.

You will judge for yourself what we ought to think of this event.

FREDÉRIC PASSY.

This premonition was precisely realized.<sup>1</sup>

The question of human liberty deserves to be analyzed.

We still read with real esthetic pleasure the works of our eminent geometrician Laplace, one of the greatest and most penetrating of the minds which are the pride of France, and at the same time one of our purest writers. This is what he wrote, concerning free will, in his “*Essai philosophique sur les probabilités*.” (It is the second edition, of 1814, which I have before me):

All events, even those which, through their insignificance, seem to have no part in the great laws of nature, are as necessary a consequence of them as the movement of the sun. In the ignorance of the bonds that unite them to the entire system of the universe, they have been supposed to depend upon final causes or upon chance, according to whether they occurred or succeeded one another with regularity or without apparent order, but these imaginary causes have been successively withdrawn, with the limits of our knowledge, and have disappeared entirely before the healthy philosophy which sees in them only the expression of the ignorance of which we are the veritable causes.

The actual events have, with what preceded them, a relation that is founded upon the self-evident principle that a thing cannot begin to be without a cause which has produced it. This axiom, known as the principle of *sufficient reason*, extends even to the slightest events. The freest possible will cannot, without a determining motive, give them birth for if, when all the circumstances of the two positions were exactly the same, it acted in one and refrained from

<sup>1</sup> I know of another case similar to it, reported by Lombard de Langres.

acting in the other, its choice would, in fact, be without cause: it would then be, said Leibnitz, the blind chance of the Epicureans. The contrary opinion is an illusion of the mind, which, losing sight of the fugitive reasons for the choice of the will among indifferent things, persuades itself that it has determined itself and without any reasons.

We ought, therefore, to see the present state of the universe as the result of its former state and as the cause of that which will follow. An intelligence which, at a given instant, could understand all the forces with which nature is animated, and the respective situations of the beings which compose it, if it was vast enough to submit these data to analysis, and could include in the same formula the movements of the greatest bodies of the universe and those of the least atom—to such an intelligence nothing would be uncertain, and the future as well as the past would lie open before it. In the perfection which it has been able to bring to astronomy, the human mind offers a feeble outline of this intelligence.<sup>1</sup>

We shall discuss this reasoning in a moment.

We are accustomed to attribute the paternity of this to Laplace. But all thinkers had uttered it before him, and nothing is more natural: it almost dates from La Palice. The first edition of this book on probabilities, consists of a course given by Laplace in 1795 at the Normal School founded by the Convention.

But in 1787 Immanuel Kant had written in his “Critique of Pure Reason”:

From the point of view of time and its regular order, if we could penetrate into the soul of a man so that it will reveal itself by acts internal as well as external, if we could understand all its motives, even the slightest, and at the same time all the external influences, we could calculate the future conduct of this man with all the certainty of an eclipse of the sun or of the moon.<sup>2</sup>

Kant is not the inventor of this argument, either. We

<sup>1</sup> Laplace, *Essai philosophique sur les probabilités* (Paris, 1814), p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> French edition, p. 289. Foissac, *La Chance et la Destinée*, p. 212.

find it among the most ancient authors, as far back as the Romans, as far back as Cicero, for example. In his treatise on "Divination,"<sup>1</sup> he has his brother, Quintus, explain the connection between the sight of the future and fatality. He says:

In order to account for divination, it is necessary to go back to the Divinity, to destiny, to nature. Reason obliges us to confess that everything is governed by destiny. I call destiny that which the Greeks named *εἰσπαράγγελν*: that is to say, an order, a *series of causes joined together and* producing results. There is that perpetual truth the source of which is in eternity itself. According to this there is nothing in the future for which nature does not already contain sufficient causes. Thus destiny would be the eternal cause of all things, the cause which construes past, present, and future events. It is thus by means of observation that we can learn what are usually the consequences of each cause. Without it is this chain of causes and effects which explains inspirations and dreams.

Let us add that since everything is ruled by destiny, if a mortal could exist capable of conceiving the connection between all causes he would never be mistaken. In fact, he who knew all the causes of events could not fail to understand all the future.

This mode of reasoning is impeccable in itself and, I repeat, what Monsieur de La Palice says approaches the truth. That there are no effects without cause, is evident. But the conclusion of fatality, or of absolute determinism, is not backed by the same evidence as this reasoning of simple good sense.

Despite my profound admiration for Laplace, on whose works I was brought up, I confess that I cannot share his absolute negation of free will. My readers already know what I have written concerning this thorny point, in my Memoirs.

"The freest will in the world cannot act without a determining motive." Doubtless. But among the causes con-

<sup>1</sup> *De Divinatione*, lib. I, cap. 55.

cerned in the choice, our own personality exists, and that is not a negligible cause.

This personality acts, one would say, according to its predominant motive, and, is itself, due to former causes,—that is incontestable. Nevertheless it exists, along with our character, and what is here perhaps even more important, even irrefutable, is that we feel very strongly, that we examine, weigh, consider within ourselves, when the matter is worth the trouble, and that we decide with a full sense of our responsibility.

There are times, I admit, when the scales are just in balance, and the smallest added weight may tip them; but this little weight may be our own fancy, our whim, our will, even our own pleasure in frustrating a foreseen result,—in a word, to the extent of the exercise of our liberty. No one has the authority to declare that all this is “an illusion” of our mind, or to state this hypothesis as a demonstrated truth. The principle of the “sufficient reason” is within ourselves, when we discuss it before the tribunal of our conscience.

That we decide in accordance with the predominant motive does not prove that we do not act according to our character. Our own will is associated with this character, without being the slave of it. In his treatise on “The Heavens” Aristotle wrote (Book II, chapter 13): “It is like the case of a man who, being both very hungry and very thirsty, finds himself at an equal distance from food and drink; necessarily he would remain motionless.” Dante said the same thing in the Fourth Book of the “Paradiso”: “*Intra duo cibi, distanti e moventi. D'un modo prima si morria di fame,—che liber uomo t'un recasse à denti.*” Buridan has the credit of having expressed this reasoning, putting a donkey in place of the man.

There is no doubt in any one's mind that neither the donkey nor the man would die of hunger. There is nothing of the mechanical in nature.

Is there absolute incompatibility between prevision and free will? That is what is generally stated, and by ancient writers as well as by moderns.

The author of the "*L'Histoire de la Divination dans l'antiquité*," Monsieur Bouché-Leclercq of the Institute, writes that an uncertain future, depending upon free will, does not agree with the idea of the fixed laws inspired by the sight of the universal order, and that the popular instinct, anticipating the philosophical theories, has been insuperable in its inclination to consider the future as unavoidable (Volume I, page 15); that the future cannot be foreseen just because it is inevitable" (ibid.); that there is "an unending conflict between prevision and liberty and that the one sets aside the other" (ibid., page 16). Sextus Empiricus has shown that since future events must occur either necessarily or by chance or be produced by free agents, divination is useless in the first case and impossible in the second case (ibid., page 79).

In his "Essay on Free Will" Schopenhauer writes: "If we do not admit the rigorous necessity of all that happens by virtue of a causality which compels all events without exception, any prevision is impossible and inconceivable" (page 124).

Evidently there is general belief in an incompatibility, an undetermined contradiction between free will and prescience, because we confound "Divine Prescience" with necessity. That is an error.

In the conversations of Goethe with Eckermann, we may read, under the date of October 13, 1825:

What do we know, and with all our intelligence where do we stand to-day?

Man is not born to solve the problem of the world, but to seek to understand the extent of the problem and to keep, thereafter, well within limits of that which he is able to conceive.

His faculties are not capable of measuring the universe, and to wish to approach the totality of things with the intelligence, when

it has so restricted a point of view, is labor lost. The intelligence of man and the intelligence of the Divinity are two very different things.

As soon as we grant liberty to man, that is the end of the omniscience of God; and if, on the other hand, God knows what I shall do, I am not free to do anything but what he knows. I cite this dilemma only as an example of the little we know, and to show that it is not good to touch upon divine secrets.

Also, among the highest truths we ought to express only those which serve the good of the world. The others we ought to keep to ourselves, but like the gentle rays of a hidden sun they may spread and they will spread their light on what we do.

Goethe did not dare go further. Why? Let us find out.

Events and happenings generally influence us more than we believe. Let each one analyze attentively the acts of his life and he will readily recognize this. Our free will finds play only in a very restricted compass of activity. "Man proposes and God disposes," goes an old saying. This is not entirely exact. God, or Destiny—*Fatum*, as the Latins called it—leaves us a little liberty.

The proverb that is the opposite of the preceding one—each proverb has its opposite—puts it this way:

"Heaven helps those who help themselves."

Yes, man proposes and events dispose: but at the same time we are the builders of our own destiny.

In short, truth does not exist in the metaphysics of the philosophers who expatiate upon the fatality of destiny, but in the common and practical good sense which is summed up in the universal adage of six words which I have just quoted.

My explanation is essentially careful to remain in the exclusive domain of the positive facts of observation, without having recourse to any hypothesis. When we are told that our feeling of free will is an illusion, that is an hypothesis. I am sitting down at my desk, and I ask myself what I shall do; I ponder. I reason, I decide on this or that. I am assured

that I am the dupe of circumstances external to my will. I maintain, on the contrary, that if I had no reason, I should let events occur as they might, and that liberty consists precisely in the choice of what seems preferable to me. It is not absolute, no matter how much we might wish it to be, it is relative; we are constantly upset in our plans; there are even some days when nothing goes right. It is very imperfect, but it is our incontestable sensation, and we have not the right to suppress it in order to substitute a hypothesis for it. It is as evident as the day. It is an appearance, they may say. Yes, an appearance like the sun, like a landscape, like a tree, like an arm-chair, like a house,—things which we know through the impressions they make upon us,—but this appearance is confounded with the reality.

There is in it a fact of daily observation, constant, legitimate, irrefutable.

Oh! assuredly, we are often very passive and form no radical determination. And the objection is offered that when we debate within ourselves and make up our minds after ripe reflection, it is always in accordance with a predominating motive, so that our pretended liberty is like a pair of scales, one pan of which will sink according to the weight placed in it. Beyond a doubt, we ourselves make up our minds, when we reason coldly weighing the pros and cons, to that which seems preferable to us. But it is precisely in that that our reason acts, and no sophistry can suppress this conviction in us. We even feel that in the opposite case we should be unreasonable; and when, at times, we are led to act against our judgment, we feel we have been, in some respects, forced to it.

As for free will, is not the following declaration, which Juvenal put in the mouth of an imperious woman, the best argument?

*Sic volo; sic jubeo; sit pro ratione voluntas.* "I wish it, I order it; my will is my only reason."

*"Because such is our pleasure,"* said Louis XIV, with a pride which was to destroy royalty.

Without doubt, is the reply, we are endowed with a certain liberty of action; we can choose, we can determine according to the preponderant motive; but to seek for absolute free will! Is not each one of us led according to his temperament, his ideas, his preferences, and also according to circumstances and the chain of events? How can we free ourselves from the chain? We begin works, big or little, without knowing whither they will lead us. Let each one examine his own life and see clearly how feeble is his personal liberty. We are carried along in the whirlwind. Man proposes and destiny disposes. This destiny is the universal spirit of which we form but a minute portion. But we, also, are spirits.

Absolute free will? No, relative free will.

Undoubtedly, our liberty is much more restricted than it appears to superficial minds. The cosmic progress of the universe leads us on. We live under the influence of astronomical conditions, of meteorological conditions, of heat, of cold, of climate, of electricity, of light, of our surroundings, of our heredity, of our education, of our temperament, of our health, of our strength of will, etc. Our liberty is comparable to that of a passenger on a ship which bears him from Europe to America. His voyage is traced in advance. His liberty stops short at the ship's railing. He can walk upon his floating edifice, talk, read, smoke, sleep, play cards, etc.; but he cannot leave his moving home. The sketch of our existence is traced in advance, like the movements of the portions of a machine, and we have a rôle to fill, with a certain amount of personal action. This conditional liberty is certainly very limited, but it exists all the same. You are, let us suppose, at a friend's table. You are offered certain dishes, you can choose between white and red wine, between Burgundy and Bordeaux, beer and pure water, and you know perfectly that

you are free to choose, with due regard for your stomach, and by *making use of your reason*.

If we observe with care, at any moment, our least acts, we shall see clearly that our liberty is extremely limited, that what we decide to do in the morning, when we awaken, may be disturbed for a thousand causes, but that nevertheless our principal intention will be more or less realized, and that our choice will be felt.

It is the same with great things as with little; our most important acts are determined *both* by circumstances and our will.

We can admit the premonitory sight of the future without compromising, for all that, the principle of free will and of human responsibility. The present never stops: it is constantly continued by the future. Something will always happen; it is not inevitable for all that, if it is granted that the human will forms a part of the chain of events, and that this will enjoys a relative liberty; what it decides becomes real, but it might not have decided; the future is the succession of the past, and seeing it does not differ essentially from seeing the past. This fact does not at all prevent us from admitting that the human will is one of the causes of action in events. Something else might have happened than what did happen, and it is this other thing which would be seen in premonitions.

What happens is the result of the chain of causes, whether it is a revengeful force which orders its adversaries to be shot or guillotined, as Paris saw it in 1793 and 1871 (and as it has been seen almost everywhere on our lovely planet), or whether it is a philanthropic force which interposes in the midst of a revolution to stop its excesses or to direct its progress. What happens does not prevent the existence of good and evil, of the tyrant and the victim, the just and the unjust, the brutal and the thoughtful, the intelligent and the idiotic, the bloodthirsty and the pacifistic, the exploiters and the exploited, the robber and the robbed.

To see, by any process whatever, what will happen through the succession of effects and causes, can be reconciled with the existence of all the effective causes, including liberty.

The future is no more a mystery than the past. If I calculate to-day that the movements of the moon about the earth and the movement of the earth about the sun will lead our globe and its satellite in a direct line (sun—moon—earth) with France, upon the passing of the shadow of the moon, on August 11, 1999, at half-past ten in the morning, and that a total eclipse of the sun will be observed to the north of Paris during two minutes, there is no more mystery in this prediction than in the retrospective reckoning of the eclipse of the sun which took place over Peripagnan, on July 8, 1842. At the moment of the eclipse of 1842, which was made famous by the observations of Arago in his native town, I was four months and eleven days old; at the moment of that of August 11, 1999, I shall have been dead a long time: but that has no importance whatever: what is to-day the future for me, for you, for those now living, will be the present of others and will then become the past.

One may object that the comparison of astronomical events with human happenings is not complete, as it is granted that there is no liberty in the movements of the stars and that with them fatalism is absolute. But we can answer that if free will is included in the number of active causes, its effects will be felt none the less.

There is no doubt that everything which happens is the necessary result of active causes, including the most abject crimes, including the burning of Rome, including the martyrdom of the Christians by Nero, including the violation of Belgium by the Germans, the assassinations of its citizens, the burning of Louvain, the bombardment of the cathedral of Rheims, the infamous massacres of the last German war. But each actor forms part of the active cause and is partly responsible. The events are a mechanical series, which in-

cludes the sentence of Jeanne d'Arc to the flames by Bishop Cauchon, on the accusation of witchcraft, and her later canonization by other bishops; which includes the chemist Lavoisier, the astronomer Bailly, the poet André Chénier, the philosopher Condorcet, victims of the blind and ferocious revolutionists. All these things are brought about by determining causes, but they are not inevitable, and the course of events might have been different. To conclude, from this, that responsibilities do not exist means chaos. The Emperor of Germany who, in unchaining the war of 1914, caused the death of twelve million human beings, is not to be compared to Saint Vincent de Paul; neither the one nor the other is an automaton, a slave of fatalism.<sup>1</sup>

To suppress liberty would be to suppress all responsibility, all moral valuation, to equalize the good and the wicked, to which our inner certainty is opposed. In this case we should have to give up our clearest and most evident ideas.

Every one has before him his own unknown fate; but events will come to pass, despite the more or less developed free will of each person, and even because of this free will. In human life all men act in various ways, and the consequences result from all this.

There are fools and wise men (perhaps more fools than wise men) who are certainly not dominated by reason, and those especially in the administration of countries.

<sup>1</sup> There are wicked people who know quite well they are doing evil and do it on purpose. I have had the proof of it more than once, although the whole of my life has been consecrated to the good of humanity. I have never forgotten that at the time when I was giving a regular course in popular astronomy to the workmen of Paris, at the Ecole Turgot (1865-1870), a course free for them as for me, I had, although I was in want of sesterces, cherished the ambition of buying a pretty little statuette of the Venus de Medici, which I had noticed in a shop of plaster casts. She had cost me fifteen francs. I was carrying her away, over my heart, in happy satisfaction, when a gamin flung himself upon my neck from behind and uttered cries of joy at seeing my pretty little statuette broken into fragments on the sidewalk. Yet it was to teach these humble brothers that I was giving my course.

Even while each of us has before him his unknown fate, we each create this fate: we act according to our faculties, our possibilities, our heredity, our education, our judgment, our hearts, and knowing quite well that we enjoy relative liberty and can make decisions. We are the artisans of our destiny.

Whatever we may do, the hour of our death is already determined. Why? Because events will succeed one another, including our caprices, our weaknesses, our imprudences, our mistakes, including all that will come to pass about us. We act, naturally, according to our possibilities and our mentalities. An honest man will not be made to lie; a generous man will not become avaricious. The action of each one, limited by his faculties, exists none the less, and there are cases when weeks, when months of reflection are necessary for us to make our decisions. Nevertheless, our acts are linked together, and seeing them in advance does not alter the chain.

It seems to me that Bozzano, the laborious analyst of psychic phenomena, has rationally defined this apparent antimony in writing: "*Ni libre arbitre ni déterminisme absolu* during the incarnate existence of the spirit, but *conditional liberty*."

You might still, perhaps, object that if what happens must necessarily happen, it is superfluous to torment ourselves in order to succeed in anything whatever, to try to carry off the victory in a competition, to go after the doctor for a sick person, to struggle against an adversary, etc. This objection proves precisely our action in the order of things. However much of a fatalist you may believe yourself, you run as quickly as possible after the doctor, you serve the country against the invader, you call the fire department to put out a fire, you put out a fire which has started from a spark falling on your papers in your workroom, etc. You have reason and you make use of it. This does not at all prove that you lack it and that you are an automaton.

Does not the best proof that we have of our liberty, of our powers of free choice, of conscious decision reside in the intimate, absolute feeling we have of it, against which no sophism can prevail? You know that you can make any gesture you please. It is no use to tell you that the fancy to lift your finger is preceded by a series of antecedent ideas; this fancy is itself real and comes from nothing but our mind endowed with mental liberty.

The future is determined by circumstances, including human liberty, including even the rancor of the unjustly beaten animal, and a thousand special instances of which we scarcely think.

*The human personality is a party to active motives in the march of human events.*

There is the solution of the problem stated by Cicero, Saint Augustine, Laplace and their followers.

An extremely subtle distinction must be made here in order not to confound the inevitable chain of human events with fatalism. What happens is not inevitable, although it is the necessary result of its causes. A man receives a blow in the back from the fist of a hurried passer-by in the midst of a crowd: he might not have received it, for, on one hand, he might not have gone out of his house on that day or he might not have taken that direction, and the man who assaulted him might not have been there himself. Things would have happened differently, that is all, and the event would have been something else. Nevertheless, a premonitory vision might have been seen of what would happen, without this vision's proving, for all that, the absence of free will in the two actors. We coöperate in the march of events. It is not modest to speak of ourselves, but it is just there that we are the best judges; and I shall permit myself to use an example which I know about exactly. For many years I have struggled to spread the knowledge of astronomy in the world,

and I have in a measure succeeded. Illustrious friends of science and progress have given me the most precious assistance in the foundation and gradual organization of the Astronomical Society of France. No one could efface from my mind the different struggles which I have undergone or make me admit that that was not a personal work of my own: I know something about it, and all organizers are in my position. Will is not a vain word. Each one can make the same reflections over what concerns him. *We act* and the future is made of our consecutive actions. That is not fatalism. It is even the opposite. Fatalism is the doctrine of the drowsy; fatalists await events, which they suppose must come to pass nevertheless and in spite of everything. The contrary is the case, we work and we coöperate in the march of events. Far from being passive, we are active, we ourselves construct the edifice of the future. Determinism ought not to be confounded with fatalism. The latter represents inertia, the former represents action.<sup>1</sup>

Fatalism is Oriental, Turkish; determinism is European. There is an abyss between the two civilizations.

To see the future is simply to see what is going to happen. It is not to *foresee*, it is to *see*. In astronomy we calculate the orbit of a comet, for example, the normal theoretic orbit, the curve—elliptic, parabolic, or hyperbolic—in space. But it is possible for the comet to pass in the neighborhood of a large planet, the attraction of which will influence it. This

<sup>1</sup> We see that the greater number of contemporary writers imagine that the discussion of determinism is a philosophical theory of modern invention. That is not at all true. Let us open Volume I of the *Palingénésie philosophique* of Charles Bonnet (Geneva, 1770), at page 33; there we read: "I have never said, because I have never thought, that motives determine the action of the soul, as a body determines the movements of another body. The body does not possess action of itself: *the soul contains within itself a principle of activity, which it only holds from Him who made it.* To speak exactly, motives do not *determine* it, but it *determines itself* in view of the motives, and this metaphysical distinction is important."

disturbance will modify its course, and our sight of the comet, concerning its position, will not be exact and precise unless we allow for this disturbing influence.

All influences have their effect upon events. That of man is not more negligible than the planetary disturbances, although it enjoys a certain independence.

Therefore it is not impossible to reconcile our feeling of liberty with a premonitory knowledge of human events.

Suppose an observer is placed near the top of a mountain at the foot of which there stretches away a vast plain. He sees a man following a path which leads to a village, and he divines that this traveler is going to the village for some business or other. In what way would the fact of seeing his action contradict the liberty of the individual?

The free will of the actor is not in contradiction with the sight of the observer. The anticipated sight of an event does not influence this event. From the mountain on which we suppose ourselves, we see, for example, two trains rush quickly into each other, through an error in switching. A disaster is imminent. Our sight, our prevision goes for nothing; the fact of seeing it is entirely foreign to the fact of the event.

To see events unroll in the future as we see those that have unrolled in the past, does not prevent the determining causes, including the human will, from having their effect.

Has it never happened that while reading a novel you have divined exactly the rest of the story? And does not the greatest skill of a writer consist in giving such an appearance of truth to his imaginary personages and to interest the reader so keenly in them, that he is impatient to know the rest? For example, the prince of story-tellers, Alexandre Dumas, gave us "Joseph Balsamo" after "The Queen's Necklace." While reading the list of the innumerable works of this author, you may have remarked the title of "The Countess of Charny." Well, without having read this last romance, without knowing who this countess may be, has it not happened that, while

you were reading the twelfth chapter of "The Queen's Necklace" and the description of the beautiful qualities of Monsieur de Charny, given by Marie Antoinette to Andrée de Taverny, who is very pale and deeply moved,—has it not happened that you have divined, in a sudden flash, that Mademoiselle de Taverny, who was in love, would become the Countess of Charny? Have you not divined the future?

Certain persons who disagree might invite me to notice that the characters of Alexandre Dumas are puppets whom he moves at his will, and that my comparison is valueless because it could be used to prove just the contrary of my thesis, and lead us to conclude that, far from being free individuals, men and women are only puppets in the hand of the author whom we name God, Destiny, or Chance.

This objection would not be well founded. In arranging his romances after his own fashion, Alexandre Dumas evidently did what he wished, what pleased him, what he preferred, what seemed to him most interesting to his readers, and his imagination played the most important rôle. His personages, imaginary or real,—Andrée de Taverny, the Countess of Charny, the bailiff of Suffren and his nephew Charny, Marie Antoinette, the Cardinal de Rohan—appear upon the scene following the caprices of his prodigious talent as a story-teller. I knew Alexandre Dumas, with his large face and his scrubby, shaggy wig, and I can see him burst into peals of laughter, his own hearty laughter, at some psychologist of the Ecole come to oppose grave determinism to his amusing fantasies, and to tell him that he had been fatally forced to write what he had imagined.

From this assemblage of considerations we can, it seems to me, draw an indisputable conclusion. The cases of spontaneous vision of future events are so numerous and so adequate that the hypothesis of casual coincidence is a hypothesis devoid of value and must be absolutely rejected. Those

who have sufficiently studied the question have no doubt at all of this subliminal view. There is no actual scientific explanation of it, but it does not abolish liberty.

Despite appearances, and no matter what may be thought of it by philosophers who have not made sufficiently thorough study of this special question, the sight of the future is not at all in contradiction with the utmost extent of human liberty and free will. *We see what is going to happen, we abolish time*, which, for that matter, *does not exist in itself*, as it is a transitory product of the movements of our planet. It is thus, simply, an idea which is abolished. We see what is going to happen as we can see what has happened. If will, caprice, circumstances had brought something else, it would have been this other thing which was seen. Knowledge of the future no more compromises liberty than does the knowledge of the past.

In absolute space time does not exist. If the earth revolved twice as fast the days would be half as long. These measurements are relative, not fundamental.<sup>1</sup> Let us not confound the succession of events, that which to our human impressions constitutes "time," with the absolute. Astronomy has already invited us to make this distinction. This evening, for example, look at Sirius, Vega, and Aldebaran; you see them not as they are but as they no longer are, as they were,—the first, eight years ago, the second, twenty-five years ago, the third, thirty-two years ago. Our actual present coexists with their past. We saw in the heavens, on February 22, 1901, a sidereal conflagration which had taken place about 1551. The stars, as we see them at this moment, no longer exist. The actual time of Jupiter and Saturn is not that of this world.

<sup>1</sup> We are familiar with a great number of observations concerning the relativity of our impressions of time, which has nothing absolute about it. Here is one among a thousand.

My regretted friend, Alphonse Bué, has often related to me, and always

The metaphysicians are accustomed to associate space and time, which have, in truth, a certain relation, and to attribute common properties to them. That is an error. Space exists in itself. It is absolute, infinite, eternal, even though it may be empty, for emptiness is still pure space. Time, on the contrary, does not exist in itself. It is created by the movements of the stars and the succession of things. If the earth were motionless, if the stars were not possessed of movements, there would be no time, but there would still be space. In the absolute space, between the worlds, there is no time.

I have discussed this question more than once, during fifty years, with our most eminent contemporary philosophers,<sup>1</sup> and I can testify that most of them prefer to sacrifice the possibility of our foreseeing the future rather than sacrifice liberty. They have not surmised that harmony can exist between the two. I hope that this harmony has been established here. In any case *we should not, we cannot deny the facts of observation.* Let us return to these facts.

There was published in 1912 a French translation of the work of the German philosopher Schopenhauer on "Animal Magnetism and Magic," published by him at Frankfort, in

in the same words, the following observation on the relativity of our impressions of time:

He was on horseback, in Algeria, and following the edge of a very steep ravine. For some reason, which he was not given the time to find out, his horse made a misstep and fell with him into the ravine, from which he was picked up unconscious. During this fall, which could hardly have lasted two or three seconds, his entire life, from his childhood up to his career in the army, unrolled clearly and slowly in his mind, his games as a boy, his classes, his first communion, his vacations, his different studies, his examinations, his entry at Saint-Cyr in 1848, his life with the dragoons, in the war in Italy, with the lancers of the Imperial Guards, with the spahis, with the riflemen, at the Château of Fontainebleau, the balls of the Empress at the Tuileries, etc. All this *slow panorama* was unrolled before his eyes in less than four seconds, for he recovered consciousness immediately.

<sup>1</sup> See what we have already written above (Chap. IV, p. 116) in regard to a conversation with a French cardinal concerning divine prescience and free will.

1836, as well as related writings on spirits and premonitory dreams, published by him in Berlin, in 1851. Here is what we read in this book:

Dreams often announce important events, but at times also insignificant things, the realization of which is not worth the attention of a thinker. I myself have been convinced of this by an irrefutable experience. I wish to tell of this experience because it clearly exhibits at the same time *the rigorous necessity of what happens, even of what is most accidental.*

One morning I was writing with great care a long and most important business letter in English. When I reached the end of the third page, I took the ink-well, instead of the sand-box, and poured it over the paper; the ink ran off the desk to the floor. The servant came in at my ring, brought a pail of water, and began to wash the floor to get off the spots. While she was doing this she said: "I dreamed last night that I took some ink spots off here by rubbing the boards."—"That's not true!" I answered her.—"It is true, and I have already told it to the other servant, who sleeps with me."

Just then the other servant, who was about seventeen years old, chanced to come in, to call the one who was washing the boards. I went toward her and asked her: "What did she dream last night?"—Answer: "I don't know." Then I said: "But she told you about it when she woke up." Whereupon the young girl replied: "Oh, yes! she dreamed that she washed an ink spot off the floor here."

This tale, the absolute truth of which I vouch for, places the reality of this sort of dreams beyond doubt. It is no less remarkable because it concerned an act which can be qualified as involuntary, as it occurred entirely against my will, resulting from a very insignificant mistake of my hand. And nevertheless, this act was so necessary and so inevitably determined that its effect existed, several hours in advance, as a dream in the consciousness of another. Here appears in the clearest manner the truth of my proposition: everything that happens, happens of necessity."<sup>1</sup>

I should not have classed this tale among my positive docu-

<sup>1</sup> Schopenhauer, *Mémoires sur les sciences occultes* (Leymaire, éditeur), p. 170.

ments, and I should have left it in the category of doubtful cases (for the testimony of servants is often to be suspected, and more than one takes a certain pleasure in deceiving his master), if Schopenhauer were not the author and if he had not offered it himself in support of his convictions concerning necessity. He declared he was convinced of the truthfulness of his two servants, and in his mind there was *no doubt* about the reality of the premonitory dream.

But he was mistaken in the interpretation. He was not at all forced to upset his inkstand. The event was seen because it was what happened.

This story of the German philosopher's servant reminds me of a similar vision of another servant which was told in the review, "Uebersinnliche Welt," of Berlin (August, 1904), which I give:

Monsieur Buchberger, Councilor of Justice, chanced to be at Obermais. One morning at about five o'clock he had a dream, which showed him his house at Olmutz and his servant, her clothes on fire, upon which a stream of water was directed. Next he saw the body of the unfortunate woman, whose skin was still quite white, and then he awoke.

A short time afterward Monsieur Buchberger returned home and when he had reached the house his wife told him that their servant had died as a result of burns. On the same day that he had had his dream, but at ten o'clock in the morning, as she was warming some varnish, it had caught fire and had set fire to the servant's clothes. They had caught her as she ran about the room, flung her to the ground, and succeeded in putting out the fire with water; then she had been taken to a hospital where a few days later she had died.

It is noticeable that this dream occurred at five o'clock in the morning, while the accident did not happen until ten o'clock. This is much the same as the case of Schopenhauer.

The account is signed by Monsieur Buchberger, Councilor of Justice at Graz-Rucherlberg.

The principal fact that ought to strike us and acquire in

our eyes the character of a certainty, is simply this paradoxical affirmation,—that the future, which does not yet exist and which will result from the chain of a series of little consecutive causes, can nevertheless be seen as if it had already been realized.

It is not merely in premonitory dreams that the future can be seen, but also in certain states of the soul that are difficult to define. One of the most curious examples that I know of this exact vision of the future is the observation reported by my learned colleague of the Metaphysical Institute, Dr. Geley, whose works are well known to my readers. Here it is, literally: <sup>1</sup>

On June 27, 1894, at about nine o'clock in the morning, Dr. Gallet, who was at the time a student of medicine at Lyons, was working in his room, in the company of a fellow-student, now Dr. Varay, himself a doctor of medicine at Annecy.

At the time Gallet was very much occupied and preoccupied with the preparation for an examination that was about to occur, the first examination for the doctor's degree; and he was not thinking of anything but this examination.

In particular, he took absolutely no interest in politics, gave only a hasty glance to the papers, and in the past few days had discussed only superficially and incidentally the election of the President of the Republic, which was to take place on this very day. *The electoral congress was to meet at noon at Versailles.*

All at once, Gallet, who was entirely absorbed in his work, was dictatorially diverted from it by an obsessing thought. An unexpected phrase was imposed on his mind with such force that he could not help writing it down with a pen in his note-book. This phrase was, literally:

*"Monsieur Casimir-Perier is elected President of the Republic by 451 votes."*

This took place, I repeat, *before* the meeting of the congress. We must notice, however, a curious thing, the phrase, of which Dr. Gallet

<sup>1</sup> This has been published with all its details in the *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, October, 1910.

has the most distinct memory, indicates the present and not the future.

Stupefied, Dr. Gallet called his comrade Varay and held out to him the paper on which he had just written.

Varay read, shrugged his shoulders and, as his friend, very much interested, became insistent, declaring he believed in the premonition, begged him, a little coldly, to let him work in peace.

After lunch Gallet went out to attend a class at the Faculty. On his way he met two other students, Monsieur Bouchet, now a doctor at Cruseilles, Haute Savoie, and Monsieur Deborne, now a pharmacist at Thonon. He announced to them that Casimir-Perier would be elected by 451 votes. Despite the laughter and mockery of his comrades, he continued several times to affirm his conviction.

When they came out of the class the four friends met again and went to refresh themselves on the terrace of a neighboring café. At this moment the newsboys arrived with the special editions which announced the result of the presidential election, crying:

"Monsieur Casimir-Perier is elected by four hundred and fifty-one votes!"

We can assuredly believe the word of Dr. Geley. But he has been careful to add to his tale irrefutable confirmations, the signed statements of the witnesses:

1 The affidavit of Dr. Varay, former interne at the hospitals of Lyons.

2 The affidavit of Monsieur Deborne, pharmacist at Thonon.

3 The affidavit of Dr. Bouchet, physician at Cruseilles.

Therefore, no one is justified in disputing this event.

It is well to notice that the election of Casimir-Perier, by a majority of only twenty-eight votes,<sup>1</sup> was unexpected and

<sup>1</sup> Here is the official result of the ballot:

Votes taken .....	845
Absolute majority .....	423
Obtained:	
Casimir-Perier (elected) .....	451
Brisson .....	195
Dupuy .....	97
General Février .....	53
Others .....	22

that people had rather counted on the success of Monsieur Brisson or of Monsieur Dupuy.

To see in this only another simple coincidence passes the limits of a reasonable skepticism. These cases strengthen one another. If there were only one, isolated and lost in the number of possibilities, we might doubt. But such a mass as we have proved here leaves in the mind the *absolute certainty* of the reality of these previsions, however inexplicable they appear in the present state of science.

Here, also, the involuntary medium saw what happened; but the election of Casimir-Perier was not inevitable, for all that. Each one of the 945 voters certainly made his influence felt, even more than Schopenhauer did when he upset his ink; each one acted according to his judgment. This very example is a piece of typical evidence against fatality.

Let us continue our free examination.

Monsieur César de Vesme, the learned director of the "Annales des Sciences psychiques," told me in 1901 of the following extraordinary prediction:

In the first days of the year 1865, a certain Vincent Sassaroli went to live at Sarteano, a commune of 6,000 inhabitants.

As there existed in this neighborhood a good musical band composed of thirty-four performers, Monsieur Joseph Frontini who was in charge, being obliged to flee the country for political reasons, invited him to become director of it.

Monsieur Sassaroli accepted the offer, and he was at once presented to this body of musicians, in the room where they practised, on the third floor of a house belonging to Canon Dom Bacherini. After the rehearsal and in the presence of the whole society, he announced to Monsieur Frontini that the apartment in which they were was going to crumble with the rest of the building, from the roof down to the ground floor; he added that he seemed to see the debris of the ruined house bury and crush all those present, including himself.

At these words they all looked at one another speechless, wondering whether the new director were joking or if he had gone mad; but

Monsieur Sassaroli, imperturbable, insisted on mentioning the very day and hour on which the catastrophe would take place.

At these last words those present no longer doubted that the unhappy man was out of his mind. They withdrew, laughing.

Naturally this absurd story spread at once through the country and every one laughed immoderately.

At this, Monsieur Frontini, seeing that Sassaroli had become a laughing-stock and still persuaded that his fixed idea would lead him straight into madness, made every effort to bring him back to reason. With the consent of Canon Joseph Bacherini, he had the building in question carefully examined from roof to foundations by architectural experts, who declared that the house did not show the least sign of deterioration. Fortified by this judgment, he reported it to Monsieur Sassaroli, counseling him to insist no longer on his foolish prediction, and wishing him as long a life as that of the solid building of which they were speaking.

It was labor lost: Monsieur Sassaroli answered that he could not share the wish, as in that case he would have only four days left to live.

Such obstinacy could only increase the doubts as to the maestro's sanity, and they began to keep an eye on him and to watch him, lest he should commit some enormity.

In the cafés, in the homes, people spoke of nothing but this nonsense, which made the whole countryside laugh.

At last the great day arrived. In the evening, as it happened to be one of the days fixed for practice, the musicians came together in the room as their custom was, and while they were waiting for the director they passed their time laughing at him. Monsieur Sassaroli soon arrived and, refusing to hear of work that evening, very much agitated because the hour of the catastrophe was approaching, he protested to such purpose that he succeeded in persuading all those who were present to leave. As they went down the stairway, which was built over massive arches, Monsieur Sassaroli, who went ahead of them all, repeated continually: "Gently, walk gently, the weight of all of us might hasten the fall."

We can imagine the jokes and laughter of these thirty-four persons, who, feeling convinced that they were following a madman and taking part in an absurd farce, went down the long flights of steps,

one after another. At last they came out into the street. A few moments later, and at exactly the hour foretold, the house crumbled from top to bottom.

We can all picture to ourselves the sensation such an event created in the countryside.

The report from which we have taken this abridged account, was written by Monsieur Joseph Frontini, whose father, the president of the municipality, had been the first to congratulate Monsieur Sassaroli the day after the catastrophe. There are also three affidavits, the first from all the members of the family with whom Monsieur Sassaroli lodged, the second from the guardian of the theater; and the third from the family living in the house adjoining the theater, all certifying to the event.

Really, how can one still doubt in the presence of an occurrence so absolutely convincing? Would it not be a case for applying to the incredulous the biblical stigma: *Oculos habent et non vident; aures habent et non audiunt*, "Eyes have they and see not, ears have they and hear not"? To deny, always to deny, to deny notwithstanding: what does that prove?

Very well, let us be still unsatisfied: we have not the weight of enough proof in our scales. Here is more weight.

One of the most astonishing examples of the exact vision of the future that I know of, one of the strangest and most characteristic, of those due to hypnotic lucidity, is this, reported by Dr. Alphonse Teste in his "Manuel pratique du magnétisme universel." This is not a work of yesterday, as it was published in 1841, but it is none the less valuable for, as Molière says, time has nothing to do with the matter. Here is this truly fantastic case:

On Friday, the eighth of last May, I hypnotized Madame Hortense M——. On the day of which I speak, this lady was in a state of admirable lucidity. I was alone with her and her husband, and she seemed especially preoccupied with her personal future. Among other unexpected things she said this to us:

"I have been pregnant for fifteen days, but the child will not be born at the proper time; this causes me bitter grief. On next Tuesday, the twelfth of the present month, I shall be frightened by something and fall, and as a result I shall have a miscarriage."

I confess that in spite of all I have seen, one of the points in this prophecy roused my senses.

"What will you be afraid of, Madame?" I asked, with an expression of interest which was far from feigned.

"I don't know at all."

"But from what direction will it come? where will you fall?"

"I cannot tell you, I know nothing about it."

"Is there no way of avoiding all this?"

"None."

"If, however, we should not leave you?"

"It will make no difference."

"And will you be very ill?"

"Yes, for three days."

"Do you know exactly what will happen to you?"

"On Tuesday, at half-past three, just after I have been frightened, I shall have a fainting-fit which will last eight minutes. Afterward, I shall be seized with violent pains in my back which will last all the rest of the day and continue all night. Wednesday morning I shall begin to lose blood. This flow will increase rapidly and become very abundant. However, there is nothing to worry about, for it will not kill me. On Thursday morning I shall be much better, I shall even be able to leave my bed for almost the whole day, but at about half-past five in the evening I shall have a new loss of blood which will be followed by delirium. Thursday night will be good, but by Friday night I shall be quite out of my head."

Madame Hortense said no more, and without taking everything she said literally, we were so much impressed, that we did not dream of questioning her further. Nevertheless her husband, who was very much disturbed, asked her with indescribable anxiety if she would be out of her head for long.

"For three days," she answered with perfect calm.

Then she added with a sweetness that was full of grace: "Come, don't be anxious! I shall not stay out of my head and I shall not die; I shall suffer, that's all."

Madame Hortense was awakened, and, as is usual, retained no memory of what had happened. When I was alone with her husband, I especially urged him to keep secret from his wife all these occurrences which, although they were perhaps imaginary, would be quite capable of depressing her painfully if she were aware of them; besides, in the interests of science, it was important for her to be left in ignorance of them. Monsieur H—— promised everything, and I know his character well enough to feel sure that he kept his promise. As for me, I had carefully taken notes of all the predicted events, and the next day I had occasion to speak of them to Dr. Amédée Latour.

The fatal Tuesday arrived; fear for Madame H—— was the only thing that occupied me. When I reached their home she was lunching with her husband and seemed in the best possible spirits.

"My good friends," I said as I entered, "I am at your disposal until evening, if it does not disturb you."

"You are heartily welcome," answered Madame Hortense, "but on one condition, which is that you will not talk too much about hypnotism."

"Madame, I will not speak of it at all, if you will consent to sleep for me only ten minutes."

She accepted, and shortly after lunch I put her to sleep.

"How are you, Madame?"

"Very well, Monsieur, but not for long."

"How is that?"

She repeated her conclusive statement of Friday: "Between three and four o'clock, I shall be frightened by something, I shall fall, a copious loss of blood will result."

"What will frighten you?"

"I don't know."

"Nevertheless, try to find out."

"I know nothing about it."

"Is there no way to escape this fatality?"

"None."

"This evening, Madame, I shall be able to contradict you."

"This evening, doctor, you will be very anxious about my health, for I shall be very ill."

I had nothing to answer to that, for the moment. It was necessary to wait and I waited.

When she was awakened a few minutes later, Madame Hortense remembered nothing; her face, which had been saddened by the visions of her dream, took on again all its natural serenity. As she had done before she went to sleep, she talked and jested with us, with no mental reservations, and once more resumed those gay sallies which were so natural to her and which she knew so well how to utter. As for me, I was in a state of mind impossible to describe: I was lost among conjectures and hypotheses which sometimes shook my faith: I suspected everything, I suspected myself.

Having quite made up our minds not to leave her for a second, we kept watch of her least movements; we closed the windows tightly for fear some accident occurring in the street or in the neighboring houses should make the prophecy come true. Finally, if any one rang, one of us went into the hall to see who it was.

It was a little after half-past three. Madame Hortense, who was much astonished at the little attentions with which she saw herself beset and who could not penetrate the mystery of our precautions, said to us, as she rose from the arm-chair in which we had made her sit down:

"Will you permit me, gentlemen, to remove myself a moment from your inconceivable solicitude?"

"Where do you intend to go, madame?" I cried, with an air of anxiety which I could not hide.

"But, good heavens, Monsieur, what is the matter with you? Do you think I have plans of suicide?"

"No, Madame, but—"

"But what?"

"But what? I know I am indiscreet, but the truth is I am concerned over your health."

"Then, Doctor," she answered laughing, "all the more reason for letting me go out!"

I understood.

The reason was plausible, there was but little ground for insisting. Nevertheless, my friend wished to see the thing through and said to his wife:

"Will you permit me to go with you as far as there?"

"What! So it's a wager then!"

"Precisely, Madame, a wager between us, which I shall certainly win, although you have sworn to make me lose."

Madame Hortense looked from one to the other of us and remained dumbfounded! She accepted the arm her husband offered her and went out with a peal of laughter.

I laughed also, yet for all that I felt I know not what presentiment that the decisive moment had come. It is so true that this idea had taken possession of me that I did not dream of reëntering the drawing-room but stayed like a Swiss at the door of the antechamber where I had no reason to be.

All at once there was a piercing cry and the sound of a body falling on the landing. I dashed upstairs. At the door of the bath-room my friend held his wife fainting in his arms.

It was indeed she who had cried out. The noise I had heard had been that of her fall. At the moment when she had left the arm of her husband to enter the room, she had suddenly come upon a rat—there where they swore they had never seen a single one in twenty years—and had been so suddenly and terribly frightened that she had fallen backward, without its being possible to catch her.

After that events took place as she had foretold they would.

Who, after such happenings, would still dare to set a limit to what is possible or to define human life?

We cannot doubt the veracity of the author. He was himself too profoundly impressed by this stupefying clairvoyance for us to fail to be as impressed as he. To deny everything, as is often done, would be to deny the whole history of humanity.

Was I not right in calling it one of the most extraordinary cases in the whole series which we are studying at this moment, and which is so rich in variety? Here also, it is impossible to apply the banal explanation of chance. At the most one might suppose that the sick imagination of the narrator produced everything through subconscious autosuggestion, and that she herself created this future which she saw;

but what an untenable hypothesis!—a hypothesis, for that matter, diametrically opposed to the preceding case, the collapse of the theater, as well as to those that follow.

It is certainly quite right for us to receive cautiously the accounts of persons who assure us that they have foreseen extraordinary events: for all that, there has been evidence that it is impossible to doubt, and to this class belongs an account, rather banal, but curious in a way, which was brought in by my friend, Colonel Rochas, and which happened to our famous surgeon, Baron Larrey, who told it to him. All in one night he dreamed *four* numbers for the lottery and the next morning, as he was in haste to begin his calls, he asked Madame Larrey to make the bets on them herself. But what was his annoyance, when he returned home, to find that the numbers had appeared—and that his commission had been forgotten!

It is impossible to attribute this coincidence to chance, the player had 2,555,189 chances against him.

One number, yes; perhaps even two, but four! To-day we know that the future can be seen.

This event is as interesting as the preceding ones. I used to know Baron Larrey, as distinguished as a man of the world as he was honest as a scholar. His testimony is that of a man of honor.

Let us notice, in this connection, that the examples which I am submitting to the impartial attention of my readers have the most diverse origins. It is not merely a question of premonitory dreams, or of divinations in a state of somnambulism, or of palmistry, or of fortune-telling with cards, or of any special series whatever. All the forms of brain activity are represented, as are all social conditions and all countries. It would therefore be impossible to object that there was any suggestive influence of any sort whatever.

Let us continue our study.

One of the most tragic examples of premonitory dreams of

death that I know is that of Dr. de Sermyn, *of the death of his own son*. Let us hear his account of it:

My first child was just beginning his fourth year. I had a quite particular attachment for him, such as I have felt for none of my other children. His glance and his smile seemed to me angelic, and I believed his intelligence was exceptional for his age. He was my joy and my consolation, and the thought that I was to see him and talk with him, when I returned home, filled me with happiness. I forgot then all my fatigue and care.

One night I dreamed that I was holding the child in my arms before a lighted stove. Suddenly he slipped, I know not how, and fell into the flames. Instead of hastening to pull him out of the fire I precipitately closed the stove doors.

What led me to act thus was the following reasoning. I said to myself: "If I pull the child out of the fire, he will die in a few days in frightful suffering, because of his many and deep burns; but if I close the stove he will die quickly, perhaps in a minute, in any case he will not suffer long."

Strange and stupidly cruel reasoning, but in my dream this idea seemed luminous to me and my act a duty.

When I had thus closed the two doors of the stove I heard, with inexpressible anguish, the movements of the child roasting inside.

"Oh, my God!" I said, "make him die quickly! I cannot bear to hear him suffer."

I awoke with a start, my forehead bathed in cold sweat, my heart beating madly. I first sat down on my bed, saying: "Thank heaven it is only a dream!"

Then I ran into the child's room. He was sleeping peacefully. His breathing was regular, his pulse normal, his skin fresh. Nevertheless, I tried in vain to calm myself. It was useless to say to myself: "Imbecile, donkey, it is only a dream, the child is wonderfully well."—"Go back to bed, then, and sleep," said the voice of my reason. I went to bed but without being able to conquer my anxiety, without being able to get rid of an evil presentiment. The first thing I did, when I awoke in the morning, was to go and examine the child. He talked, he was gay, he was bursting with health.

"Go and work," said the mocking voice of my conscious self;

"there is nothing the matter with the child; your dream was stupid. Does one throw one's child into the stove and, when it is in, shut it in that it may die the more quickly?"

How could I guess that my subconscious mind, which said nothing but tormented me, obsessed me, possessed the truth and knew what was going to happen?

In the morning the child awoke gay and happy, as usual; he ate breakfast with a good appetite and I went out reassured.

I returned home about noon. The child was lying on a couch, drowsy. His pulse was rapid, his skin burning, his breathing quick. I was very much disturbed. My wife noticed it and questioned me anxiously, but I restrained myself and tried to hide my secret alarm. Nevertheless, I began to listen attentively to the little boy's breathing and I was able to detect the existence of bronchitis which extended to both lungs, as well as a slight crepitation at their base. At this I could not help exclaiming, "It is serious, very serious! I believe the child is lost."

Just then a doctor, who was related to us, was passing on horseback. My wife rushed to the window and called him.

"Doctor," she said when he entered, "I beg you to examine our child, who is ill; my husband says he is lost."

Dr. W—— was the fashionable practitioner of the moment. He was an excellent talker, rather witty, and not exactly tender toward the young doctors for whom he did not seem to have much respect.

He examined the child, smiling. "And how long has he been ill?" he asked.

"Hardly an hour, Doctor," cried my wife. "This morning he was perfectly well."

"And Monsieur thinks he is lost?" he asked, pointing to me. "Ah! these young men!"

"Come," he went on, addressing me, "you can have no serious reason for alarming a mother in this way. This child has hardly been ill an hour, and your diagnosis as well as your prognosis is already made. That is n't reasonable.

"Nonsense, Madame, calm yourself," he added, addressing my wife. "Put the child to bed, give him something hot to drink, cover him up well, try to make him perspire, and I will stop in during the evening."

I understood perfectly the absurdity of my conduct, and how ridiculous I must appear in the eyes of the celebrated doctor, but how could I confess that I was acting through belief in a dream? He would have taken me for a simpleton.

I lowered my head without replying to his just reproaches, but as he was about to leave I exclaimed, "I beg you, Doctor, not to fail to return this evening."

Was it the beseeching tone of my voice which struck him? He stopped, looked at me fixedly for a few seconds, and then went slowly toward the child and began to examine him a second time, more attentively than at first.

Without doubt he said to himself: "Here is a father who is a doctor, and who seems to be very anxious over the state of his child. Has he discovered some terrifying symptom which has escaped me?"

When he had finished his examination, he said to me: "It's quite true one can distinguish, here and there, a few hissing rattles in both lungs, and you seem to believe that serious bronchial pneumonia is about to appear. But at this moment we cannot be certain of any such eventuality. All that we can actually say is that there exists light bronchial pneumonia which may perfectly well disappear in a few days. But even if we admitted the beginning of bronchial pneumonia, what reason would you have to say that the child was lost? All cases of bronchial pneumonia are not fatal. Come, be reasonable. I will return."

Despite all the care of Dr. W—— the state of the child grew worse hourly. On the fourth day he was choking desperately.

When I saw him suffering so cruelly and foresaw the end, I experienced the same anguish which I had felt in my dream. I said once more, in my heart: "My God! make him die quickly! If this agony lasts it will drive me mad."

Since this dream, which announced the death of my son George, nothing has been able to take away the conviction that our mind acquires, during sleep, the power of foreseeing certain future events.

But whence came the form under which the prediction of my child's death was produced? Why the stove into which I dropped my child? Why this strange *mise-en-scène*? Whence came the idea of closing the doors so that he might die more quickly? This act cannot be reconciled with the horror I felt in performing it.

I have often thought about this and here is the most probable explanation I can find:

I had gone to bed very late, on that night. I had been reading, stretched out in an arm-chair before a fire, which I often stirred. My nerves had evidently kept the impression of the burning coals and of a stove with two doors that one could open and shut at will. It seems to me that we can attribute to this excitation of the brain the illusion of a blazing stove in which my child writhed and which I tried to close in order to put an end to his agony.

This premonitory dream clearly shows our dual mentality. We do not like to put our faith in a dream, especially when it foretells something disagreeable. Reason revolts in such a case, without, however, being able to dominate the profound and anguished feeling of the subconscious.<sup>1</sup>

The narrator adds that he has often thought of this struggle between his conscious and his subconscious self. The latter was sure that the dream would inevitably be realized. However, reason revolted against it and clung to a wavering hope, as a man flung in the ocean grasps a floating bit of wreckage.

Our secret intuitions often have their reason for being, and we are wrong to despise them without seeking for their cause. A presentiment might at times be a forgotten dream.

Whatever may be the explanation, the fact is there, as it has been observed, irrefutable. This father was impressed by a physiological state, at the time unknown, of his child, and believed in advance in his inevitable death. This is a very characteristic proof of the human soul's power of premonition, of the existence of a real psychic world, suggesting the conclusion that the apparent vital organism is not all. There is something indefinable in us which we ourselves do not recognize.

An abominably dramatic event—the exact vision, in a dream,

<sup>1</sup> *Contribution à l'étude de facultés cérébrales méconnues*, p. 29.

just six hours in advance, of the accidental death of his son, crushed by an automobile, on the very day when he was going to pass his baccalaureate examination, after brilliant work in his studies, and when he was in excellent health—was described to me in a long letter by one of my oldest readers. This dream had shown him all the details of the accident—the carrying away of the body, the appearance of the wounds, and the despair of the family—as clearly as in a photograph, or rather a cinematograph. (Letter 2218.)

At the earnest request of the afflicted family, I shall limit myself here to mentioning the case of the premonition, for our general instruction, without indicating names or over-painful circumstances. But I must say that this living drama, in itself alone, eliminates all the explanations of so-called coincidences and would suffice to prove that at times the future is foreseen with the most absolute precision.

I am sure that my readers will agree with me if I say that from now on the denial of these facts will prove only the ignorance of those who deny them or their unreasonable obstinacy.

A premonitory vision, equally remarkable, of a coming event was told me by an attentive observer of these unexplained phenomena. The author wrote me:

This was a sort of premonitory waking dream, and I think I ought to tell you of it, because it may add a bit of evidence to what you are already collecting for your important researches. You yourself may judge of its value.

Quite recently, in a drawing-room, when the conversation turned on those psychic studies of which you are making so thorough an examination, a lady who is one of our relatives told us the following story:

“Once when I was leaning out of my balcony, I suddenly saw myself in the street in deep mourning, following a hearse. The impression was so strong that I went to my dressmaker the same day to revoke the order for a dress, as I could not stop thinking: ‘Some

great misfortune is going to happen to me.' Well, four days later, my child, a little boy four years old, fell from the top of the staircase and was instantly killed."

This was what I heard with my own ears, from a woman in mourning, still under the impression of what had happened to her. There could not have been any question of error or imposture.

P. DREVET,

Lieutenant in the 14th Infantry, at Grenoble.

(Letter 985.)

This principle often takes the form of a communication from a spirit through a medium, as if this spirit saw the future exactly, especially the death of the subject in question. My regretted colleague and friend William Stead, editor of "The Review of Reviews," who was a victim of the shipwreck of the *Titanic*, received one day, from his "spirit Julia," a singularly astounding prediction. He wrote:<sup>1</sup>

A few years ago, I had as an employee a lady of truly remarkable talent, but of a variable character and of less than robust health. She became so impossible that in January I was seriously thinking of letting her go, when "Julia" wrote by my hand: "Be patient with E. M. She will come and join us here before the end of the year."

I was stupefied, for nothing led me to suppose that she was going to die. I followed the advice, saying nothing of the message, and continued to employ this lady. It was, if I remember rightly, about the fifteenth or sixteenth of January that this warning was given me.

It was repeated to me in February, March, April, May, and June: "Remember that E. M. will have ceased to live before the end of the year."

In July she swallowed, by accident, a small tack. It lodged in the intestines and she fell seriously ill. The two doctors who cared for her had no hope of saving her. In the interval "Julia" wrote to me with my hand.

"Without doubt," I said to her, "this is what you foresaw when you warned me that she would die."

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1909, p. 120.

To my extreme surprise, the answer was: "No, she will recover from this, but all the same, she will succumb before the end of the year."

E. M. recovered suddenly, to the great astonishment of the doctors, and was soon able to take up again her accustomed work. In August, September, October, and November word of her approaching death was again sent me by the help of my hand. In December she was seized with influenza.

"Is it this?" I asked "Julia."

"No, in this case it will not come from a natural cause; but whatever it is, it will come before the end of the year."

I was alarmed, but I knew I could not hinder the event. The year passed and she still lived. "Julia" wrote: "I may have been mistaken by a few days, but what I said is true."

Toward the tenth of January, "Julia" wrote me: "You will see E. M. to-morrow; say good-by to her. Make all the necessary arrangements. You will never see her again on this earth."

I went to find her. She was feverish, with a bad cough. They were about to take her to a hospital.

Two days later I received a telegram informing me that she had flung herself from a window of the fourth floor, in an access of delirium, and had been picked up dead. The date had overpassed, by a few days, the twelvemonth of which the first message had spoken.

I am able to prove the authenticity of this tale by the manuscripts of the original messages themselves, as well as by the signed affidavits of my two secretaries.

It would seem, indeed, that the "spirit" must have known in advance the time of her death and even that this death would be accidental. But can the prediction be surely attributed to a spirit? This is not proved. I knew Stead well enough to have noticed his rare psychic powers, although he did not make use of them for his own security.

This premonition is assuredly most remarkable. Who is this "Julia," so well known to the psychists who have kept up with Stead's writings? A spirit? The subconscious? Special mental faculties? We do not know. But it is not

the material of the brain which sees the future in this way.

In his work "Lucidité et intuition," which is so judiciously thought out and so carefully certified, Dr. Eugène Osty has given on his part the following case of intuitive auto-perception:

Madame D——, a lucid subject, who was given to automatic writing, was astonished, at a certain period of her life, to see that her hand continually traced the word "R——," a name which she had never heard and which seemed to her to have no significance. For several months, in the midst of her occupations, whether her hand was lying on a table or whether she was getting ready to write a letter, the same word was traced. She ended by considering this involuntary movement just a bad habit, and paid no attention to it.

One evening her husband told her that he had just signed, on the spur of the moment, a contract as engineer at R——, a small town in the province of Oran.

Later her hand began to write "June." Madame D—— then tried to get some explanation of this date, by means of automatic writing. The only reply to her questions was always "June." June arrived and Madame D—— had the sorrow of seeing her husband die.

Then, soon after, her hand obstinately traced this other date: "March." We can imagine the terror that was then felt by this unhappy intuitive woman, who wondered with what other terrible blow destiny would strike her. Believing that in the automatic writing her hand was the slave of some disincarnated spirit, she addressed the most urgent prayers to the occult being, begging to be spared the agony of the mysterious menace. And her hand, in reply to the torture of her heart, still wrote the single word "March."

The fatal and dreaded period arrived. In the same month Madame D—— lost her daughter and her mother.

This mysterious history greatly resembles the preceding one. There are many similar cases which I lack space to include here. Can they be explained, the ones by the others? Subconsciousness? Psychic force? External spirit? Destiny? What word ought our ignorance to apply to them?

The following account of a singular warning was sent me by a young student of Morbihan:

DEAR MASTER:

It is my duty to let you know of a premonition that has occurred in our family.

In 1896, my grandfather, Commandant Dufilhol, officer of the Legion of Honor, who met you in the home of Monsieur Allan Kardec in 1862, was living, with my mother, near Vannes.

One day he was going down the entrance stairs of the château, by himself, to rejoin Mama at the stables.

Suddenly a voice said at his ear: "*A death in the family.*"

Surprised and agitated, my grandfather thought: "It is I. I am the eldest."

"No," answered the voice, "*Adolphe Planes.*"

My grandfather arrived at the stables so pale that my mother asked him if he felt ill. He answered no, and told her of the warning that he had just received.

Both of them, very much saddened, wrote for news of Adolphe Planes, my young uncle, who at the time was professor of English at Nice.

The reply was satisfactory, and my relatives were somewhat reassured.

Two months later, my uncle passed his examination for a fellowship; the test had been hard and fatiguing. At the moment when the examiner said to him, "Monsieur Planes, you are received, with all our congratulations," my poor uncle swayed and lost consciousness.

Eight days later he died of meningitis, in the arms of my grandfather.

He was twenty-six years old. The voice had not been mistaken.

The memory of her brother's premature death is still so cruelly painful to my mother that she would never have authorized me to write if it had not been as a help to your researches.

ADRIEN DUFILHOL,  
Saint-Raoul-Guer: August 3, 1918.

(Letter 4042.)

Premonitory *auditions* are more rare than premonitory *visions*, but their number is large enough for us to lack the right to deny them. To attribute them to chance is no more satisfactory.

Several readers wrote me from New York, in August, 1919, that the accident to Mr. William Cooper, the celebrated manufacturer, who was crushed by a trolley car, had been seen from Philadelphia by his mother, Mrs. Ella Cooper.

Twice that very night, she dreamed that she saw her son falling in the street, crushed in this fashion, and this repeated dream had so alarmed her that *she could not prevent herself from taking the train from Philadelphia to New York*. Exactly at the hour of her arrival, in the morning, having taken a Thirty-Fourth Street car, as she was crossing Seventh Avenue she saw a crowd about a man who had just been run over by a trolley car. It was her son.

These letters read: "This accident which will probably result in the death of Mr. William Cooper." Did death follow? I do not know; but the premonitory dream is no less remarkable.

We can have no doubt that this mother was warned of what was about to happen to her. How? By whom? By what? By what means? That is the object of the researches in this book.

There it was a mother who saw her son run down. Here is an experience somewhat similar, which took place by means of an intermediary. The following account was sent me from Biarritz, July 9, 1917, in reply to the desire that I had expressed to Madame Storms Castelot, my learned colleague of the Astronomical Society of France, who had told me the dream, to receive a first-hand account from the one who had experienced it. It was the vision, three days in advance, of a sudden death.

Extract:

In spite of all the sadness which such a communication awakes in me, I can solemnly declare to you that the death of my son Jean was announced to me on the *Thursday before the Sunday* on which my dear child, who was abroad with his brother Louis, left us for ever. Here is this very simple dream:

I saw, in an unknown house, my son Louis in tears, and when I asked him the reason for his grief, he answered me: "Oh! Mama, Jean is dead!" My dear child was nineteen years old, superbly well, and nothing could have led us to foresee so terrible an end! An embolism, during a peaceful bicycle ride, in company with his brother and an uncle. Long after, I learned that the Thursday on which I had had this frightful presentiment, my child had had an attack of fainting, caused by a cut in his finger—a strange coincidence! . . .

Another strange coincidence; this last concerns myself.

Once when I happened to be in Hamburg, on one of my numerous concert tours, I was seized on the morning of one of the concerts with such a frightful pain in the neck that it threatened to prevent my keeping my engagement for the evening. I hurried off to a medical specialist who treated these disagreeable little ailments with electricity. But almost at once I fainted from the effects of running. The same day I received a telegram from Paris, from my mother, telling of her anxiety on seeing me *in a faint* in a dream. That astonished me! In fact, my mother had all her life a veritable gift of second sight, as the expression goes.

B. MARX-GOLDSCHMIDT.

(Letter 3750.)

This letter was countersigned by the brother of the dead man.

We see that these sorts of intuitions were not rare in this family. The same is true of the following case.

It was from the Argentine Republic that I received the story of the remarkable premonitory dream given here:

Rosario de Santa Fé; September 15, 1899.

I think it is my duty, illustrious Master, to report to you the following event which quite certainly took place in my family, and

which may help bring you light which you will later spread through the world.

One of my great-aunts was noted for her presentiments and mental visions.

In 1868 she saw in a dream an interior which was a whole revelation. This tableau represented an apartment, where one of her friends, Madame B——, seated in an arm-chair near a fireplace in which blazed a great fire, was caressing a small child which she held in her arms, while a servant dried some linen before the flames. This dream was related to several persons without any one's thinking much about it, for Madame B——, the mother of a numerous family, had passed her fortieth year, and as she had had no children for seven years she did not appear likely to have any more.

However, what had at first seemed impossible was realized a year later and one evening when my great aunt was going to congratulate the mother on the birth of her last born, she saw in reality her former dream. The apartment, the arrangement of the furniture, the lighted chimney, the servant drying clothes before the fire—in short, all the details of the dream—were faithfully reproduced. The prophecy had been entirely fulfilled.

Accept, Monsieur, the respectful homage of your far-away reader and my best wishes for you and for our dear France.

EMILIO BECHER,

At Rosario de Santa Fé, Argentine Republic.

(Letter 799.)

Still another occurrence.

I received from Sweden, in December, 1899, the following story from a well-known Protestant minister:

There is here, at this moment, a visitation of the bishops. One of the persons who was to have been present last week at this reunion (the meeting of the bishops was to have begun on Tuesday, the third of December, in the parish of Sjustorp, at Medelpad) dreamed on the night of the preceding Saturday that he was called to the telephone and that a minister from Medelpad, who gave his name, told him that there would be no visitation on that day, as some one had just died. But whoever it was that telephoned him from the world of dreams

did not tell him the name of the person who had died. The dreamer remembered all this very clearly the next morning. What was his amazement when at noon he actually learned, by telephone, that the wife of the bishop had died suddenly that very morning, and that the visitation could not take place, as this period of mourning would prevent his fulfilling his duties as a visitor.

(Letter 854.)

What was the agent of this psychic phenomenon?

The dead woman? That is not probable. The minister, who made his communication in a dream over a so-called telephone? Perhaps. But by what mental current, by what process? The thought of the bishop himself, radiating afar! Mysteries of telepathy!

Still another case as tragic as that of Dr. de Sermyn: Dr. Foissac tells us<sup>1</sup> how one evening in the spring of 1854, the Abbé Deguerry, the curé of the Madeleine, the Count of Las Cases, a senator, Messieurs Longet and Marshall-Hall, of the Academy of Sciences, had a very animated discussion in his salon on the marvelous and on prophetic visions, and that the last of these four persons related the following:

A year ago, when I was in Edinburgh, I went out into the neighboring country-side to visit one of my old friends, Mr. Holmes. I found every face full of sadness. Mr. Holmes had that very day been present at a burial at a castle in the neighborhood; he told me that the son of the master of the castle had often frightened his family by manifestations which they attributed to *second sight*. At times they saw him gay or sad without cause, his glance profoundly melancholy, uttering words without meaning, or describing strange visions. They tried, but in vain, to combat this disposition by a great deal of exercise and a system of varied studies, in accordance with the advice of a very enlightened doctor.

Eight days before, when the family was all together, they had suddenly seen young William, who was barely twelve years old, turn pale and become motionless; they listened and heard these words:

<sup>1</sup> *La Chance ou la Destinée* (Paris, 1876), p. 544.

*"I see a child asleep, lying in a velvet box with a sheet of white satin and wreaths and flowers all around. Why are my parents weeping? That child is I."* Filled with terror, the father and mother seized their son, whom they covered with tears and kisses. He came to himself and devoted himself with high spirits to games suitable to his age.

The week had not passed when the family, seated in the shade, after lunch, looked for William, who had been there a moment before. They did not see him and called; no voice answered. The family, the tutor, the doctor, the chaplain, the servants searched all over the park; there was a medley of a thousand cries of distress: William had disappeared. After an hour of search and anguish, the child was found in a pond where he had been drowned while trying to seize a boat which the wind had driven away from the bank. For several hours they did everything possible to bring him back to life. The fatal prediction was fulfilled.

We shall have occasion, in the second part of this work, abounding with records, to return to these phenomena accompanying death; but we are confining ourselves here to the study of the metaphysical events bearing witness to the transcendent faculties of the soul. This child had, from all the evidence, seen his coffin.

What is also one of the most singular premonitions of death can be read in the autobiography of Baron Lazare Hellembach. Here it is, as we find it in the "*Annales des Sciences psychiques*," 1877 (page 124):

I had the intention of asking the collaboration of the chief of the chemical department of the geological institution at Vienna, Monsieur Hauer, director of mines, concerning some researches which I had made in crystallography. I had spoken to him of it incidentally, as the laboratory was near my home and Hauer was well known in the scientific world—we may say throughout the whole of Europe—as an expert in his subject. I had always put off my visit, but finally I decided to make it the following morning. That very night I dreamed I saw a man, pale and trembling, supported by the arms, by two men.

I paid no attention to this dream and I went to the geological institution; but as the laboratory was in a different place from where it had been in former years, I mistook the door, and, finding the right door locked, I looked through a window and saw the exact scene shown in my dream; they were supporting Hauer, who had just poisoned himself with cyanide of potassium; they were carrying him into the vestibule, just as I had dreamed.

Baron Hellembach adds the following observations:

If I had arrived a few minutes earlier, I could surely have prevented this act, as the suicide was caused by family and money troubles, and my proposition would have given Hauer a new phase of work as well as material help. This circumstance stirred me deeply; the more so because I understood the great loss I had sustained from the point of view of my ideas and my plans, and realized that my efforts had gone for naught.

It is quite natural that this death, which swept away my plans, should have made a deep impression on me; it was perhaps for this reason that on my awakening, my consciousness should have kept a fragment of clairvoyance.

From the point of view of telepathy, we might think that the suicide, who had very probably premeditated his desperate act during the night which preceded it, had provoked the dream of Baron Hellembach. But this would not explain the essential element of the dream, the sight of a man with a livid face, dying, *supported by the arms by two other men*.

To introduce once more the hypothesis of chance events would really be too much.

We can remark here that all these facts show more and more clearly the truth of our affirmation that the soul can see the future by means of occult powers. Still another case of premonition, no less moving, occurred in 1905 in the Republic of San Marino.

A certain Marino Tonelli, twenty-seven years old, who used to sell eggs, was in the habit of visiting all the neighboring markets,

among others that of Rimini. The evening of June 13th, as he happened to be in that last-named town, he made the mistake of taking too many drinks,—a thing which, in fact, was not usual with him. He returned home in his modest wagon, fortunately with his egg-baskets empty. It appears that the young merchant was almost sunk in a stupor, for when he had reached a certain spot known as Costo di Borgo, where the road is tortuous and descends rapidly, he felt a violent shock and found himself stretched out in a field at the bottom of a little ravine, down which he had rolled. He saw then that the wagon was half overturned on the edge of the road, and the horse, almost suspended in the air, was struggling while in a very critical position. As soon as he found he was not hurt, the young man seized the animal and with the help of some persons who had run up, managed to pull the wagon also out of the ravine.

While the business of rescue was going on, what should appear before the eyes of Monsieur Tonelli but the figure of a woman who, in the moonlight, seemed to be his mother. Great was the young man's astonishment; he could no longer doubt when he heard her dear voice and felt himself embraced by the old woman. She wept with relief, asked him if he had not hurt himself and added: "I saw you. Your wife and the two children were already asleep, but I, I felt an agitation, a strange, extraordinary uneasiness, which I could not explain to myself. All at once, *I saw this road appear before me, exactly this spot, with the ravine at the side; I saw the wagon overturned and you flung into the field; you called me to help you, you prayed, and seemed to be dying!* This last is not true, thank God; but all the rest is just as I saw it. In short, I felt the irresistible need to come here, and without awakening any one, bracing myself against the fear of the loneliness, the darkness, and the stormy weather, here I am after having walked four kilometers; I should have walked a thousand to come and help you."

The editor of the "Messaggero," who published this tale, ends it by saying: "Such were the exact facts as I heard them from the lips, still trembling with emotion, of these good people."

Following this publication in the "Messaggero" an inquiry was made by Professor A. Francisci, who asked him [the editor] please to submit to the hero of this adventure a little questionnaire destined to throw light on certain points which the story in the Roman paper

had left in darkness. Here are the questions, with the replies that were made to them:

1 Was it the first accident on the road that had happened to Monsieur Tonelli, especially lately?

*Answer:* Yes.

2 Was the spot called Costo di Borgo the only dangerous point on this road? Was it at least the most dangerous of all? On the roads over which Monsieur Tonelli usually passed, returning from the markets, were there other spots as dangerous?

*Answer:* Along this road there were many spots much more dangerous, as well as on the other roads which Monsieur Tonelli was in the habit of going over.

3 When Madame Maria Tonelli began to be anxious, was the usual hour of her son's return already past? Was it at least past when she decided to go to that spot?

*Answer:* It was a little past the usual hour.

4 Did the anxiety of the mother and the vision of the accident occur when Monsieur Tonelli had already fallen?

*Answer:* The anxiety of the mother preceded by several hours the vision of the accident, and the latter occurred three quarters of an hour after the vision, so that the mother had the time to traverse on foot the four kilometers which separated the house of the Tonellis from the spot called Costo di Borgo.

5 Did Monsieur Tonelli remember having thought of his mother at the time of the accident?

*Answer:* He states that he thought of her with great affection, as well as of other members of his family, but especially of her.

6 Has any other supernatural experience ever occurred to Madame Tonelli or her son?

*Answer:* No.

This examination of Professor Francisci's establishes beyond all doubt the authenticity of this case,<sup>1</sup> which greatly resembles the one we related above (page 105). This vision of an accident *before it had happened* was a vision seen by

<sup>1</sup> See *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, August, 1905.

the spirit of the mother. That which preceded it, the child's vision of his coffin, was a sort of personal presentiment.

I have already recalled (Chapter IV) the presentiment of the astronomer Delaunay, director of the Observatoire in Paris, in an interim (1870-72) between the two administrations of Le Verrier, who was drowned in the harbor at Cherbourg, where he had gone almost in spite of himself. And I followed this recollection with that of the sister of Arsène Houssaye, carried off by a ground-swell on the coast of Penmarc'h. Here is a case of the same sort, even more significant and more remarkable for its decisiveness. Baron Joseph Kronhelm, of Podolia, Russia, is responsible for the following account of the death of a high official of the ministry of the Russian Marine, which occurred in the month of June, 1895, as the result of a collision between two boats on the Black Sea:

At the beginning of the year 1895 Madame Lukawski was awakened one night by the groans of her husband, who, in his sleep, uttered the cry: "Help! Save me!" and struggled with the movements of a drowning person. He was dreaming of a terrible catastrophe at sea, and, as soon as he was completely awake, he told how he had been on board of a great ship which sank suddenly after a collision with another ship; and that he had seen himself thrown into the sea and swallowed up by the waves. When he had finished his tale, he said: "I am convinced, now, that the sea will cause my death." And so strong was his conviction that he began to put his affairs in order, like a man who knows his days are numbered. Two months had passed and the impression caused by the dream had already grown weaker, when an order came for the minister to prepare to leave, with all his subordinates, for a port on the Black Sea.

At the moment of bidding his wife farewell, at the station in Petersburg, Lukawski said to her: "Do you remember my dream?"—"My God! Why do you ask me?"—"Because I am sure that I shall not come back, and that we shall see each other no more." Madame Lukawski forced herself to be calm, but he continued, with deep sadness: "You may say what you wish, my convictions will not change.

I know that my end is near and that nothing can prevent it. Yes—yes, I see the harbor again, the ship, the moment of the collision, the panic on board, my end—everything lives again before my eyes.” And after a short pause he added: “When the telegram reaches you announcing my death, and you put on mourning, I beg you not to put over your face the long veil which I detest.” Quite incapable of replying, Madame Lukawski burst into tears. The whistle of the train gave the signal for departure; Monsieur Lukawski embraced his wife tenderly, and the train disappeared.

After two weeks of extreme anxiety, Madame Lukawski learned from the papers of the collision of the two ships *Wladimir* and *Sineus*; it had taken place in the Black Sea. Full of despair, she telegraphed to obtain information from Admiral Zelenoi at Odessa, and received this answer: “No news just at present of your husband, but it is certain that he was on board the *Wladimir*.” The announcement of his death reached her a week later.

It should be added that in his dream Monsieur Lukawski had seen himself struggling with a passenger for his life, an incident which was realized with scrupulous exactitude. In the catastrophe, a passenger on the *Wladimir*, Monsieur Henicke, had flung himself into the sea with a life-buoy. Monsieur Lukawski, already in the water, started for the buoy as soon as he saw it, and the other cried out to him: “Do not take hold of it; it will not support two persons; we shall be drowned together.” But Lukawski seized hold of it none the less, saying that he did not know how to swim. “Then take it,” said Henicke. “I am a good swimmer and I shall get along all the same.” At this moment a great wave separated them; Monsieur Henicke was able to save himself, but Lukawski went to meet his fate. “Light,” 1899, p. 45.

In repeating this tale, Monsieur Bozzano<sup>1</sup> points out that the conjunction of so many circumstances that could not be foreseen, entirely eliminates the hypothesis of chance coincidence, and compares, in this connection, other explanatory theories, reincarnation, fatalism, spirits. We, as a matter of fact, simply wish to convince ourselves of the existence in

<sup>1</sup> *Des Phénomènes prémonitoires*, p. 77.

us of a psychic element endowed with *the supra-normal power of seeing the future.*

What we wish is to prove that the future virtually exists in the causes that bring it about, and under certain psychological conditions it can really be seen exactly.

We find examples of this vision of the future in all ages; but they have never been interpreted as they deserve to be; no one has ever seen in them the manifestation of the inner powers of the human soul. Here is one, little known, of the famous Captain Montluc, which we can read at the end of Book IV of his "Commentaries." We know that he received the baton of Marshal of France, and no one has forgotten that Henry II was mortally wounded, in 1559, in a tournament, as he was jousting against Montgomery. Here is what Montluc tells of his vision:

The night before the day of the tournament, in my first sleep, I dreamed that I saw the King, seated on the seat, his face all covered with drops of blood, and it seemed to me that it was thus that they paint Christ when the Jews lay the crown of thorns upon him and he holds his hands clasped. I looked at him carefully. The face seemed his, but I could not discover his trouble or see anything but the blood on his face. It seemed to me that I heard some say, "He is dead," and others, "He is not yet dead!" I saw the doctors and surgeons come from and go to his room. And it must be that my dream lasted a long time, for when I awoke I discovered something which I had never believed before,—that a man can weep while he sleeps,—for I found my face all covered with tears and my eyes still shedding them, and I had to let them continue, for I could not keep from weeping for a long time after. My wife thought to comfort me, but I could believe only in his death. Many who are now living know that this is not a mere tale, for I spoke of it as soon as I was awake.

Four days later a messenger arrived at Nérac, who carried a letter to the King of Navarre, from Monsieur the Constable, in which he gave information as to the King's wound and of the small hope for his life.

The most surprising thing about the work which we are undertaking here is that all this should have passed unnoticed for so many centuries, and should have even been disdained, denied, laughed at, and despised.

I have found a curious letter of the year 1615, from Nicolas Pasquier to his brother, the counselor to the king and sheriff of the city of Paris, on the death of their father, Etienne Pasquier, born in 1529, died in 1615, whose death was announced in a premonitory dream exactly a year before, to the day. Here is this document.<sup>1</sup>

I have received your letters this third of September, 1615, on the death of our father, which took place the thirtieth of August, about two hours after midnight. I have something memorable to tell you on this subject. Last year, on the night of the same thirtieth of August, about five o'clock in the morning, I dreamed that I was with our father, who was lying in bed, from which he rose and fell on his knees to pray to God. This he did devoutly, his clasped hands lifted, his eyes raised to heaven. When his prayer was finished, he changed color and fell dead in my arms. I awoke trembling, and told the dream to my wife, and in order to keep it fresh in my memory, as I was already up, I set it down in writing. Consider the two coincidences in this case, the one, that *I saw the death of our father one year, to the very day, before his decease*, the other that, *the very day he died I came across this paper which I had not thought of since*. If you analyze this dream you will find that everything that took place at the time of his death was foreseen by me; that he would not be ill for long, and he was ill for only ten hours; that he would die a good Christian, as he did; that all his senses would remain sound and healthy up to his last breath. In conclusion, his death was like his life; just as he had enjoyed great peace for eighty-six years, two months and twenty-three days, so his death was peaceful, without sorrow, difficulty or pain.

Yes, all of these psychic facts have been known for cen-

<sup>1</sup> Lenglet-Dufresnoy: *Recueil de dissertations* (1752), II, ii, p. 1.

turies. The Latin authors have told us that the assassination of Julius Cæsar had been announced to him that morning by his wife Calpurnia; that Brutus foresaw his defeat in the Battle of Philippi which was foretold by his "genius"; that Arterius Rufus had seen in a dream the net-fighter who was to stab him,<sup>1</sup> etc. But all this has remained misunderstood.

And the premonition of the tragic death of Henry IV, reported by his confidant Sully? And so many others!

Astronomy has had its Copernicus, its Kepler, its Newton. The psychic sciences have not yet had their Hipparchus, their Ptolemy, their Aristarchus; they await their Copernicus.

We have only to read a little to find everywhere these observations which we are just now beginning to take seriously.

One of the profoundest and most original scholars of the seventeenth century, Pierre Gassendi, the friend of Galileo and of Pereisch, has told of the following premonitory dream:

Monsieur Pereisch set out one day on a trip to Nîmes with a friend, a certain Monsieur Rainier. The latter, noticing in the night that Pereisch was talking in his sleep, awoke him and asked him what was the matter with him. He answered: "I dreamed that we had reached Nîmes, and that one of the jewelers offered me a medal of Julius Cæsar for four écus. Just as I was about to give him the money you awoke me, to my great regret."

When they had reached Nîmes, and as they were walking about the town, Monsieur Pereisch recognized the jeweler's shop which he had seen in his dream. He entered and asked if he had nothing curious to sell him and received the answer: "Yes, a medal of Julius Cæsar." When asked how much it was worth, the merchant answered, "Four écus." Monsieur Pereisch hastened to pay him and was delighted to see his dream happily realized.

Here the fulfilment of the premonition seems to have been

<sup>1</sup> See Valerius Maximus: *De Somnis Romanorum*.

determined by the memory of the premonition itself, for Pereisch recognized the jeweler's shop which he had seen in his dream.

Dr. E. Osty, who was especially versed in this subject of lucidity, held a conference, duly recorded at the general Institute of Psychology, on March 24, 1919. I will select from this the following case which had occurred to him personally.<sup>1</sup> He reports:

In 1919 a lucid subject which I was using for the first time described my life in this way:

"You are living in a little town in the center of France—I see the house where you live, on a small square—but your work is not there. You go for your work to a house where you have a desk—there you handle a great many sheets of paper. How many sheets of paper you touch! They bring them to you from another office room, next to yours, where several men are writing. There is a perpetual going and coming between the room in which they are and your own. You look at the papers they bring you and give them back to them. People also come from outside bringing you papers. You look at them, you write and you give them back. How many papers you touch!—how many sheets of paper!"

All this was false. My existence at the time was composed of little else than the practice of medicine, and personal work in psychology. *All this came true* after August, 1914, when I became head doctor of the hospital and of the post at Vierzon. During the first two years of the war, the fragmentary vision of the medium became one aspect—I should even say the principal and most characteristic aspect—of my daily life. I was immersed in administrative red-tape.

This vision of the future was exact, like a window opened on a future scene. It is quite remarkable that these personal visions are so frequent, while general events and especially the frightful political catastrophe of the German war of 1914–18, are not the subject of any characteristic foresight of

<sup>1</sup> *Bulletin de l'Institut général psychologique*, January–June, 1919.

this kind. It would seem that the vision concerned only the sensations passing from soul to soul.

My laborious and much regretted friend, Dr. Moutin, who made remarkable experiments in hynotism at my house, in 1889, of which I shall have occasion to speak later, was occupied in 1903 with analytical studies in spiritualism, among which is worth noting the singular example given here:

During a *séance*, held on August 19th, of which he kept the written account, following his excellent habit, a spirit manifested itself at the table, saying that it was a lady, Hermance V——, who had recently died. The doctor had known this lady and her husband for a long time. The following statement astonished him very much:

"My husband will remarry next September. Before he marries he will come to Paris, but will not have time to make you a visit."

"What you tell me is impossible. I know V—— and I know all the affection he had for his wife; I could never believe that he would remarry four months after her death."

"It is true, nevertheless, and in a few days you will receive the confirmation of what I say."

"Then it is interest which guides him and not affection?"

"Interest has nothing to do with it; you know well that Lucien [this was the first name of V——] cannot live alone."

"Will he marry a woman of his own age?"

"No, a young girl, twenty-three years of age, and shortly after his marriage he will leave Provence and come to Paris."

"How is that possible, with the position which he occupies in the Midi? It is quite inadmissible."

"Unfortunate circumstances, especially a large loss of money, forced him to come to Paris, to seek a new situation."

"We shall see if your prediction is realized; I doubt it very much. But, admitting that what you say is true, do you see this union with displeasure?"

"On the contrary, since Lucien cannot live alone."

At these last words the table remained quiet. After a few minutes

of waiting I asked if the communication were ended: "Yes," was the answer.

Madame V—— did not appear again, and that was the only manifestation which she gave.

In the present case nothing could have made any one expect these revelations, nothing could make us take this communication seriously. The members of my family and I were the only ones who knew the dead woman, and we were far from believing what she had just told us; the other persons who were present at our meetings had never even heard the name of V——.

A few days later, on August 27th I received a letter from my friend V—— in which he announced his approaching marriage, in September, to Mademoiselle X—— and told me some things about his future which exactly coincided with what we had already been told on August 19th.

In March, 1904, Monsieur V—— came to see us and told us that he had come to live in Paris; I told him of Hermance's communication, and he was so astonished that although he did not doubt our statements, he wished to see the written account of this séance, and he was able to ascertain that everything his first wife had said had been literally correct—his trip to Paris before his second marriage, his change of position. He was petrified with astonishment, and affirmed the reality of the concluding facts which we do not hesitate to give as proof of the preservation of personality after death, and as a patent proof of the identity of Madame Hermance V——.

Dr. Moutin presents this event as the most important of those which brought about his spiritualistic convictions. Does it really possess the positive value which he attributed to it?

It has been demonstrated that our thoughts can take effect either consciously or unconsciously, to adduce these typical statements of fact. Dr. Moutin and his family knew Madame Hermance V. The idea that her husband, who had become a widower, might marry again was not in the least extraordinary. On the other hand, the thoughts of the widower may have had something to do with the event, as he already had the intention of remarrying and he announced it to his

friends eight days after this séance. Did not the plan of leaving the country for Paris already occupy his mind?

It seems to me that the identity of the dead woman is far from *certain* and that the manifestation may well have been due to other psychic causes. Nevertheless, it seems to me *probable*. This is not the place to discuss this important problem, and I only mention the case as an example of the *exact announcement of a future event*.

I will add, however, that in this particular case, as in similar ones, the first wife of the friend of Dr. Moutin may have had, even in her lifetime, an intuition of this second marriage and may have approved of it, which would be in favor of her identity. We shall return to this subject in the third part of this work, when we discuss the manifestations of the dead.

The famous curé of Ars, the Abbé Vianney (1786-1859), has given several examples of his power of seeing the future. Here is one of them which I take from his biography:<sup>1</sup>

Sister Marie-Victoire, the founder of a rescue home for young girls, was at Ars, at the beginning of her work, with two companions, one of whom is at present her assistant. One morning before their departure, when they all three prepared to hear the mass of Monsieur Vianney, he approached them, and addressing Sister Marie-Victoire, who had not then taken her vows, he said to her: "You must leave quickly."—"But Monsieur le curé," she answered, taken by surprise, "we wished first to hear the holy mass."—"No, my daughter, leave instantly, for one of you is going to fall ill. If you delay you will be obliged to remain here, you will not be able to go away." In fact, a short distance from the district where they lived, one of the travelers—she who has since become Sister Marie-Françoise—began to feel so ill that her two companions were forced to carry her in their arms as far as her home. This was the beginning of an illness which nothing had presaged.

The Abbé Vianney was gifted with excellent psychic facul-

<sup>1</sup> *Le Curé d'Ars*, by the Abbé Alfred Monnin, II, 500.

ties. He attributed to the devil certain manifestations of an inferior order, such as unexplained noises; but nothing has been less clearly demonstrated than the existence of the devil.

This premonition was of service. The greater part of the time they are of no use at all and prevent nothing. Here is one, however, which saved the life of a child.

The English Society for Psychical Research has reported, among others, a case of a very precise vision of the future, which saved the life of a little girl who was going to play near the railroad in Edinburgh, where an accident due to a locomotive killed three men and would have crushed the child. The mother writes the following account of this curious escape:

I had told my daughter that I would let her go out to walk from three until four o'clock; and as she was alone I advised her to go into the "railway garden" (a name which we had given to a narrow strip of land between the sea and the railway). A few minutes after she had left I distinctly heard an inner voice saying to me, "Send for her at once, or something frightful will happen to her."

I thought it was a matter of autosuggestion, and I wondered what could possibly happen to her on such a fine day, so I did not send for her.

Nevertheless, a few moments later, the same voice began to say the same words to me, but more imperiously. I still resisted, and I used all my imagination to divine what could happen to the child. I thought of an encounter with a mad dog, but the thing was so improbable that it would have been absurd to recall her for such a silly fancy; and although I was beginning to feel anxious I resolved to do nothing about it, and tried to think of other things. I succeeded for several minutes, but soon the voice renewed its intimation with the same words, "Send after her immediately, or something frightful will happen to her." At the same time I was seized with violent trembling, and with an impression of extreme terror. I got up quickly, rang the bell, and told the servant to go at once after my daughter,

repeating mechanically the words of the intimation, "otherwise something frightful will happen to her."

At the end of a quarter of an hour, the servant returned with the child, who, disappointed at being recalled so soon, asked if I really intended to keep her in the house all the afternoon. "No," I answered, "and if you will promise me not to go again into the 'railway garden' you may go where you wish—to your uncle's, for example—or you may play in the garden with your little cousins." I thought that within those four walls she would be safe, for although the child had come back safe and sound, I *felt clearly* that the danger still existed in the spot where she had been before, and I wished to prevent her from returning there.

Well, it was precisely at that point that the locomotive and the tender ran off the tracks, breaking the walls and crashing against the very rocks on which the child was accustomed to go and sit.

This extraordinary escape has been attested to by all the family and the neighbors. It occurred in the month of July, 1860, and was published in the "Journal of the Society for Psychical Research" (Volume VIII, March, 1897) and by me in "La Revue" for May, 1912. Its veracity cannot be attacked.

I will add here, with Bozzano, a no less remarkable premonition which saved the lives of a whole family, and which was also caused by a mysterious voice. It, too, is taken from the "Journal of the Society for Psychical Research" (Volume I, page 283). Captain MacGowan himself reported the event to Professor Barrett:

In January, 1877, when I chanced to be in Brooklyn with my two young sons, who were on their vacation, I promised to take them to the theater on a certain evening. The day before I had already picked out *and paid for the three seats*.

On the morning of the appointed day I began to notice an inner voice which repeated insistently: "Don't go to the theater; take your sons back to school." Despite my efforts to distract myself, I could not prevent this voice from continuing, and repeating the same words

in a more imperious tone than ever; and to such an extent that by noon I had decided to inform my friends and children that we could not go to the theater. But my friends reproached me for this determination, pointing out that it was cruel to deprive the children of a pleasure that was so unusual for them, and so impatiently awaited, after having made them a promise, and that caused me to change my mind again.

However, during the whole afternoon, this inner voice did not cease from repeating the order, with an insistence so impressive, that when evening had come, and one hour before the beginning of the play, I peremptorily told my sons that instead of going to the theater we were going to New York, and we left.

Well, it happened that that very evening the theater was entirely destroyed by fire, and that 305 persons perished in the flames.

If we had been at the theater, my sister, who was there, would have perished as well as we, for we should have gone out by a staircase on which every one was crushed to death.

I have never in my life had another presentiment, and I have not the habit of changing my mind without good reasons, and on this occasion I did it with the greatest reluctance, quite in spite of myself.

What was the cause which obliged me, against my will, not to go to the theater, after having paid for the three tickets and arranged everything for passing the evening pleasantly?

Captain MacGowan explained to Professor Barrett that the inner voice<sup>1</sup> had sounded very clearly to him, "as if some one had really been speaking from the inside of the body," and that it had persisted from breakfast-time up to the moment when he took his children to New York. His

<sup>1</sup> What was this voice? We have heard of others in the preceding cases, that of the lady from Edinburgh a few minutes ago, then the telephonic voice of the Swedish pastor, that of Monsieur Dufilhol, the inner voice announcing the election of Casimir-Perier, Monsieur Fryer hearing his brother sixty-four kilometers away, the telepathic sound heard by Dr. Balme, that of Dr. Nicholas at Zante, the voice of a father to his son, one hundred kilometers away, a mother hearing her son from England to Java, weeping heard twenty-four hours in advance, the voices of Jeanne d'Arc, the young girl in the bath, the phantom of Monsieur Marechal; voices evidently fictitious but of psychic origin.

sister still preserves the three tickets which he had bought the day before.<sup>1</sup>

These events are so convincing, so thoroughly demonstrated, that they strongly confirm one another and together from a mass of evidence that no force would be able to destroy.

It seems superfluous to add other examples to the preceding ones. However, there are some so typical that it would be a pity not to recall them, to anchor fast the idea of truth in the minds of the most stubborn. The following observation, which is so carefully reported by the very exact experimenter Liébault,<sup>2</sup> in his "Thérapeutiques Suggestives," is especially remarkable.

The learned doctor of Nancy tells how on January 7, 1886, at four o'clock in the afternoon (according to his authentic daily memorandum book) one of his clients, Monsieur de Ch—— came, in a state of nervousness easily understood, to consult him. Let us hear the story:

Six years before, on the twenty-sixth of December, 1879, as he was walking in a street in Paris, this young man had seen, written over a door: "Mme. Lenormand, Necromancer," and, pricked by curiosity, had gone in.

On examining his hand the prophetess had told him: "You will lose your father in a year, to the day. You will soon be a soldier (he was then nineteen) but you will not remain one very long. You will marry young and have two children. You will die at twenty-six."

This amazing prophecy, which Monsieur de Ch—— confided to his friends and to some of his family, he did not at first take seriously; but when his father died on the twenty-seventh of December, 1880, after a short illness, just a year after the interview with the fortune-teller, this misfortune rather shook his incredulity; when he became a soldier for only seven months; when, having been married shortly after, he became the father of two children, and was on the point of becoming twenty-six, definitely shaken by fear, he believed that there only remained a few days of life for him. It was then

<sup>1</sup> See Bozzano, *Des Phénomènes prémonitoires*, p. 408.

<sup>2</sup> See *L'Inconnu*, p. 564.

that he came to consult Dr. Liébault, and to ask him if it would not be possible to conjure fate. For, he thought, as the four first events of the prophecy had come to pass, the fifth must inevitably be realized! The doctor writes:

That very day and on the following days, I tried to put M. de Ch—— into a deep sleep, so as to dissipate the black impression engraved on his mind—that of his approaching death, which he imagined would take place on the fourth of February, the anniversary of his birthday, although the prophetess had not been definite on this point. I could not produce even the lightest sleep, so greatly agitated was he. However, as it was urgently necessary to take away his conviction, for we have seen predictions fulfilled to the letter by autosuggestion, I proposed to him to consult one of my somnambulists, an old man called the Prophet, because he had announced the precise moment of his own recovery from a four-year-long attack of rheumatism and even the time of his daughter's recovery.

Monsieur de Ch—— accepted my proposal with eagerness, and did not fail to appear promptly at the rendezvous. As soon as he was in rapport with this somnambulist, his first words were: "When shall I die?" The experienced sleeper, suspecting the young man's trouble, answered, after having made him wait: "You will die—you will die—in forty-one years." The effect of these words was marvelous. Immediately the patient became gay, expansive, full of hope; and when he had passed the fourth of February, the day so greatly feared by him, he believed himself saved.

I thought no more of all this when, at the beginning of October, I received a letter announcing that my unfortunate client had passed away on the thirtieth of September, 1886, in his twenty-seventh year, that is to say, when he was twenty-six, as Madame Lenormand had foretold. And in order that it may not be supposed that there is any error on my part, *I preserve this letter, as well as my register: they are two written and undeniable pieces of evidence.*

Such is the account of Dr. Liébault, whose works are well known. Analyze, dissect this series of incidents with all imaginable skepticism, with the greatest surgical decisiveness, and even if you should think that there was nothing surprising that the fortune-teller should have predicted to this

young man nineteen years old that he would be a soldier and would marry, still four coincidences would have to be explained: first, the death of his father at the end of exactly one year; secondly, his release from military service before the usual time; third, the birth of two children; fourth, his own death at twenty-six years. It seems to me that this tale alone would almost suffice to establish our contention. It would perhaps show us also that it is imprudent to ask these questions, even when one does not believe in them, because one's peace of mind suffers inevitably, and it is not necessary to arouse anxiety.

But is one always the master? We must confess that the whole of this study of the conditions of death bristles with interrogation points. The following case also is most odd. How can it also be explained?

On the night of May 24-25, 1900, Monsieur Renou, who at the time was twenty-eight years old, and living in a large city in the north of France, dreamed that when he was at his barber's the latter's wife told his fortune by cards. Let us mention in passing that the person in question had never shown proof of this social talent. She then said to him: "Your father will die on the second of June."

On the second of May, in the morning, Monsieur Renou told this dream to his family. At the time he was living with his parents, and all these good people, who were most skeptical about this sort of warning, laughed at it without attaching any importance to it.

Monsieur Renou, the father, had had, at long intervals, a few attacks of asthma; but at this moment he was very well. On the first of June, while he was present at the funeral of a person of his acquaintance, he told the dream to one of his friends, and concluded gaily: "If I must die to-morrow, I have n't much time to lose."

The entire day passed without his feeling indisposed.

In the evening, one of his sons, a soldier at Verdun, came home on furlough. The whole reunited family talked joyously, well on into the evening.

At half-past eleven, Monsieur Renou, the father, went to bed, not in the least indisposed. At midnight he was suddenly seized with

an attack of breathlessness: intense dyspnœa, a violent cough, a mossy and bloody expectoration. They ran for a doctor: it was too late, all was over. At twenty minutes past midnight—therefore, on the second day of June—he died.

This tale, in which only the name is changed, at the request of the family, was published in "*Les Nouveaux Horizons de la science*" (Douai, June, 1905). Dr. Samas, who reported this event, searched for the explanation. Skeptics will make an easy matter of it, he says, by objecting that there was nothing but mere coincidence: Monsieur Renou, already affected with heart trouble, consequently impressed by this dream; the return of his son,—the second cause for emotion; his already over-excited imagination determined, by reflex action, the ultimate crisis. But we have just seen that neither he nor any other member of his family attached the least importance to this strange dream. Then—?

Let us consider, also, the following premonitory dream of death, which was associated with an apparition.

On March 8, 1913, I received this important account from Madame Suzanne Bonnefoy, president of the Union of French Women, of the French Red Cross, at Cherbourg, the wife of the head doctor of the Maritime Hospital:

I feel, dear Master, that I must tell you a case of personal premonition, which may be of use if added to the list of your psychic documents.

On the eighteenth of last January, at about eight o'clock in the morning, the servant of Monsieur Féron, an attorney, living in rue Christine, and first deputy of the town of Cherbourg, came to tell me of the sudden death of his master, which had occurred ten hours before. The affection which I bore Monsieur Féron was rather that of a sister than of a friend. Very much moved, I ran to offer my services to his wife Madame Féron, who, having been married for twenty-eight years to a husband who constantly petted her, was in despair and wished to die. "And to think," she cried on seeing me,

"that for a month he has repeated constantly that he would never see the end of January. Just lately, he had been to the burial of one of his friends, and had had, on the following night, a very strange dream, in which this friend had appeared and had said to him: 'On such a day you will come and join me.'"

As Madame Féron finished this tale, broken with sobs, Madame Leflambe, who lives here, on the Place Napoléon, entered. Madame Féron repeated her tale, and added:

"My husband, in consequence of a dream, predicted not only the death of his mother but also of your husband, Madame. When you were leaving for Vichy, in 1911, where Monsieur Leflambe had insisted that you should go for your health, he said to me: 'Our friend, Monsieur Leflambe, is going to Vichy for his wife's health, but he will not return.' Monsieur Leflambe, who was very well when he left, contracted there a fatal case of pneumonia.

"On coming down from this visit, of which I am telling you very simply, I met the servant: 'Monsieur Féron,' I said to him, 'was at the Town-hall only last evening, very well and not knowing he was to die so soon!'—'Oh, Madame,' he answered, 'on the contrary, Monsieur Féron told us that he had dreamed that he would never see the end of January, and he seemed very much struck by it.'"

Monsieur Féron was taken suddenly ill in the street and died in half an hour, carried off by a heart attack. Very much respected at Cherbourg, he enjoyed a comfortable fortune, excellent health, and everything in life smiled upon him.

Yesterday, the fifth of March, I was talking once more with Madame Féron, of this singular premonition. She told me that he felt sure he had already lived another life than this.

SUZANNE BONNEFOY,

13 rue de la Polle, Cherbourg.

(Letter 2325.)

When I chanced to be in Cherbourg, in September, 1914, Monsieur and Madame Bonnefoy confirmed to me this most curious case, and I had, moreover, an independent and spontaneous confirmation from Monsieur Biard, director of the "Réveil de la Manche," who had been struck by the sudden

death of the mayor's deputy, and who knew the circumstances. These facts exist; it serves no purpose to deny them. They ought, on the contrary, to instruct us.

Here is another of the same order:

Monsieur Harley, a merchant at Pont-Audemer (Eure) wrote to me on the thirteenth of April, 1918 (Letter 4024), that Dr. Castara had one night seen a man push aside the curtains of his bed and announce to him: first, a good situation, and, secondly, his death at the age of forty years; that on the date fixed he had gathered all his friends together at a great dinner, at which his grandfather and grandmother were present, congratulating himself on the end of the nightmare, and that at midnight, he had been seized with a raging toothache and had fallen dead.

Still another event:

The well-known naturalist, Edwin Reed, director of the Museum of Natural History of the city of Conception, Chile, enjoyed excellent health a little while before his death. Two months before his decease, he dreamed that on reaching the end of an avenue where he was walking, he saw a tomb with a cross and read on it the following inscription: "Reed, naturalist, November 7, 1910." Mr. Reed jokingly related this strange dream on different occasions to several friends. A short time after, Madame de R——, the daughter-in-law of Mr. Reed, who was living at Mendoza, dreamed one night, as she was about to celebrate the anniversary of her marriage, which fell on that very day, the seventh of November, that all the presents which reached her on that day were funeral wreaths.

Well, Mr. Reed died November 7, 1910.

During the days which preceded his death he recalled that date to those about him, without seeming to attach the least importance to it.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Revista de Estudios Psiquicos* (Valparaiso). *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, April, 1911.

I could cite a great number of events similar to the preceding ones, *proving that the future can be seen*. That is not the aim of this book, and I have consecrated a special book to them which will be published shortly. The examples which we have before us are more than sufficient for this chapter, which was simply but expressly destined, as were the former ones, to point out the existence of faculties of the soul independent of the exercise of the material senses. To add more evidence here could give no better proof of these faculties.

It seems to me that the attentive reader of these pages can no longer doubt the existence of the soul and its purely psychic faculties.

Before the knowledge of telepathy, in the past ages, they attributed these sorts of warnings to angels or demons, or, fifty years ago, to disembodied spirits. To-day we can think that there is telepathic transmission from brain to brain, that cerebral waves overcome distances. This is possible; but it is also possible that the science of the future will smile at our present theories as we smile at those of the ancients. Whatever may be the explanation, premonitory dreams, visions of the future, in various ways, are authentic, investigations have confirmed them, and that is what concerns us here.

We might, in this account of the statements relating to a vision of the future, have spoken of the premonitions, the previsions, the predictions calculated by astrology, however inexplicable they also may be. That our destiny can be read in the stars seems inadmissible and absolutely illogical to our understanding, since the geocentric and anthropocentric appearances have been demonstrated by modern astronomy to be false. However, there are singular examples of the realization of these predictions. We lack space to give them here, but I shall cite briefly a few of incontestable authenticity, which we owe to men of the highest standing, celebrated astronomers.

David Fabricius, a Protestant pastor (born at Essen in 1564; died at Resterhäft in 1617), the astronomer to whom we owe the discovery of *Mira Ceti*, "the Marvelous," a variable star of the Whale, had intercourse, through his studies, with Tycho Brahé and Kepler, and, like them, was occupied with astrology, which, by the way, he believed in. He himself calculated, from the constellations, that the seventh day of May would be fatal to him. On that day he had taken every possible precaution to prevent any sort of accident. Finally, at ten o'clock in the evening, after very absorbing work, he thought he might take the air for a moment in the court of his parsonage. But scarcely had he arrived there when a peasant named Jean Hoyer, who thought he had been designated as a thief in a sermon by Fabricius, came out from the spot where he was hiding and with a blow of his pitchfork broke the skull of the unfortunate pastor, who died that very night.

We read of his friend Tycho Brahé, that he also read in the stars that a certain day would be disastrous to him. In vain he surrounded himself with every precaution: he was attacked in the darkness by a personal enemy called Mauderup Parsberg, who cut off part of his nose, which obliged the illustrious astronomer to wear a silver nose. And in fact, we always see in his portraits his nose marked by an oblique cut.

Jean Stœffler, born in 1472, died in 1530, greatly devoted to astrological calculations, found them true, at least for himself. The examination of his horoscope had given him the conviction that he would die on a certain day from the blow of a heavy object which would fall on his head. He did not go out on that day, received a few friends, and thought he had finished the day without mishap, when, wishing to reach a certain book that was placed on an insecure shelf, he received the board and all its books on his head, and did indeed die in consequence of the blow.

These three examples suffice to represent here very numerous coincidences which could not be due to chance. The stars themselves count for no more in these interpretations than do the cards in the hands of the fortune-tellers. When Fabricius, Tycho Brahé, Stœffler made these predictions, they were led by a secret, supra-normal power of intuition.

The same thing was true of the niece of Prince Radziwill, as is reported by the translator of the *Souvenirs* of the Marquise de Créquy (1834) :

Prince Radziwill had adopted one of his nieces, an orphan. He lived in a castle in Galicia, and this castle had a very large room which separated the apartments of the prince from those of the children; so that in order to communicate with them, one had to cross this room, or pass through the court.

The young Agnes, who at the time was five or six years old, always uttered piercing cries whenever she was made to cross the large room. She pointed out, with an expression of terror, an enormous picture hung over the door, which represented the Cumæan Sybil. They tried for a long time to overcome this repugnance, which they attributed to some childish obstinacy; but since serious accidents resulted from the use of force they finally no longer allowed her to enter the room, and for ten or twelve years the young girl preferred to cross the vast courtyard or the gardens, even in snow and cold, rather than pass through that doorway which made so disagreeable an impression on her.

The time had come to marry the young countess, and when she was engaged there was one day a great reception at the castle. The company wished, in the evening, to play some lively game, and they went into the big hall, where, as a matter of fact, the wedding ball was to take place. Excited by the young people about her, Agnes did not hesitate to follow her guests; but hardly had she crossed the threshold of the door when she confessed her terror and wished to draw back. They had made her go in first, according to custom, and her fiancé, her friends, her uncle, laughing at her childishness, shut the door upon her. The poor young girl wished to resist, and while

shaking one of the doors, she caused the picture above to fall. This enormous mass broke her skull with one of its corners, and killed her on the spot.<sup>1</sup>

I shall cease giving these examples, as this book must have an end, apologizing for having multiplied them a little too eagerly; and as my readers are by now certainly *convinced*.

Conclusion: *The future can be seen.*

In the present state of human knowledge it would be useless to try to explain how this vision rises in our minds, as well as the sensations which are related to it.

We may think that the subconscious, the psychic being, in the exercise of its supra-normal faculties, such as certain forms of clairvoyance, and, notably, prescience, crosses the limits of time and space, that is to say, the laws which regulate our material world. It is for this reason that future events seem to it to be on the same plane as the present and the past. It draws its power from laws that are still unknown. And this fact, however inexplicable it may be, has nothing inadmissible about it, if this psychic being or organism constitutes the total and permanent personality of the human being, a personality nourished by the most diverse and mysterious sources. In this order of ideas there would therefore be no temerity in supposing that, under certain conditions favored by sleep, hypnoses, or such and such personal predispositions, the influences that have come from the invisible world could invade the subconscious and inspire it with knowledge of which it makes proof by the discovery of past, present, or, above all, *future* events. During life, as well as after death, the soul is immersed in the ethereal atmosphere of the invisible world.

The rigorous examination of facts, the closest logic, lead us to conclude that it is impossible to attribute to matter, to the brain, to the cerebral molecules, to any chemical or mechanical combinations whatever, the intellectual power of see-

<sup>1</sup> Charpignon, *Physiologie et métaphysique du Magnétisme*, p. 352.

ing without the eyes, of foreseeing future events, of knowing what is passing at a distance, or what will happen in the future, facts outside the corporeal organism and the essentially mental organism. These observations prove the existence of the spirit, endowed with intrinsic faculties, independent of the physical senses.

During the earthly existence, the soul is associated with a brain appropriate to its functions. *Mens sana in corpore sano.*

If the soul is not a production of the brain, if it is distinct from the cerebro-spinal nervous system, if it exists in itself, there is no reason why it should disintegrate with it.

Certain phenomena, such as the reading of unknown texts, testify to the existence of a spirit endowed with special faculties. This spirit may be our own, and it has not been proved that there has been the intervention of spirits foreign to those of the experimenters. Nevertheless, the hypothesis remains. For if the spirit survives death, it still exists somewhere, and if our spirit can discover hidden things during its lifetime, why should it lose this power after death?

For the very reason that we attribute the production of these phenomena to the action of our spirit, we ought to accept also the possibility of its ulterior action, and compare the two hypotheses, in order to estimate which is the simpler.

But the fact that these readings, these divinations, these previsions, these psychic actions, these spiritualistic communications, are realized without our expecting them, in complete unconsciousness on our part, places before us a complication as great as the hypothesis of spirits external to our own.

It seems quite likely that the two elements are brought into action—our own metaphysical faculties and at times the action of invisible spirits. Let us not be exclusive.

We go forward in complete mystery, and this mystery is imposed upon our thirst for knowledge.

To admit only the facts that can be explained in the present state of knowledge is a great error. Not to be able to explain an observation proves nothing against its authenticity. Scholars ought always to have before their minds the following remarks of Arago, concerning the history of aërolites:

The Chinese believed that the appearance of aërolites was closely connected with contemporary events, and it was for this reason that they made lists of them. I do not know, as a matter of fact, whether we have much right to laugh at this supposition. Were the scholars of Europe any wiser when, refusing to believe the evidence of the events, they stated that it was impossible for stones to fall from the atmosphere? Did not the Academy of Sciences declare in 1769 that the stone picked up at the moment of its fall, near Lucé, by several persons who had followed it with their eyes until it reached the ground, had not fallen from the skies? Finally, was not the formal written account of the municipality of Julliac, stating that on July 24, 1790, there fell in the fields, on the roofs of the houses, in the streets of the village a great quantity of stones, treated, in the journals of the period, as a ridiculous tale, fit to arouse the pity not only of scholars but of all reasonable people?

The physicists who will admit only those facts for which they perceive an explanation, certainly hinder more the advance of science than the men who can be reproached for too great credulity.

How many times have I repeated that it is a total mistake to believe that a fact which cannot be explained ought not to be admitted? To understand or not to understand a phenomenon proves nothing against its existence. So said Cicero long ago.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "*Cur fiat quidque, quæris? Recte omnino; sed non nunc id agitur: fiat, necne fiat, id quæritur. Ut si magnetem lapidem esse dicam, qui ferrum ad se alliciat et attrahat; rationem, cur id fiat, affere nequeam: fieri omnino neges?* [You wish to have the explanation of these things? Very well; but that is not the question: are they real, yes or no? That is what we wish to know. What! I might tell you that the magnet is a body which attracts iron and attaches itself to it; but because I could not give you the explanation of it, would you deny it?]" (*De Divinatione*, lib I, cap. 39.)

An incomprehensible fact is still a fact, but an incomprehensible explanation is not an explanation. The mental faculties which we have just watched in operation, prove that there is in the human being a psychic element distinct from the physical organism, seeing across time and space, penetrating the invisible world, and to which the future as well as the past can appear as present.

We are studying here the world of the soul which it is no longer permissible to misunderstand.

To solve the mystery of death, to establish the survival of the soul, we first had to prove *that the soul does exist*, individually, an existence proved by special, extra-corporeal faculties, which cannot be included among the properties of the material brain, or among chemical or mechanical reactions; faculties essentially spiritual, such as the will, acting without the spoken word; autosuggestion, producing physical effects; presentiments; telepathy; intellectual transmissions; reading in a closed book; the sight by the spirit of a far-off country, of a future scene or event—all phenomena outside the sphere of our physical organism, lacking any common measure with our organic sensations and proving *that the soul is a substance which exists in itself*.

I hope that this proof has been rigorously made.

Psychic observations prove that the universe is not limited to things that can be reached by the five or six senses derived from our animal inheritance. There are other orders of creation.

Since the personal existence of our spiritual entity has been thus established, we shall now study, with the same experimental method, the phenomena associated with death itself, the manifestations of the dying, the apparitions of the living and the dead, the constitution of the psychic being, haunted houses, communications from the dead, the proofs of the survival of the psychic atom, the ethereal body. What has preceded belongs to life.

We are coming now to what concerns death, and to what goes on after the last corporeal hour. This new spiritual synthesis is thus composed of three parts that succeed one another logically: *Before Death, At the Moment of Death, and After Death.*

I Before Death: *Proofs of the existence of the soul.*

II At the Moment of Death: *The manifestations and apparitions of the dying; doubles; phenomena of occultism.*

III After Death: *The manifestations and apparitions of the dead; the soul after death.*

The second and third parts are already completed, as well as this, and will be published consecutively.

The sole aim of this work, the sole ambition of the author, is that the whole may bring, so far as is possible, in the present state of positive science, the satisfaction longed for in so many legitimate aspirations toward the understanding of the truth.

This first volume of a very complex work proves the existence of the human soul independently of the bodily organism. In this, it seems to me, we have acquired a fact of the very highest importance for the whole doctrine of philosophy.

# DEATH AND ITS MYSTERY

## AT THE MOMENT OF DEATH

*Manifestations and Apparitions of the  
Dying; "Doubles;" Phenom-  
ena of Occultism*

BY  
CAMILLE FLAMMARION

TRANSLATED BY  
LATROBE CARROLL



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**DEATH AND ITS MYSTERY**  
**AT THE MOMENT OF DEATH**

No one knows what death is, and whether it be not the greatest of all good things for Man. Nevertheless, it is feared as though it were the supreme evil.

Athenians, you have just condemned me to death. The divine inner voice which, my whole life long, has never ceased to make itself heard in me, has to-day been silent, and I did not defend myself against your accusations. This means that what is happening to me is good.

I am about to suffer the fate to which you have condemned me; but iniquity and infamy will cling to the memory of my judges. I accept my punishment, and they theirs. It was thus predestined, and, in my belief, all is for the best.

When death comes near to Man, that which is mortal in him is scattered; that which is immortal and incorruptible withdraws intact.

SOCRATES

# DEATH AND ITS MYSTERY

## I

### THE POSITIVE METHOD

Let us have eyes, that we may see;  
Minds, that we may judge.

**I**N the exactions of the experimental method lies its force. The more rigorous we are in the admission and interpretation of facts, the more firmly will our proofs be established. As we proceed farther, let us leave no uncertainty behind us; let us ask ourselves if the foregoing three hundred pages have proved the existence of the soul as an entity independent of the body. We must determine whether the supernormal faculties, the manifestations of which we have described,—presentiments, the visioning of the future, the will acting without the spoken word and without outward sign, telepathy, things perceived at distances too great for the eye to reach, the functioning of the soul beyond the sphere of the physical senses,—whether all these could not be attributed, strictly speaking, to unknown properties of our vital organisms. Does Man know himself in his entirety? Has his evolution reached this limit? Could not these transcendental psychic faculties belong to the brain?

We must investigate all freely, in full liberty of conscience, without preconceived ideas, unfettered by any system.

The facts that are to follow will prove superabundantly the truth of our thesis, through manifestations observed round

and about death and after death. But it may be helpful to answer at once some possible objections.

First, as to the debatable value of human testimony. We have more than once pointed out the scientific weakness of this sort of evidence, and we know that we must constantly challenge it. Such evidence is uncertain, varies with changes in weather, is self-contradictory even as to actual events about which it would seem that unanimity should be the rule. Human vision is faulty. Each of us sees with his eyes and *with his mind* (even in exact astronomical observations; this is called the personal equation). Accounts by different witnesses of the same occurrence differ, and, on the other hand, recollections easily undergo modification,—even admitting perfect good faith and an absolute sincerity, which do not always exist. We must also realize that among our strange human kind we come upon men devoid of sensibility, and also upon farceurs without scruples, any sense of honor, or even simple honesty. So we must be constantly on our guard. But between such an attitude and one of rejecting all, denying all, lies a gulf that uncompromising deniers do not appear to measure.

Despite the acknowledged uncertainty of historical evidence, it would seem difficult to doubt that a man named Ravallac stabbed King Henry IV on May 14, 1610, in the rue de la Ferronnerie, in Paris; that King Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes, depriving France of excellent citizens; that Napoleon's body lies to-day in a marble sarcophagus under the dome of the Invalides; and that certain armies met in combat in eastern France from August 3, 1914, to November 11, 1918. We may all admit, it would appear, without unduly compromising ourselves, that Louis XVI died on the guillotine.

There are men who cannot be candid! They would even be afraid to commit themselves by declaring that castor-oil is a laxative.

There are limits to skepticism and incredulity. Quibbling and the sophistries of the subtlest dialectic do not affect the existence of facts.

On the other hand, one hears objections, now and again, that the extraordinary narrations the value and the scope of which we are discussing here, are brought to our notice by plain people rather than by savants accustomed to the rigor of experimental methods. What is there to surprise us in this? Do not plain, ignorant men make up the vast majority of mankind? Can we find one scientific mind in a thousand? If so, there would be forty thousand such minds in France, and one million six hundred thousand in the whole world. Let us admit it: there are few thinkers among the human race; men in trade vastly predominate. Well, is not this ratio quite comparable to that of proved psychic phenomena?

Unfortunately, as a general thing, people of the upper classes—savants, scholars, artists, writers, judges, priests, physicians, etc.—maintain a discreet reserve, as though afraid to speak out. They are less free, have their own interests to protect, and are silent while others talk. Such faint-heartedness, such cowardice, is absolutely despicable. What is there to fear? It is excusable to deny facts through ignorance. But not to dare admit things seen—a sad state of affairs!

There are other criminals besides those in prisons, namely, cultivated men who know truths they do not venture to reveal, for reasons of personal interest, or for fear of ridicule. In the course of my career I have met more than one of these “men of science,” extremely intelligent, very learned, who have been witnesses of metaphysical phenomena beyond cavil, or who have grown aware of them,—men who have no doubt of the undeniable existence of these phenomena, yet dare say nothing, through meanness unpardonable in minds of real worth. Or else, from fear of being heard, they whisper, mys-

teriously, testimony which would be of considerable weight in the triumph of truth.

Such men are unworthy of the name of savants. Several of them belong to what is called "high society," and believe that they would lose credit by seeming over-credulous, although, on the other hand, they subscribe to debatable beliefs. I might give here the name of a member of the Institute, a member who is of real value to science, who might serve as a competent witness to the metaphysical phenomena treated in this work, but who neither wishes nor ventures to admit aught, because he is an avowed Catholic, and his adviser in matters of conscience has told him that the domain of these questions lies within the authority of the Church alone.

A part of the clergy is hostile to this sort of investigation, and considers that the Church should monopolize such questions. This point of view has come down from biblical times. The summoning of the dead was formally forbidden the Hebrews, and Saul violated his own decrees when he went to consult the witch of Endor and invoked the shade of the prophet Samuel. Perhaps this interdiction was justifiable in the case of incompetent men of the humbler orders, who can so easily fall into the worst stupidities. But in our day to forbid men who are learned, given to reflection, well balanced, to study these problems; to teach them that they are not to use the reason God has given them, that they must humble this reason before the affirmations of a debatable divine revelation; to maintain that the question of the nature of the soul and of its survival, which interests so personally each one of us, must be reserved to a caste of casuists who appropriate for themselves the right to judge and to decide between the true and the false, between God and the devil—such is, indeed, a strange way of thinking, and an anachronism carrying us back to the middle ages. What crimes the Inquisition committed in its numberless trials for sorcery! There

is in the ideas that yet dominate a certain class of men and women, a menacing error, extremely baneful in the search for truth.

This error is all the more inexplicable from the fact that the phenomena with which we are concerned support the stories of the sacred Scriptures, among others the apparitions of Jesus, unknown or denied by nine tenths of mankind.

This unpardonable aberration recalls to astronomers the prohibition made in the eighteenth century (January 21, 1759) by Delisle, the head of the naval observatory. He forbade his assistant Messier to reveal the discovery which he had just made of the return of Halley's comet. This scandal in the annals of science prevented a demonstration of the truth of Newton's theories of attraction.

To forbid the revealing of facts useful in the progress of human knowledge! Is that not a real crime?

It is nevertheless indisputable that a certain number of witnesses of the phenomena with which we are here concerned remain obstinately dumb as to their personal experiences. Some obey a word of command, others fear the sarcasm of neighbors, still others fancy that they would compromise their dignity; many are simply cowardly, or culpably indifferent.

Without doubt, we may acknowledge the fact that men in official positions are usually not independent. It may be that to attain to these positions they have been particularly yielding toward their superiors, fearful of causing the least alarm, and egotistical enough never to lose sight of their small personal interests, which they put above everything. It may be that, having attained to these positions, they are unwilling to endanger them by the least defiance of conventional ideas,—sacrificing all to these interests, even, at times, their own convictions. Or, finally, it may be that the human comedy glorified by Balzac, and the hypocrisy pilloried by Molière hold sway over a greater area than honest and ingenuous men

suppose. Whatever the truth of the matter, dominant conventional motives stifle all liberty.

No rule is without exceptions. There are independent persons in official places. On the other hand, we freely admit that in certain circumstances silence is necessary,—cases of deep and painful family grief, tragic deaths, critical situations, personal sorrows that no indiscretion has a right to wound. These special cases are emphatically to be respected. But when people, without sufficient cause, lack the courage to affix their signatures to a scientific observation of importance, lack the courage to tell in what spot the observation was made, give only the initials of the town, sign X or Y instead of an honorable name—this lessens the value of the observation related. In certain cases, it is only fair that I be asked not to make the names public; but why should there be anonymous relations?

The objection pointed out above is groundless,—namely, that these accounts of anomalous and extraordinary facts (premonitions, warnings of death, apparitions, etc.) are for the most part submitted by an indiscriminate lot of people, and not by men of science of great personal worth. In the first place, a simple observation often suffices to establish the truth of a fact, such as, for example, the fall of a meteorite, a thunderclap, an earthquake. On the other hand, as we pointed out above, the proportion is much the same with regard to the accounts in question as it is with regard to the level of general intelligence. There are men of worth among the observers: the names of Immanuel Kant, of Goethe, of Schopenhauer, of William Crookes, of Russel Wallace, of Oliver Lodge, of Edison, of Victor Hugo, of Victorien Sardou, of Lombroso, of William James, and of some others, are not negligible; there are observers of all sorts.

Objections based on the uncertainty of human testimony are, it seems to me, entirely eliminated by the preceding ar-

guments. We can, we must, admit that these facts are real, sufficiently proved, beyond refutation, after we have taken into account all possible errors, of whatever nature, including deception; this last has been more fully investigated by me than by any of those who dissent. Let us turn, now, to a fundamental discussion of explanatory hypotheses, that we may throw a clear light on our convictions as to the intrinsic faculties of the soul, and its existence, independent of the body.

Could not these phenomena, which seem so extraordinary, have a physical origin? Could not all these manifestations of unknown forces, several of which seem attributable to a mind distinct from our organisms, or even, at times, to minds exterior to us—could they not originate in our own brains? Does Man know himself?

No, he does not; he has not gaged the reservoir of energies, of unknown forces of his being. Biology halts at the surface, at evident manifestations, and physiologists admit that they have analyzed but incompletely certain of the mechanisms of the human machine; in particular, those which have to do with the functioning of the nervous centers.

When we review the discoveries due to creative genius—the invention of the telescope, of the microscope, of steam-driven machines, of the applications of electricity of terrestrial and astronomical photography, of spectral analysis, of aërial navigation, of the electric telegraph, of the telephone, of radiography, of the phonograph, of the cinematograph, of wireless telegraphy, etc.—we cannot help admiring the power of the human mind, cannot help thinking that its faculties have not yet been fully explored.

Very recently (May, 1920) I was listening at the detector of a wireless-telegraph receiving station at my observatory at Juvisy, to the successive, dry, rapid cracking sounds produced by the electric discharges of a distant storm. Sud-

denly a beautiful melody took the place of these monotonous sounds; at first a piano sonata, then a whole orchestra charmed my ears. No musical instrument was being played near me: it was a celestial concert, recalling the smooth harmonies of the music of biblical angels; the musicians were in *London*, at a wireless-telephone transmitting station, and the audience in *Rome*, at a listening-post! So this concert from the other side of the English Channel was wafted far beyond France, destined for the Eternal City.

If our ears were gifted with the peculiar properties of the receiving apparatus of a wireless-telephone station, we should hear these voices from space, this ethereal music which makes itself heard at a distance of hundreds of thousands of kilometers. If our eyes were constructed as is a photographic plate, we should see radiations to which our optic nerves remain insensitive. For us the world would be quite another place. If we were all of us gifted with the supernormal faculties especially developed in certain beings, all of the unknown forces with which we are here concerned would seem natural, and we should have a different conception of the universe and of life.

These considerations lead us to think that we live in the center of an invisible world, into which we are plunged like the blind in bright sunshine, or the deaf whose ears cannot perceive the harmonies of a Beethoven or a Mozart: the blind man's lack of vision does not stop the sun from shining, any more than the infirmity of the deaf changes in any way the beauty of a symphony. In consequence of having verified this onward march of science, we cannot help seeing its continuation into the future. If, for example, it is proved that a dying man in the United States or in China reveals his death to a friend living in France or in England, or that some one dead comes to tell us under what conditions he passed from life to death, we cannot help musing upon the gradual evolution of human knowledge, cannot help asking

ourselves to what point will extend, in the future, the mental conquests of the dweller upon this earth.

How far will Man go in his progress?

Have we not succeeded, not only in speaking at a distance, but in writing, in drawing, in sending a portrait?

When my book "*La Fin du Monde*" (1893) was published, a few critics, ignorant of our researches, classed as purely imaginary the illustrations on pages 273, 307, and 367, the first of which shows a man living in Paris, seeing, from his bed and by means of an improvised motion-picture apparatus, a dancing-girl dancing in Ceylon; the second, an apparition made by the transmission of waves in the ether; the third, Omégar going to the feet of Eva, who had summoned him across the immensity of the ocean. Such progress was effected gradually, just as was the evolution of the airships I have mentioned. All things come to him who waits.

In view of the power of the human mind, one might, then, maintain that the transcendental facts that are the objects of our metaphysical investigations, might be due in part to faculties of the mind as yet unknown. Let us consider the objection closely, without a single preconceived idea.

The question presents itself with clarity: can the facts observed be attributed to known or unknown faculties of a cerebral mechanism as powerful as we choose to assume? Let us analyze, examine carefully, one of the examples given in our first volume, chosen at random,—let us say, that of page 270:

On June 27, 1894, at about nine o'clock in the morning, Dr. Gallet, then a student of medicine in Lyons, was studying in his room, in company with a fellow-student, Dr. Varay, for the first examination for the degree of doctor, and was very much absorbed in his work, when he was irresistibly distracted from it by a sentence that obsessed him, the repetition, in his inner consciousness, of the words, "Monsieur

Casimir Perier was elected President of the republic by four hundred and fifty-one votes.”

The student wrote this sentence upon a sheet of paper which he handed to his companion, complaining of the obsession. Varay read it, shrugged his shoulders, and when his friend insisted that he believed it to be a real premonition, asked him, harshly enough, to let him work undisturbed.

After lunch the two comrades met two other students, Monsieur Bouchet, now a physician in Haute-Savoie, and Monsieur Deborne, now a pharmacist at Thonon, and the three companions laughed at such a prophecy, since the official candidates for the presidency were Messieurs Brisson and Dupuy.

That day the election was held at Versailles, at two o'clock.

Presently, while the students from Lyons were refreshing themselves upon the terrace of a café, newsboys passed, and shouted: “Monsieur Casimir Perier elected President of the republic by four hundred and fifty-one votes!”

It would be ill-advised for the most hardened skeptics to contest this fact of exact premonition, five hours before the actual event, since it was confirmed by the triple attestation of three witnesses. (Page 271.)

That this was only a chance coincidence is inadmissible.

If it were a question of an arithmetical calculation, one might say that there is nothing marvelous in its being exact, just as in the calculation of the number of grains of wheat contained in a liter, but we are here concerned with a *spontaneous* inner voice. And the figures!

The question that arises is whether we may attribute this divination of the future to the brain, to physiological cerebral faculties, or are not impelled to seek, in Man or elsewhere, the functioning of a psychic element differing from the material organism.

Does not this question answer itself?

It is purely hypothetical to attribute to a grouping of material molecules, to chemical or mechanical action, to a swirling of atoms of any sort, the faculty of seeing that which does not yet exist, that which will happen in several hours, several days, several weeks, several months or several years.

The hypothesis rests upon no scientific basis. Furthermore, it is absurd in itself. By virtue of wishing to set up a practical science, we slip into aberration, we cease to reason logically.

The only quibble, in the case of the premonition that we have just related, would be the supposition of a chance coincidence, (1) as to the unlooked-for name; (2) as to the number. Strictly speaking, although the chances are a million to one against this, it is, perhaps, not absolutely impossible.

But, then, take the incident related just after the one given above,—Monsieur Vincent Sassaroli predicting several days in advance the collapse of a house that architects thought extremely substantial and inducing the inmates to leave it just before the catastrophe. In this case, assuredly, the prediction cannot be laid to chance. Another hypothesis will be sought: it will be conjectured that the prophet was gifted with the faculty of animals which have a presentiment of earthquakes; but this hypothesis is untenable; it is not a question of a cosmic phenomenon, but of a particular piece of property. Those who contradict, from preconceived convictions, wish to bring forward improbable hypotheses rather than admit the simple reality.

And Schopenhauer's maid-servant, seeing in a dream five or six hours in advance, the overturned inkstand and the ink running from the desk to the floor? To attribute this premonitory vision to the brain of the philosopher's servant—is that not the height of folly?

And the Edinburgh child, a charming little romper, suddenly seeing himself in a coffin lined with white satin, flowers

all about him,—a scene that occurred eight days afterward?

And the young Princess Radziwill, always refusing, from childhood, to pass through a certain drawing-room doorway, under which she was crushed at her betrothal-fête?

And Mademoiselle Noell of Montpellier, appearing to her brother the day after her death and telling him of it? My readers have read this dramatic story in "L'Inconnu," and we will return to it later.

Even in the case of Madame Constans, who refused obstinately to take the potion which would have killed her,—a case in which we might fancy a mysterious divination on the part of the human organism,—in this case, too, we feel that there is a subliminal cause.

And a hundred other observations of the same sort!

Presentiments are at times characterized by a precision that certain psychologists think the human soul incapable of attaining,—the soul reduced to its own faculties alone; they think it necessary to assume the intervention of a spirit exterior to the soul. These analysts push the consequences of spiritualism still farther than we have done, so far.

The brain comes into play, yes, but it is only the tool. A locomotive would not run without the engineer. The electric apparatus is not the telegraph operator. The telephone is not the person speaking over it. The dark-room is not the photograph.

There is yet another aspect of Man, of which we have not spoken, and which we do not have to discuss here,—his moral nature. How could combinations of chemical molecules produce benevolence, devotion, the love of rectitude, honesty, probity, goodness, the spirit of sacrifice and of justice, the passion for truth, and all the spiritual faculties which make up the moral domain of humanity? The faculties of the soul are as varied as are individuals; but all souls have this in common: a conscience to condemn evil and approve goodness. Besides the *mental* aspect of the human soul, there is the

*moral* aspect, which is its very core. How can we see in this a function of cerebral matter?

No, Man is not merely a physical organism, as physiologists have taught till now. He is more complex. What is the sum total of him? That is what we are seeking in this research.

Nevertheless there are men, reputedly scientific, who will not loosen their grip, will not accept our conclusions, however logical they be, in any circumstances. Theirs is a systematic denial deplorable in well-balanced minds. For every observer who thinks freely, the strictest positive method establishes, with certainty, that the supernormal facts investigated in this work can no longer be denied, must from now on be admitted into the realm of the exact sciences, must be augmented and transformed; they are not attributable to cerebral functions; they prove the existence of the soul as an entity distinct from the bodily organism.

A rigorous scientific procedure is indispensable to put psychic investigation on a positive foundation, and to fit it into the framework of modern science, constantly enlarged by the new discoveries which, in a quarter of a century, have transformed the world. But when occurrences so long discussed—and even denied—have been authenticated, one cannot explain the persistence of a skepticism which refuses to acknowledge them. Is obdurate systematic denial reasonable?

To believe in everything is an error. To believe in nothing is also an error. We must admit nothing without proofs, but must acknowledge with fairness that which is proved.

Let us admit, nevertheless, that there are temperaments so recalcitrant to the special research that occupies us here, that, notwithstanding all imaginable proofs, they will never believe anything.

We meet often enough, about us, men incapable of being convinced, despite the most evident proofs; worthy men,

moreover, from other points of view, learned, agreeable, philanthropic, but whose mental eyes are constructed in such a way that they do not see straight before them. (Hunters tell us it is the same with hares.) Their eyes have a prism before the retina in place of the normal lens, and this prism distorts the rays by a few degrees, with refractions which differ according to type. This is not their fault. It is not only that they *do not wish* to perceive the sun at high noon, but they *cannot*. Various systems of education are opposed to such an acknowledgment, some because of blind credulity as to certain teachings not in the least proved, which satisfy them, others because of an incredulity not less blind. Charles du Prel tells, somewhere, that a preacher in Vienna pronounced from the pulpit these astounding words: "I will not believe in hypnotic suggestion until I have seen it, and I shall never see it, because it is a principle of mine never to be present at this sort of experiments."<sup>1</sup>

What logic! What magnificent reasoning!

Eyes are useless to a blind brain, says an Arabian proverb.

Obdurate deniers, those who laugh at everything, do not guess what pleasure their dissertations give us. Among them we find humorists of distinction, and subtle talkers who fancy they are passing over a royal road dominated by their luxurious automobiles, while in reality they ride upon tires that a pebble can deflate. If I am positive as to the principles here laid down, it is because my certainty is absolute, firmly upheld by an impartial personal research carried on for more than half a century. The documents that I am making public represent only a minimum of those in my possession, and every day I receive new ones. Our first volume might be double, quadruple, ten times the size that it is, and the pages about to be read might also be multiplied by ten, to hold all. But, for all that, the blind and the deaf do not lose their

<sup>1</sup> *La Magie, science naturelle*, II, 327.

blindness and their deafness. It is so distinguished to smile in a superior way at everything!

To have too much intellect is sometimes a hindrance to the simple comprehension of things as they are. To be sure, this reproach cannot be applied with any great frequency to our terrestrial human kind; but it is applicable from time to time to famous specimens of that same humanity. All those who have read Voltaire have been somewhat shocked by his ridiculous ideas as to fossils, by his irreverent poem about the Maid of Orleans, and by his unseemly jokes upon the most solemn subjects. Too much intellect, certainly: "*Striving to better, oft we mar what 's well.*" A telescope held to the eye would be a bad instrument in the writing of a letter. A microscope, in place of the telescope, would be equally bad in the judging of a landscape. The well-known proverb "Some one is wiser than Voltaire: every one," is not fallacious. Simple good sense must not always be disdained.

Did not the illustrious savant Henri Poincaré, in the quintessence of his metaphysical reasoning, give us to understand one day that he doubted the movement of the earth? One does not forget a literary and scientific scandal of this sort.

Reactionary writers hastened to adduce arguments. Edouard Drumont, at their head, wrote in "*La Libre Parole*" (January 9, 1904):

It has not been proved, at all, that the earth rotates, as Galileo contended, or that it is not the center of the planetary system. Monsieur H. Poincaré, who is at present the foremost among French geometrical physicists, speaks in no positive tone. He says: "It is maintained that the earth rotates, and I, for my part, see no disadvantage in that assumption. It is a pleasing and convenient hypothesis to explain the formation and evolution of worlds,—one that can be neither confirmed nor discredited by any tangible proof. Absolute space, that is to say the guiding-point with which the earth would have to be compared in order to know if, in reality, it rotates, has no objective existence. Therefore, there is no sense

in the statement 'The earth rotates,' since we can verify it by no experiment. These two statements, 'The earth rotates,' and 'It is more convenient to assume that the earth rotates,' have one and the same meaning; there is no more in one than in the other.

A great many newspapers straddled the Pegasus lassoed by Drumont: "L'Eclair," "Liberté," etc., in Paris, and a large number of provincial newspapers, without counting the "Croix" of all the dioceses. We read in the "Croix du Nord" of February 22d: "Those who affirm that the earth rotates *know nothing about it. They say the earth rotates because they think this irritates Catholics greatly.*"

A rising in arms such as this was an old enough phenomenon in the fourth year of our twentieth century!

I have often described, in my works, the fourteen principal movements of the earth, and this is not the place to explain them. Nevertheless, ignorant and sectarian men answer: There are not fourteen, there are none at all,—neither rotation in twenty-four hours, nor revolution about the sun in three hundred and sixty-five days, nor movement toward the constellation of Hercules, nor secular oscillation of the pole—nothing.

Nevertheless, all may convince themselves, for example, of the first of these movements; that of the daily rotation to which we owe the succession of days and nights, by a reasoning so simple that it is childish, which we can sum up in a few lines:

No one can deny that we see, every day, the sun, the moon, the planets, and the stars rise in the east, climb the heavens, reach their point of culmination, sink, set in the west, and re-appear on the eastern horizon the next day, after having passed under the earth.

There are only two possible hypotheses by which to explain this universal and perpetual observation: either the sky turns

from the east to the west, or our globe turns upon itself in the opposite direction.

In the first case we must assume that the heavenly bodies move at a speed in proportion to their distance.

The sun, for example, is at a distance from us of twenty-three thousand times the half-diameter of the earth; it would thus, in twenty-four hours, have to pass over a circumference twenty-three thousand times greater than that of the equator, which would mean a speed of 10,695 kilometers a second.

Jupiter is about five times that distance away; its speed would have to be 53,000 kilometers a second.

Neptune, thirty times farther away, would have to travel 320,000 kilometers a second.

The nearest star, Alpha Centauri, at a distance two hundred and seventy-five thousand times that of the sun, would have to speed, to fly through space at a rate of 2,941,000,000 kilometers a second.

All the other stars are incomparably farther away—to infinity. And this fantastic revolution would have to take place about a tiny point, about our terrestrial atom, more than a million times smaller than the sun and lost to sight in an immensity of worlds!

To state the problem thus, is to solve it. Unless we deny the most concordant astronomical measurement and geometrical calculations, the daily rotation of the earth is a *certainty*.

To assume that the heavenly bodies turn around our globe is to assume, as a humorist put it, that to roast a pheasant one would have to turn the fireplace around it,—the kitchen, the house, and the whole country!

Moreover, Foucault's pendulum shows this movement, and the flattening of the poles proves it.

Despite this certainty, we see writers still proclaiming inexplicable doubts.

To such a point did this go that in 1917 Monsieur Capus, Poincaré's successor in the Académie Française, uttered the following words in the speech delivered at his reception:

We now see that, four centuries after Copernicus, a man of great learning remarks that there exists nowhere in space an observation-post from within which one might observe whether the earth really rotates and that, in consequence, the statement 'The earth rotates,' has no meaning, since no experiment will ever enable it to be verified. But the discovery of Copernicus may be summed up in these words: It is more convenient to assume that the earth rotates, because in this way we express laws of astronomy in simpler language.

And farther on:

The sun long let us believe that it was he who rose on the horizon; then suggested that it was, perhaps, the earth that turned weakly toward him, but in both these hypotheses he has not measured for us either his light or his heat. Let us accept, then, as the condition upon which our destiny depends, approximate truth and the approximations of observation.

These words, proclaimed under the dome of the Institute, and worthy, rather, of a scene in vaudeville, astound us; they would have confused more than one mind if they had been taken seriously.

The rotation of the earth has been proved up to the hilt; to deny it would be to deny all astronomy and all astronomical mathematics.

We see the other planets rotate, as the earth does,—Mars in twenty-four hours and thirty-seven minutes, Jupiter in nine hours and fifty minutes, Saturn in ten hours and fourteen minutes. An observer on the moon would see our globe performing its daily rotation; and so on.

Poincaré had delivered upon this subject only a metaphysical dissertation as to the "relativity of motion"; per-

sonally, he greatly regretted the comments with which a section of the press lent flavor to a dissertation that was, really, amusing.

I tried to destroy this myth, and the illustrious astronomer had invited this very thing by the following explanatory letter, published in the "Bulletin de la Société Astronomique de France," of May, 1904:

MY DEAR COLLEAGUE:

I am beginning to be rather exasperated by all the noise a section of the press is making about sentences taken from one of my works, —and the ridiculous opinions these newspapers attribute to me.

The articles from which those sentences were borrowed appeared in a metaphysical review; in them I spoke a language well understood by constant readers of that review.

That article most often quoted was written in the course of a controversy with Monsieur Le Roy, the principal incident of which was a discussion in the Société philosophique de France. Monsieur Le Roy had said: "A scientific fact is *created* by the savant." And he had been asked: "Be more exact: what do you mean by a fact?" "A fact," he had answered, "is, for example, the rotation of the earth." And then the reply came: "No, a fact, by definition, is something that can be proved by a direct experiment; it is the *crude* result of this experiment. For this reason, the rotation of the earth is not a fact."

When I said, "These two sentences, 'The earth rotates,' and 'It is more convenient to assume that the earth rotates,' have one and the same meaning," I spoke the language of modern metaphysics. In the same language one says, offhand: "The two sentences 'The exterior world exists,' and 'It is convenient to assume that the exterior world exists,' have one and the same meaning."

Thus, the rotation of the earth is certain in the same degree as is the existence of external objects.

I think there is reassurance in this for those who might have been frightened by unusual words. As for the conclusions that people have wished to draw, it is useless to show how absurd they are. What I have said would not have justified the persecution of Galileo, first, because even error should never be persecuted, next because,

even from a metaphysical point of view, it is not *false* that the earth rotates; thus Galileo cannot have made a mistake.

This does not mean, either, that one may teach with impunity that the earth does not rotate, for the reason, if for none other, that a belief in this rotation is a means as indispensable for him who wishes to think learnedly as is the railroad, for example, to him who wishes to travel speedily.

As for the proofs of this rotation, they are too well known for me to dwell on them. If the earth did not rotate, we should have to admit that the stars describe in twenty-four hours an immense circumference which light would take centuries to traverse.

Now, those who look upon metaphysics as out of date since Auguste Comte will tell me that there can be no modern metaphysics. But the denial of all metaphysics is in itself metaphysical, and it is precisely that view that I call modern metaphysics.

Forgive this chatter.

Yours sincerely,  
POINCARÉ.

I admit, however, that this letter had not absolutely satisfied me. The skepticism of the philosopher persists in it, and it is in contradiction to the certainty we must have as to the proofs of modern astronomy. Poincaré believed, with Berkeley, that we are sure of nothing, not even of the existence of the earth, of the sun, and of the world outside our thought, which alone might be said to exist.

I have often had long discussions with him on this point. And this is what made me say, above, that one may prefer simple good sense to the quintessence of intellect.

All we ask is that people simply acknowledge reality ascertained through experience. That they reason calmly. That they let themselves be duped by nothing,—neither by illusion, nor by any sophistry. That they see the sun at noon. That they investigate all sincerely, frankly, honestly, conscientiously.

After all, why bother with those who are indifferent, with deniers, with the incredulous? There is the desire to con-

vince. There is the apostleship of truth. There is the happiness of being useful, of doing good, of consoling those who suffer, of spreading about one the rays of hope. But those who are satisfied, either by their certainty of tranquil nothingness after death, or by their belief in dogmas which suffice for their mentality, need seek no further. Every sincere conviction must be respected. Freedom of conscience above all, whether that conscience be that of a Christian, a Jew, a Mohammedan, a Buddhist, a Taoist, a theosophist, an atheist, it matters little. Every man for himself. But since one's manner of life differs greatly according as one admits, or does not admit, an after life, and an innate sense of justice as to our actions, he who knows that the soul exists, and that it survives the body, considers it a duty to be helpful to his fellow-men.

It is, however, only fair to note that incredulity found, at times, certain more or less solid props in analytical discussions of psychic phenomena.

We cannot, indeed, admit these extraordinary facts without encountering difficulties and objections of various kinds. These difficulties cannot be disposed of by hiding our eyes like the ostrich.

Thus, for example, in the case of a mind that sees into the distance, into a closed suite of rooms, into a sealed envelop, and even into the future, these faculties make us ask ourselves why beings so gifted are not the masters of the world. Why can they not manipulate all financial quotations, learn the state secrets which go from one end of the world to the other, sealed in diplomats' hand-bags? Why can they not, without scouts or airplanes, perceive the movements of troops in a war and know in advance the outcome of battles of the Marne, discover camouflaged artillery shelters and destructive submarines, and even prevent wars by learning the plans devised by rulers? Why can they not tell us where, in the bowels of the earth, we may find carbon, minerals,

the petroleum we need? That is what a reader of the first volume wrote me recently, adding: "I have the great happiness of being a thoroughgoing spiritualist and of thinking precisely as you do, but I also believe, with you, that we must give way before no problem and that there is nothing in the world more interesting than the search for truth."

The answer to these very logical objections is that the faculties of which we speak are not brought into play normally, by our will, but under special indeterminate conditions, and for the most part *spontaneously*. They are a sort of inspiration, of hypnotic condition. They may be compared to musical creation. Could Beethoven have written by command any one of his splendid symphonies? It is the same with poets. Can you see a general ordering Beethoven to dream his "Moonlight Sonata," or Dante his "Vision of Paradise"? They are uprushes of the imagination, creations of the mind. Rouget de Lisle wrote of the "Marseillaise," "The words came to me with the melody." Occasionally poems have been ordered for official ceremonies; the results were such as Rostand's poem, written for the reception of the Empress of Russia at the palace of Compiègne, when the carpet upon which she was walking cried out suddenly:

"Oh! Oh! It is an empress!"

What an indiscreet carpet! And what astonishment on the part of the empress! It seems to me that this academician was not much better inspired than Henri Poincaré's successor.

These supernormal faculties are not at our bidding. They function without our knowledge. A person who sees the future does not know he is seeing it. He sees a present which he does not believe real. When the event comes to pass, he verifies the premonition, the inner vision. On the other hand, this foreknowledge occurs but rarely in the lives of even the best-qualified percipients, usually but once.

Even though indisputable, the phenomenon of vision without eyes and that of knowledge of the future is a super-normal phenomenon. It is the unconscious at work. We do not know the laws of this action.

Hypnotists have often obtained views of things at a distance, views remarkably well defined, through their somnambulists, but we cannot always trust this method. At times there comes into play the influence of external minds, as in spiritualistic manifestations. I have before me, at this very moment, a hundred cases of this sort, inexplicable enough. The oddest, perhaps, is that related by Maxwell, as to the statuette whose place was taken by a spirit, which for several months influenced the behavior of the trusting and astounded observer, and ended by ruining him at the time of the war of 1870; it had not foreseen the consequences of the war on the stock-exchange, although up to that time all its information and predictions had been perfectly exact.

In short, we must apply to metaphysical research the same rational rules we apply to all branches of science, and good common sense must, from this time on, banish the incredulity so long opposed to the admission of the best-established facts.

If I have rather dwelt on the argument as to the movement of the earth, as an example of unwarranted hesitancy, I did so for the reason that a knowledge of the position of our planet in the universe constitutes the very foundation of all science, and because it was necessary to form an estimate of the great disadvantage, from a philosophical point of view, of doubts without good reason, fatal in the search for truth.

An objection very different from the preceding ones was made to me with regard to our first volume. A lady, who asks me not to give her name, sent me from a château near Mans a long and interesting letter, voicing her regrets as

to what I had said about Lourdes and about the apparition of the Holy Virgin, which she considers authentic. Other letters of like nature were written me, one, notably, by an eminent canon of the diocese of Marseilles.

If I have spoken of the healing in Lourdes, it is because *it proves the existence of the soul*, the power of ideas, of mental exaltation, of faith. But it would be a mistake to think that the Catholic Church has a monopoly of such cases. There are *many others of the same sort* which are not in the least connected with Notre-Dame de Lourdes or de la Salette, and which are not Catholic at all.<sup>1</sup>

This work was not written for religious establishments, nor for convinced and well-contented believers in any religion, but for men who think freely, desirous of judging things in complete independence of mind. Now, is it reasonable to believe that the mother of Jesus Christ concerns herself with the cures at Lourdes; or Æsculapius himself with those of the temple of Epidaurus? We may challenge the associating of Madame P—— with Bernadette's vision, despite the local anecdote which was at once related in the region; we may

<sup>1</sup> The discussion of this special subject resulted in a new investigation, made for me in August, 1920, by devoted friends, and I have been led to modify the text of pages 148-150 of the first editions of Vol. I (beginning with the thirty-fifth thousand). Two natives of Lourdes, whose memories are still excellent and who were living at the time of the apparitions, a certain Monsieur B——, now aged ninety, and his wife, well remembered the beautiful Madame P——, her amorous adventures, her silk dresses, and the *bons mots* current at that time as to Bernadette's visions. But the local myth does not seem to me as well established as it appeared to be. This investigation revealed the fact that Madame P—— gave birth to a child, a girl, on February 8, 1858. Could she have taken a walk on the eleventh? On that day the weather was cloudy and serene. The following Sunday (the date of the second apparition) there was brilliant sunshine, fine weather, —a beautiful spring day. It is worthy of remark, however, that on the first day the apparition did not speak, and that on the following Sunday it spoke more or less at length, as on Thursday, the eighteenth.

It seems that Bernadette was asked if the Holy Virgin were more beautiful than Madame P—— and that she answered that she was

admit only an hallucination without objective cause, but to assume any direct action on the part of the Virgin Mary would, indeed, seem altogether extravagant.<sup>1</sup>

Do not *religions* (there are about fifty on our little globe) often seem a parody of *religion*? How can we refuse to admit the existence of a universal Spirit ruling all things, atoms as well as worlds, the smallest plant, the smallest animal, as magisterially as the planets of the solar system, the formation of nebulae, the millions of suns of the Milky Way? Religion, the belief in an infinite God, to us *unknowable*, imposes itself upon every thinking mind.

It may be answered that religions are the diverse forms of this general belief in a supreme Being, that these forms still more beautiful. (Letter 4256 of Aug. 31, 1920.)\* Lasserre alludes to this question in his work on *Lourdes* (p. 33, edition of 1892, three hundred and nineteenth thousand), which I have before me. The grotto at that time was hardly accessible except from above, by a mountain path, that which Bernadette took at the time of the third apparition.

On this same subject of Lourdes a letter (4159) had been sent me from Lourdes itself, on June 11, 1920, by a native, asking me to admit that little innocent Bernadette was simply the victim of an hallucination, without connecting it with a single amorous stroll of Madame P——. Nevertheless G——, an officer, the friend of Madame P——, was all his life as dumbfounded by this association as he was convinced of it.

I also got a letter stating: "Bernadette was not an idiot, but simply feeble-minded." Lasserre, an enthusiastic believer, declares, nevertheless, that she was an extremely timid creature; that at fourteen she seemed only eleven or twelve; that she knew neither how to read nor how to write, had been unable to take her first communion, knew only the dialect of the Pyrenees, and was, moreover, subject to periods of asthmatic oppression, which caused her great suffering. She had spent her childhood herding sheep.

But are these various details worth the time we might spend in discussing them, since typical hallucinations occur without objective causes?

\*I wish to remind the reader that the letters sent to me, containing psychic observations, have been numbered, in succession, since the year 1899, so recourse may always be had to the originals.

<sup>1</sup> Gustave Droz's book "*Autour d'une Source*" gives an artistic version of the visual hallucinations of the seer of Lourdes and of the exploitation of the spring.

are comprehensible, that they are helpful to weak minds, to the lazy, to those who have neither the strength nor the will to think; helpful to those who find an easy guide to conduct in dogmatic formulas forbidding all research and insisting on passive submission to mystery, without any attempt to lift the veil from it, for that would be profanation.

But will not religions some day give place to *the* religion?

Will they not move toward perfection,—those of China as well as those of Europe?

Is humanity, then, incapable of producing a rational belief? Are illusions and superstitions therefore indispensable?

No one can deny that the various forms of religion are useful from a sociological point of view, that they teach principles of honesty, that they are the spiritual consolers of wretchedness, of those unjustly treated, of grief. But why do certain believers think they should not be enlightened? Why the religious intolerance of certain sectarians, who forbid and condemn free research, and who will not admit that one may reason in a manner different from theirs? In the twentieth century can one think with the mind of the year one thousand? Must there be two religions, one for the learned—those capable of reflection, of discussion—another for the lower classes? Up to the present this distinction has seemed necessary. But now?

Is it not wise to get rid of dross?

Was not the clergy, at the time of Joan of Arc, wrong to declare her a sorceress, a heretic, and to cause this maid of nineteen to perish infamously at the stake?

Was not Galileo condemned as a heretic? Et cetera, et cetera. Why not admit progress in ideas?

Let us not dwell on these things. This is not the place.

All thinking men have passed through the tortures of doubt, of uncertainty, that follow the serenity of childish faith. The founder, in England, of experimental psychic research, Frederic Myers, has in his *Memoirs* let us hear

the echo of a crisis such as I have spoken of. He tells this concerning the evolution of his thought:

Brought up in the Anglican Church, he was a faithful member of it, uncompromising, indeed,—“aggressively orthodox,” to use his own words,—until the age of inevitable crises, when, torn on the one hand by an irrepressible need of certainty as to the Beyond, his faith in traditional dogmas, and on the other by philosophical speculations, he went to confide his perplexities to Professor Sidgwick.

During a walk under the starry sky that I shall never forget, I asked him, almost trembling, if he thought that after the failure of tradition, of intuition, and of metaphysics, to solve the enigma of the universe, there was yet a chance that the investigation of certain actual and observable phenomena—ghosts, spirits, no matter what—might furnish us valuable knowledge relative to the invisible world. Sidgwick seemed to me to have already considered this possibility, and, with assurance, pointed out some reasons for hope. From that evening dates my resolution to give myself up to this investigation.<sup>1</sup>

This was on December 3, 1869; Myers was twenty-six years old. From that time on, the goal of his life was fixed.

All of us have gone through that. But the road to Damascus is not the same for all.

An eminent historian, a famous contemporaneous author, wrote me one day:

My dear friend, why concern yourself with the beliefs of the common people? You know as well as I that they are founded upon no reality. You know as well as I that Adam and Eve never existed; that the flood is an exaggerated account of a local inundation, that the waters never rose to the height of Mount Ararat, that it was the mountains that rose. You know as well as I that Jesus Christ cannot have sent demons into a herd of swine, which are supposed to have cast themselves into the sea. You know as well as I that Pope Alexander VI and Cardinal Dubois, archbishop under the Regency, were atheists, and that the anticlerical Voltaire was

<sup>1</sup> See “*Annales des Sciences psychiques*,” 1904, p. 39.

the most convinced of deists, etc. Then leave these believers undisturbed in their illusions. Why make enemies for yourself, when you are seeking only the progress of general education?

The advice was, doubtless, dictated by sincere friendship. But would it be possible to study the problem of death without touching upon religious beliefs? No, it is impossible, this problem being the very basis of religion. Let us respect beliefs, illusions, but let us irradiate them with new light. The world goes on. *Ad veritatem per scientiam!*

Independent seekers have before them two kinds of adversaries, believers at one extreme, materialists at the other. While writing these lines, I received a long and learned dissertation from my illustrious friend Camille Saint-Saëns, discussing my arguments with the conviction that all spiritualists are in error and will discover nothing. He wrote, amiably:

Pardon me, but despite all your reasoning, despite your great authority, due to your exceptional worth, and your intelligence beyond comparison, I do not believe in the soul. As for God, when one sees what is happening . . .

The hope of convincing every one is, I admit, utopian.

Camille Saint-Saëns is, assuredly, one of the great minds of our century. He is learned in all things; in particular, astronomy, the history of religions, telepathy, premonitions and psychic sensations, and even cites the following fact from his personal experience:

When, for the first time, I made application as a candidate for the Académie des Beaux-Arts, I was not nominated. This rather provoked me, and I told myself mentally, looking at the Egyptian lions that adorn, in such bizarre fashion, the façade of the Institute: "I shall present myself again *when the lions turn around.*"

Some time afterward *the lions were turned!*

I answered Saint-Saëns:

You are the most delightful of friends, the mightiest of musicians, the glory of the Institute, one of the profound thinkers of our era, but *you are not logical*. How could any collection whatsoever of chemical molecules beneath your skull have been able to "secrete" this bizarre premonition? An *idea* cannot be produced by a material mechanism. Your mind saw an aspect of the future, without suspecting it.

And I find my illustrious friend all the more illogical for this reason: besides the premonition of which we have spoken, and which, moreover, was only a freak, but a freak of the *mind*, he has experienced other manifestations of a kind essentially psychic, for he also wrote me:

I, personally, have known cases of telepathy, of prescience of the future. I will cite some of them for you:

In the far-off days when I lived in the upper part of the Faubourg Saint-Honoré, I worked hard. When I was up to my ears in work, I suddenly thought of a lady of my acquaintance. Some moments afterward—the time it would take to pass through the courtyard and go up the stairs—some one rang: it was the lady of whom I had thought. The first few times I believed it chance; but the twentieth time! This phenomenon lasted several years.

In my youth, a painter, a friend of mine, showed me a picture he intended to submit for the annual Exposition. He had not yet exhibited his work, and did not know whether the picture would be accepted. Looking at it, I saw it in the first room of the Palais de l'Industrie, in a certain place at the top of the stairs. On the day the Salon opened I went there, and saw the picture placed as I had foreseen.

Did not the mind come into play here? How can we see, in this case, a property of matter? As my readers know, these psychic phenomena are of frequent occurrence.

To sum up this chapter, it seems to me that, taking into account all objections, all apparent difficulties,—taking humanity as it is, with its diversity of character, of perception, of intellect, and of interpretation,—we must acknowledge that

Man is not merely a collection of material molecules, but is much more complex than standard physiology teaches, and that he has in himself a psychic element distinct from the physical, chemical, or mechanical organism.

The facts revealed in our first volume, as well as all those of like nature, prove beyond refutation the existence of the soul. All imaginable quibbling and hair-splitting, in the most varied discussions, cannot do away with the inevitable deductions. An observed fact is a fact. Whatever Henri Poincaré thinks of it, the movement of the earth is a fact. All the metaphysical dissertations in which one may lose oneself do not keep our globe from rotating, nor the innate faculties of the soul from proving its existence, quite apart from all that which may be normally attributed to a material physiological organism.

We have against us, in our investigation, three kinds of adversaries, virtually unconquerable: (1) Those who make sport of everything, who are interested in nothing; (2) materialists convinced, on principle, that matter produces everything; (3) human beings confined within a narrow dogma, whatever their religion, sure of their beliefs and satisfied with them. Those with a knowledge of truth have always formed a minority, despite the most persevering efforts of free seekers.

Let us persevere, however. The good seed will, at length, germinate.

After all, each one of us is moving inevitably to his death, and each is free to think of death or not. It would seem, however, that reason should prevail.

Let us never despair of progress. The world goes on. Truth gradually triumphs. When, in 1887, I founded the Société Astronomique de France, the head of the Paris observatory, Admiral Mouchez, told me this was an endeavor without a future, in view of general indifference, on the one hand, and, on the other, the mutual personal rivalries of

savants. There were only twelve of us at that founding. I myself did not suspect that the members would one day be numbered by thousands, that my successors in the presidency of that society would be the glory of the Institute, the official astronomers of the Board of Longitude, the heads of observatories, the highest authorities of the University of France: Faye, Tisserand, Janssen, Henri Poincaré, Deslandres, Pruisseux, Baillaud, the Count de la Baume Pluvinel, Paul Appell, etc., and that the annual budget of this institution would, eventually, exceed a hundred thousand francs.

No, let us never despair of progress.

And let us be neither surprised nor saddened by divergencies of opinion. Free and honest discussion is necessary for the triumph of truth.

We must now go a little more deeply into the faculties of Man.

The logical course of our investigations will bring us to the manifestations and apparitions of the dying and the dead. But there are apparitions of the living, intermediaries between the two worlds, which must first be verified.

A human being is made up of two distinct elements, the soul and the body. The body is visible and ponderable. The soul may manifest itself physically in phantasms of the living. What are these *phantasms*?

## II

### PHANTASMS OF THE LIVING

Ἰγῶπι σεαυτόν

Know thyself.

THE DELPHIC ORACLE.

WE shall have to study, to examine, to discuss a great number of apparitions and manifestations of the dying, and we shall then come to apparitions and manifestations of the dead. Now, there are apparitions of the living which present themselves as a very natural introduction to the more complex investigations that are to follow. This bilocation, these duplicate forms of people, have been the object of painstaking observation. Naturally, doubts have been cast upon them, they have been denied on insufficient grounds, through a predetermination to refuse to accept things not understood. We must be more independent, must desire enlightenment, must deny nothing in advance and give ourselves the trouble—or the pleasure—of analyzing in complete freedom of thought.

There are two kinds of duplication, unconscious and conscious. Let us first consider involuntary duplication. We shall then investigate experimental apparitions of the living.

My readers are already familiar with several examples of apparitions of the living given in my preceding books, and it would be superfluous to repeat here these various examples. They have had opportunity to see in "Uranie" Cicero's story of a young man, in the fullness of life, but menaced with assassination, appearing to his friend and calling on him for help; the story of an Alsatian woman appearing

to a compatriot in Rio de Janeiro, while she herself was on a vessel hundreds of kilometers away; that of Robert Bruce seeing before him, on his ship, a stranger writing on a slate and later recognizing this stranger, who had brought about this apparition while he slept; the Baron de Sulza, chamberlain to the King of Sweden, talking to his father, at the entrance to their estate, while the father was in bed in the château. They have also had opportunity to read in "Stella" the story of Bishop Alfonso da Liguori; of the transmission of his thought and his bodily form from his convent in the kingdom of Naples to Rome, to the death-bed of Pope Clement XIV, where he was with the pope at his last hour, in 1774, in the midst of a century of incredulity. They may also remember reading in "L'Inconnu" (page 490) of Mrs. Wilmot's visit to her husband, who was at that time in the cabin of a vessel far away on the ocean,—a visit seen at the same time by another traveler, not without surprise, who bore witness to its reality. And in "Uranie" again (page 196) they may have read of the personal experience told me in 1868 by the cold and exceptionally well-balanced J. Best, the general manager of the *Magasin pittoresque*. He said that when he was a child, lying in his little bed, in Toul, he had seen his mother pass before him, who at that instant was dying in Pau. A hundred, a thousand similar instances could be given. Doubt is no longer possible. The reader has read, too, in the first volume of this work (page 124) of the apparition of Mrs. Russell, wife of the inspector of public instruction in Bombay, who, at that time in Scotland, appeared to her sister in Germany. Then, too, there was the apparition of Mr. Dutton's friend. To-day, all these facts have been proved with absolute certainty.

I shall not return to these experiences, which I may presume known to my readers. We have so many facts to investigate, to compare, that we must consider new ones.

The examples of phantasms, of bilocation, of apparitions, are so numerous that it is impossible to rule them all out of existence and to deny their reality.

To admit a single one is to admit their possibility.

Formerly the saints seemed to have a monopoly of them: Saint Ambrose, for example, seeing from Milan the death of Saint Martin at Tours; Saint Anthony of Padua preaching at Montpellier; Saint Catharine de' Ricci of Prato speaking with Saint Philip of Neri in Rome; Saint Francis Xavier guiding a bark; Saint Alfonso da Liguori, of whom we have just spoken, etc. In former times people believed in miracles and sought them in the lives of the saints. To-day, laymen give rise to the same phenomena.

Let us call to memory the remarkable case of Goethe.

The poet, one rainy summer night, was walking with his friend K——, who was going back with him from the Belvedere to Weimar. Suddenly he halted, as if confronted by an apparition, and stopped speaking. His friend thought nothing of it. Suddenly Goethe cried: "Good heavens! If I were n't sure my friend Frederick is this minute in Frankfurt, I'd swear it is he!" Then he burst into a great laugh. "But it *is* he,—my friend Frederick! You here, in Weimar? But, Heavens, my dear fellow, how you've got yourself up! In my dressing-gown, in my night-cap, with my slippers on your feet here, on the highway!" His companion, seeing absolutely nothing was terrified, thinking the poet had suddenly gone mad. But Goethe, absorbed by his vision, stretched out his arms and shouted: "Frederick! Where did you go? Good God! My dear K——, did n't you see where the person we just met went?" K——, astounded, did not answer. Then the poet, turning his head this way and that, exclaimed with a dreamy air: "Yes, I understand. It was a vision. But what can the meaning of all that be? Could my friend have died suddenly? Could that have been his spirit?"

Then Goethe went home, and found Frederick at his house. His hair stood on end. "Away, phantom!" he cried, drawing back, pale as death. "But, my dear fellow," said the visitor, nonplussed, "is that the welcome you give your truest friend?"—"Ah, this time," the poet cried, laughing and weeping at once, "it is not a spirit, it is a being of flesh and blood!" And the two friends embraced with effusion.

Frederick had arrived at Goethe's house, soaked with rain, and had put on the poet's dry clothes; he had then gone to sleep in an arm-chair, and had dreamed that he went to meet Goethe, and that Goethe had questioned him in these words (the same that the poet had uttered): "You here, in Weimar? In my dressing-gown, my night-cap, with my slippers on your feet, here on the highway!"

In these incredible stories of phantasms, that only unfair deniers can reject, I admit at once that what has always seemed most perplexing to me, as in the stories of apparition, are the garments. The astral body was long ago discovered, the Peri, the spiritual body (old as Saint Paul); the discoveries do not explain the clothing. However, neither the living nor the dead show themselves naked. Let us begin our discussion with this adventure of Goethe.

It would seem that we are here concerned with a transmission of *images* by psychic waves between two brains harmoniously attuned, one serving as a wave-transmitter, the other as a receiver. Modern physics offers us examples, that may point the way to the explanation, in telegraphy, photography, and wireless telephony. In this last case it is not words that travel from one point to another. They are broken up into Hertzian waves in order to pass from the starting-point to their destination, where the detector recomposes them so that they may be heard.

His friend's dream could be transmitted to Goethe in the

form of waves in the ether, which, by impact on the poet's brain, recomposed the real image. (All images are formed, moreover, in the brain.)

We have no right to deny to that admirable apparatus the brain, endowed with such extraordinary physical and mechanical properties, the properties we make use of in the scientific apparatus we construct ourselves. But the motive power is the *spirit*.

With regard to this story of Goethe, and similar stories, people fifty years ago thought they had rid themselves of all necessity for explanation by one word, one simple word, —*hallucination. Illusion. Nothing.*

They were scarcely hard to please.

We may note several other observations of the psychic in Goethe's life. Those who have read his Memoirs have seen the account of his love-affair with the charming daughter of the pastor of Sesenheim, near Strasburg, an impassioned enough idyl, moreover, and one that left an unforgettable memory in his heart. When the hour of farewell had come, Goethe was obliged to go back to Germany, his soul possessed by the little French girl. That was in 1771. They wept inexhaustible tears; but part they must.

Let us now listen to what the future author of "Faust" tells us:

As I was slowly drawing away from the village, I saw, not with the eyes of the body but of the mind, a horseman approaching *Sesenheim* upon the same road on which I was; *this horseman was myself*; I was dressed in a gray coat fringed with gold lace, such as I had never worn; I shook myself, to banish this hallucination, and saw nothing more. It is curious that *eight years afterward I found myself on this same road*, paying a visit to my Friederike, and *wearing the same coat* in which I had appeared to myself; I must add that it was not my will, but *chance alone* which had made me assume this costume. My readers will think what they like of this bizarre vision; it seems to me prophetic, and, as I found in it the

conviction that I should see my sweetheart again, it gave me the courage to rise above the pain of farewell.<sup>1</sup>

These two examples taken from Goethe's life show us at once that the question of phantasms is extremely complex, and lead us still a little farther into the new world which we began to explore in our first volume. In these examples, we are concerned not with a phantasm, but with one of those visions of the future, the reality of which has been shown in this book. So we will admit, then, as real, these two cases of the psychic connected with Goethe's life.

Phantasms have been frequently observed in every century.

The philosopher Jerome Cardan of Pavia (1501-76), who from the time he was fifty-five could throw himself, at will, into a trance, describes for us the course of this psychic exteriorization:

When I go into a trance, I have a sensation near my heart as though my soul were parting from my body, and this separation then takes place in the whole of my body, above all in my head and brain. After that I have no sensation, save the feeling of being out of my body.

During the trance he no longer felt the gout, from which he suffered greatly in a normal condition, because his sensibility was completely exteriorized.<sup>2</sup>

Alfred de Musset saw, on occasion, a man sit down beside him "who resembled him like a brother."

George Sand assures us of having had, several times, the visual and audible hallucination of her phantasm.

Guy de Maupassant, at the beginning of the general paralysis that was to bring about his death, saw, with terror,

<sup>1</sup> Goethe's "Memoirs," translated by Mme. Carlowitz, I, 270. See also "Conversations de Goethe avec Eckermann," p. 405.

<sup>2</sup> Cardan. "De rerum varietate," XXXIV.

a phantasm of himself seated at his table, and found inspiration in this hallucination in writing "Le Horla."

The manifestations of phantasms often correspond to certain abnormal psychological states.

A great number of cases can be only hallucinations—even dangerous hallucinations—that are within the brain, subjective, in no way objective, external. But these illusions do not do away with realities. Let us proceed in this curious investigation.

In 1845, there was in Livonia, fifty-eight kilometers from Riga and six kilometers from the little town of Volmar, a school for young girls of the nobility, called the Neuweleke School. The head, at that time, was a certain Monsieur Buch.

The pupils, almost all of noble Livonian families, numbered forty-two; among them was the second daughter of Baron de Güldenstubbé, aged thirteen.

There was, among other instructors, a teacher of French, Mademoiselle Emilie Sagée, born in Dijon. She was of a Northern type, a blonde, with a very beautiful complexion, eyes of a clear blue, slender and a little above middle height; her nature was lovable, sweet, and gay. She was intelligent, and her education was perfect. Her health was good. The superintendents were entirely satisfied with her as a teacher. She was at that time thirty-two years old.

A few weeks after she came into the house, strange rumors about her began to spread among the pupils. When one of them said she had seen her in such and such a part of the building, another declared she had met her somewhere else at the same moment, saying, "Why, no, that can't be true; I just passed her on the stairs," etc. At first, such things were laid to mistakes, but as they did not cease, the young girls began to talk of them. The teachers declared

that there was no sense in all this, and that not the least importance was to be attached to it.

But complications were not long in arising.

One day, when Emilie Sagée was giving a lesson to thirteen of these young girls, among them Mademoiselle de Gùldenstubbé, and when, in order to make them understand better what she was showing them, she wrote upon the black-board the passage to be explained, the pupils saw suddenly, to their great terror, two Demoiselles Sagée, one beside the other. *They were exactly alike and were going through the same movements.* But the real person had a piece of chalk in her hand and was really writing, while her phantasm had no chalk and was content to imitate the movements she made in writing.

This caused a great sensation in the establishment, all the more because *all the young girls, without exception, had seen the second form and agreed perfectly* in their description of the phenomenon.

But the most remarkable incident was certainly the following:

One day, all the pupils, forty-two in number, were gathered in the same room, busy embroidering. It was a large room on the ground floor, with four large windows; the pupils were all seated before the table, and could see what was going on in the garden; as they were working, they saw Mademoiselle Sagée picking flowers, not far from the house. At the end of the table was another teacher, maintaining discipline, seated in a morocco-covered arm-chair. At a given moment this woman went away and the arm-chair was left empty. But this was only for a short time, for the young girls saw in it, suddenly, the form of Mademoiselle Sagée. At once, they looked into the garden, and saw her still busy picking flowers; only, her movements were languid and slower, like those of one *overcome with sleep or exhausted by fatigue.*

Again they looked toward the arm-chair, where the phantasm was seated, silent and motionless. More or less used to these strange manifestations, two of the boldest pupils approached the chair, and, touching the apparition, thought they encountered a *resistance comparable to that which a light tissue of muslin or of crêpe might offer*. One of them even dared to pass in front of the chair and, in fact, to step through part of the form. However, it still lasted a short time, then gradually vanished. They saw, too, that Mademoiselle Sagée had again begun to pick flowers with her usual animation. *The forty-two pupils described the phenomenon in the same way.*

It may be imagined that such a state of things could not exist without consequences to a girls' school. The parents withdrew a large number of pupils, and at the end of eighteen months there remained only twelve out of forty-two. The head was obliged to dismiss Mademoiselle Sagée, in spite of her professional value and her excellent conduct. Mademoiselle de Güldenstubbé heard her exclaim, despairingly, "Alas, this is the nineteenth time I have been obliged, since I was sixteen, to give up my position as a teacher!"

This odd example of duplication was published in 1849 by Robert Dale Owen,<sup>1</sup> who had it at first hand from Baroness Julie de Güldenstubbé; by the review "Light" (1883; page 336), with detailed information; by Aksakof, who vouches for its accuracy<sup>2</sup> and by most writers on the psychic. I knew, in former days (in 1862), Baron Güldenstubbé and his sister. They were most sincere, perhaps a little mystical, but of unexceptionable integrity.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In *Footfalls on the Boundary of Another Life*.

<sup>2</sup> *Animisme et Spiritisme*. pp. 498-504.

<sup>3</sup> Baron de Güldenstubbé is the author of that curious book *La réalité des esprits et le phénomène merveilleux de leur écriture directe*, with facsimiles (Paris, 1857).

We saw above that Mademoiselle Sagée was a native of Dijon. Finding myself near Dijon (at the château of Quincey) in August, 1895, I took occasion to find out if a family by the name of Sagée had lived there and were there still. The result of an examination of the civic records of Dijon was not without its curious side.

This teacher was thirty-two years old in 1845. She was, therefore, born in 1813. The civic records of Dijon contain no family named Sagée; but they record the birth, on January 3, 1813, of a child named Octavie Saget—as a “natural daughter.” This name is so like that of the teacher that it is difficult to doubt the identity. Would not her wandering life in Germany and in Russia be partially explained by her irregular birth? Could Mademoiselle de Güldenstubbé’s memory have confused the given name,—a mistake slight enough, moreover,—as well as the spelling of the name? That is possible, in view of the fact that all these statements were made in foreign languages. Could the teacher, alarmed by her eighteen changes of position, have herself made a slight change in her name?

Charles du Prel has spoken of this story of duplication in his work “*La Mort et l’Au-delà*” (1905) and spelled the name Emilie *Saget*. “Her astral body,” he writes, “was seen by an entire girls’ school during the whole course of her stay in that institution.”

I have known persons, sure of their learning, who fancy that they can solve the problem by these two words: *collective hallucination*. That is being content with little. We may repeat with Professor Morselli, head of the Clinical Department of Mental Diseases of the University of Genoa, what he said as to Eusapias’s séances:

This explanation is no explanation, since the visions obey the normal laws of optics (perspective, front views, side views, etc.), and were, moreover, spoken of by all those who took part. An

alienist used for so many years, as I am, to detecting and diagnosing illusory conditions and hallucinations, would find it strange for a group of six, eight, or twelve persons, to fall into the grip of a causeless hallucination,—persons sound in mind and in full possession of their senses. It is inadmissible that they should all of them, suddenly, in the absence of any pathological condition or in an incomprehensible morbid condition, lasting only a few instants, fall into this grip and return at once, as though nothing had happened, to their full functional health of nerves and brain.

And then we have, really, under our eyes, too many concordant facts of the same sort.

No, it was not a collective hallucination. The teacher lost her position nineteen times on account of this peculiarity. The double was real, objective. Probably it might have been photographed. (For thirty years, from my Juvisy observatory, I have been taking photographs of the rainbow, which does not exist, which is not real, under which no one can pass, which is not the same for two observers near together, and which is only a visual phenomenon.)

The double of which I am about to speak could not have been photographed, though two persons saw it. It was brought to my knowledge by General Berthaut, former chief of the Army Geographical Service, a former member of the board of the Paris Observatory, who told me of it recently (April 2, 1920), and made the following remarks: "I can vouch absolutely for the perfect sincerity of the observations which I am about to submit to you, and will confide to you the names of the observers as well as the circumstances; but if you give the facts in one of your works, I shall ask you to suppress the names; the friends of whom I speak or their relatives might not like the publicity which would be given them."

Here are these extremely valuable observations:

In 1870, as a prisoner in Mersebourg (Prussia), I had got to know an officer of another regiment, a lieutenant named —,

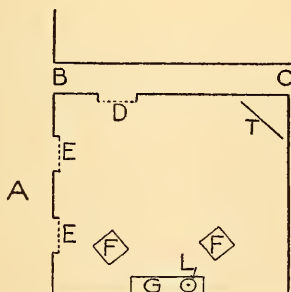
because we both painted. He was older than I, had resigned his commission, had reëntered the service with his old regiment for the duration of the war, and had, like me, been taken prisoner at Sedan. He was interested in occultism, and it is due to that circumstance that I, too, took it up.

After the war my friend returned to civilian life. He went back home to his parents at —. He came to see me in Paris, and I went several times to spend some days with him.

My friend's father was a retired cavalry captain; his mother was a most worthy and devout woman; both were benevolent, very serious-minded, and the soul of honor. They would never have thought of lying, or even of making a jest in bad taste. Their circumstances were modest and their house extremely simple. They spent much of their time in a large room on the ground floor, which served as my friend's parlor and workroom. There he kept his books, his canvases, and his easels, and in a corner of the room, to the left as one entered, a blackboard. I am making a sketch of this room for you.

The evening of September 1, 1870, the day of the Battle of Sedan, about nine o'clock, my comrade's mother and father were seated facing one another, in the arm-chairs F F, on each side of the mantelpiece, on which was the lamp.

Suddenly *both* saw the door (D) open, and their son, in uniform, come into the parlor, then close the door. Next, he went toward the blackboard (T), took up a piece of chalk, drew a circle on the blackboard, and put a dot in the center of this circle. After that,



A square before the church. B Entrance to the house. B C Corridor. D Door to the parlor. E E Windows. F F Arm-chairs. G Mantelpiece. T Blackboard. L Lamp.

without looking or speaking to his father and mother, my friend opened the door again, and went away.

Dumfounded for an instant, the father and mother ended by rising; taking up the lamp, they ascertained that there remained upon the blackboard no trace of the circle drawn by the phantom of their son.

These are the facts. Both saw in the same way what happened. No detail differed, either as to the costume or the attitude of the son. What one saw by *looking to the right*, the other saw by *looking to the left*.

My comrade and I discussed this story before his parents.

What was he doing at nine o'clock in the evening, after the battle? He did not know.

Probably he was asleep. We were all of us extremely tired. For my part, I had spent twelve hours on horseback, almost without touching my feet to the ground. At nine o'clock I must have been asleep, and he too. But what is certain is that he was never aware of having gone, in spirit, to his village, of having gone into his home, and of having made a circle, in chalk, on his blackboard.

As to the circle, he found this explanation: it meant that he was a prisoner,—a circle and a dot inside it. But he had not remembered it.

I lost touch with him when I left for Japan, as head of the military mission of 1884, from which I did not return until 1889. The father and mother are certainly dead, and it is probable that the son is, too.

(Letter 4125.)

We cannot doubt in any way the authenticity of the apparition here told of by General Berthaut. The father and the mother of the lieutenant really saw him,—“saw,” in the generally accepted sense, not in a dream, but wide awake. However, the circle drawn by their son did not exist. What conclusion shall we draw? The officer sleeping far away, in captivity, thought of his parents, and was borne in spirit into their room; he opened and closed the door in spirit, took the chalk and traced the circle, still in spirit, and those things acted upon the minds of his parents, without there

being anything objective, material, ponderable, tangible, in all this. If we refused to admit this authenticity, we should have to suppose that both had been the dupes, at the same moment, of the same causeless hallucination, one that corresponded, moreover, to the captivity of their son, which they could not have surmised. This hypothesis seemed the most probable fifty years ago, before our present knowledge; it is no longer acceptable to-day. This phantasm of the lieutenant of 1870 was a *thought-form*.

What variety in these apparitions of the living!

A well-defined phantasm of a living person was described in 1905, in the English newspapers,—“The Empire” of May 14th, “The Daily News” of May 17th, etc.,—and their accounts were reproduced in the “Annales des Sciences psychiques” of June, 1905, under the heading “An Apparition in the House of Commons.” Here is the published account:

Some time before the Easter Vacation of Parliament Major Sir Carne Raschse had an attack of influenza, complicated by neurosis. His condition became serious enough to keep him from going to the House, in spite of his wish to support the Government at the evening session preceding the vacation, a session which might have serious results. It was then that his friend Sir Gilbert Parker was astonished and saddened to see him near his usual seat. Here is Sir Gilbert’s own account:

“I wished to take part in the debate. My gaze fell upon Sir Carne Raschse, seated near his usual place. As I knew that he had been ill, I waved to him in a friendly way, and said: ‘I hope you are better.’ But he gave me no sign of recognition, which greatly astonished me. His face was very pale. He was seated, his head resting, motionless, on one hand; the expression of his face was impassive and hard. For a moment I wondered what I had better do; when I again turned toward him, he had disappeared. I regretted this, and at once went to seek him, hoping to find him in the vestibule. But Raschse was not there, and no one had seen him.

In the "Daily News" of May 17th, Sir Arthur Hayter added his testimony to that of Sir Gilbert Parker. He declared that he, too, had seen Sir Carne Raschse, and that, moreover, he had drawn the attention of Sir Henry Bannerman to his presence.

This member of Parliament was not a little surprised to receive, soon afterward, his two friends' felicitations, congratulating him on not being dead; he frightened his whole family with the story of his apparition. As for him, he did not doubt that he had really gone in spirit to the House, for he had been extremely preoccupied with the thought of attending the session for a debate which interested him particularly. This phantasm was, in truth, real; two, three witnesses saw it. Here is another which resembles it oddly:

The newspaper "Le Temps" of July 3, 1899, related the following facts:

*From our English correspondent.*—For some days a report has spread that a suite of the House of Commons, giving upon the speaker's courtyard, was haunted. Nothing was said as to whether the specter had ever ventured into the lobbies of the House.

Several members of Parliament grew uneasy. The truth was at last discovered. The phantom is not a ghost, but the *double* of a person still living. And this person is none other than the wife of one of the principal office-holders of Westminster Palace, Mr. Archibald Milman, secretary of the House of Commons (at a salary of 38,000 francs).

Mrs. Milman tells in these words the story of her specter:

"The strangest thing about it is that it is true. It has lasted for years. I am afflicted with another self, that people meet in places where I am not. The other day a friend took leave of me in the work-room in which I give myself up to a passion for binding books. Scarcely had he stepped out at the door, when he found me again on the landing of the stairway. Dumfounded, he shrank aside to let me pass. I had not stirred.

Every moment there are adventures of this kind. One of my

governesses has just left me because she is very nervous and the frequency of these apparitions made her positively ill. This very day a young woman living with us saw me in the courtyard, without my having left the house.

I have never seen my *double*. But I have heard it. One evening, just as I had come into my room, I heard a cracking sound and went out upon the landing. All the doors that I had just closed were open. I went back precipitately, and rang both for the nurse and the house-steward. There is only one stairway; the nurse sleeps in the attic and the house-steward in the basement. They were forced to meet the intruder. And, as a matter of fact, the nurse had seen nothing, but the house-steward was most surprised to find me in my room, since he had just seen me, he said, opening the door of a hall on the ground floor.

Here, as in the preceding case, we are concerned with a real, an objective phantasm.

Let us compare, examine closely.

A phantasm which recalls that of Mademoiselle Sagée was observed by Dr. George Wyld, the most conscientious of investigators; the account of it was published in "Light," in 1882 (page 26), and reproduced by Aksakof.<sup>1</sup> He writes:

I was on the most friendly terms with Miss Jackson and her mother. The statements they made to me were confirmed by one of the two maid-servants who were witnesses. As to the other, I was not able to find her.

This young woman had been very assiduous in her visits to the poor. One day, when she was going back home after a day spent in works of charity, she felt tired and restless from the cold, and experienced a desire to go and warm herself at the kitchen stove, on her return. At a moment corresponding exactly to that at which this idea passed through her mind, two maid-servants, who were in the kitchen, saw the door-knob turn and the door open to admit Miss Jackson, who went up to the fire and warmed her hands. The attention of the servants was caught by the glazed kid gloves, green in color, which she had on her hands. Suddenly, before their very

<sup>1</sup> *Animisme et Spiritisme*, p. 514.

eyes, she disappeared. Dumfounded, they went up to her mother, and told her of the adventure, without forgetting the detail of the gloves.

This lady felt some apprehension, but she tried to calm the servants, telling them that her daughter had never had any green gloves, and that, in consequence, their vision could only have been an illusion.

Half an hour afterward, Miss Jackson, in person, came in; she went straight to the kitchen and warmed herself before the fire: she had green gloves on her hands, not having been able to find black ones.

An extremely rigorous investigation, made by Dr. Wyld, established the exactitude of these facts.

A phantasm dressed, as it was, at the moment of its apparition—with green gloves! The clothes constituting part of the duplication!

To call to mind the fluid body, the astral body, the spiritual body, all the ethereal bodies one will acknowledge, does not seem to me to solve the problem at all.

It is impossible to deny the reality of these apparitions. There are too many of them.

Certain spiritualists believe they can explain apparitions of the dead, with their clothing, by the supposition that the spirit that manifests itself can make garments for itself quite as well as a body indubitably material, if it so wishes, the better to establish its identity. That is a hypothesis to be discussed with extreme care. But it does not apply in this case. This young woman, who was cold, simply thought of going to warm herself at the kitchen stove, as, without doubt, she sometimes did in like circumstances, and she was mentally disposed to go there; she was already there in spirit. But how could this thought have affected the eyesight of the two servants to the point of showing them the gloves she wore at that moment? It was not only the thought that was transmitted, it was an image, a kind

of photograph, an aspect, a form, a simulacrum, as Lucretius affirmed (Book IV), and this without any will to show herself to the servants. We are familiar with experimental apparitions, produced by will power: this is another kind of phenomenon. Here, we are concerned with an image in color and in relief, transmitted by telepathy, like the officer of Sedan in his uniform.

We cannot find an explanation. Could one have explained X-rays, the seeing of your skeleton through your clothes, before their invention? And all the scientific discoveries? Science will one day explain all this.

In a great number of cases the phantasm seems to be simply a projection of a person at the moment of being observed, and, in all details, just as that person is at that moment.

An optical projection.

We will give a special chapter to *thought as a generator of images projected to a distance*.

The variety of these observations is very great. By comparing them, we shall, perhaps, be able to learn something.

It would seem to me difficult not to include the following story in this chapter concerning phantasms of the living. The letter I give here was literally transcribed from a communication that I received from Prague in 1902:

MY DEAR ASTRONOMER:

In accordance with the wish of Professor Hess, I am taking the liberty of telling you of an occurrence worthy of your investigations, the absolute truth of which I guarantee on my word of honor, and on that of my friend who had the vision.

This friend's name is Flora Kruby. We have no secrets from each other. The lady is married, and is my truest friend. We see something of a gentleman whom we know, who is a physician. For a certain period Madame Kruby was prevented from taking part in our reunions, and I had not seen her for several weeks, during which time she had no news of me or of the doctor. One day, when I found myself, without Madame Kruby, with this doctor and several

other people in society, I had a discussion with the physician; he is very good-hearted, but easily flies into a violent temper. I was so angry that I made a resolution to break with him and never again to speak to him.

That same day he was to undertake a long trip, to fill the place of a professor for several weeks.

The other day, Madame Kruby (who knew nothing of his departure) arrived at my home breathless, and told me, trembling all over, her face agitated, and with an air of consternation, what had happened to her during the night. She has, in consequence, written the following account for me and for you:

"Mademoiselle, I had a vision last night! I had never believed in such things. On the contrary, when people came to tell me this sort of stories, I would burst out laughing. Hear me, then; listen. I had not yet gone to sleep; all the doors were locked. Suddenly the door of my bedroom opened softly and some one came in! I thought, of course, that it was my husband. For several days he had had a toothache, and I supposed he had come to look for a remedy. I asked: 'Is that you? Are you suffering?' No reply. But a shade approached my bed swiftly, leaned toward me, and said: 'It is I, Dr. B——. I have come to ask you something!'—'Good heavens!' I cried, 'Are you dead?'—'No, I am alive; I am leaving on a trip of several weeks, and as we are all mortal, one can't know. I can find no rest without addressing a prayer to you: I know you are a good friend of Mademoiselle Lux, and that you have a great influence over her; beg her to pardon me; I did not wish to offend her, for I love her without her suspecting it; but be discreet. I am saying this only to you; I have confidence in you; you are loyal; the others are not. So forgive my prayer.'

"After these words he disappeared, and went away, but my husband, who had heard the noise of the door, woke up and asked me for an explanation. I did not have the courage to speak; I was trembling and deeply agitated, and even yet, when I think of this vision, I begin to tremble anew.

"I saw the doctor distinctly, he spoke to me with animation, as usual; I felt his breath, for he spoke in a low voice, very near and bending over my bed."

Several weeks passed after this vision. Madame Kruby and I kept it secret and, as for me, I could not help remaining skeptical

as to its reality. After the doctor's return I asked him, one day, how he had spent the night after our dispute, and he answered: "In spite of my great irritation, I fell into a deep sleep in the train, thinking of you; I dreamed of you, the thought of you followed me, and did not leave me until the moment I lost all consciousness in sleep."

Dear Master, in telling you of this occurrence, I am asking my friend to add her signature to mine, as a more complete guarantee for you.

ANNE LUX.

FLORA KRUBY.

Having come to the end of my letter, I take the liberty of saying that I have such esteem, such respect for you personally, and for your work, that it would be impossible for me to deceive you.

(Letter 1039.)

Professor Hess added his signature to the letter; this guarantees the authenticity of the account.

Our first thought is to see in this only a dream. The most simple explanations are the first to thrust themselves upon our attention.

What in this story is subjective, and what is objective? How make allowance for that which belongs to the narrator's brain, to the vision she had personally, and that which belongs to the doctor's telepathic transmission?

Her impressions were complex. We cannot see why the spirit of the doctor, sent, during a dream, to the lady in question, should have needed to open a door. Psychic radiations pass through walls, like electric, magnetic, and other currents. In this case there was, without doubt, an association of ideas. But then, why did Madame Kruby see the door open, and how did her husband hear the noise?

We may answer that lightning, which goes through walls, also opens doors. We may note the cases of the officer of Sedan and of Miss Jackson.

A further objection: this door was locked!

Again the answer: in spiritualistic séances locked doors have been seen to open.

Let us acknowledge that we are explaining nothing. But let us not reject observations which seem real and exact, because we cannot explain them.

What we must note is that by some means—unknown to him, moreover, and unconscious,—the doctor made himself visible to this lady, made himself heard, and charged her with a commission which she carried out. Analyze the account in all its details, and you will see how difficult it is to attribute to an hallucination, to an error: (1) the seeing and hearing of the doctor by the seer; (2) the noise of the door, heard by her husband; (3) the synchronism with the doctor's obsession.

A case of the transmission of force to a distance.

It is the comparative study of similar facts which can enlighten us. Let us continue.

Here is another account, not less curious, received in April, 1889:

We have a friend whose mother is deaf and dumb. As the mother lives very far from us, not even being French, we had never seen her; we corresponded with her, and it was understood that I should go to see her in the course of the summer of 1897.

But before I made the trip I knew her, and this is how. I had just gone to bed; I had hardly laid my head upon my pillow when, at the foot of my bed, but higher up, almost at the ceiling, I saw the pretty face of an old lady, smiling at me. I was frightened and hid my head under the covers; then, ashamed of myself, I put the covers aside, determined to be brave, if, indeed, I had not been dreaming. The smiling face was still there, but this time it was coming toward me. All my fine courage fled; once more I hid my head in the blankets, and, to make completely sure that I was not dreaming, I pinched myself hard. When I decided to look again, there was no longer anything there. The next day I told this to my mother, whom I had not called, though she was not asleep. She told me that it was, perhaps, Grandmother, who had had, in fact, a fine and delicate face. This grandmother had died long since,

without my ever having known her, and I was not very ready to admit this hypothesis. After some time the incident was forgotten.

In the month of August I made the projected trip. Imagine my surprise when in the mother of our friend I recognized the nice little old lady who had frightened me so. The only difference was that my apparition wore a white cap, which framed her face, and that this lady did not wear one. But, after all, since it was night when she came to pay me a visit, it was, perhaps, a night-cap.

This occurrence took place in a little region of the Department of Saône-et-Loire. What may give it some value is the fact that I am a skeptic, and wish to admit only facts which can be proved by  $A + B$ ; every thing in me balks at the supernatural. It is unnecessary after saying that, to tell you with what trembling interest I am following your investigations.

I should be very happy if I can have brought to your notice the slightest bit of evidence.

L. BUGAUT,  
Charleston, Ballinacurra, Cork.

(Letter 622.)

If space were not limited, if I did not have to condense a great number of documents into a small number of separate chapters, I might publish numerous letters received, and might here reveal various examples of all kinds, proving the indisputable reality of phantasms of the living. In themselves alone they would make a volume like this one. (It is in existence, moreover, is already written, but for the moment I must leave it unpublished.) But I should be sorry not to mention one of the most curious and striking, that of Miss Rhoda Clary, seen by her whole family (twelve persons) seated in a rocking-chair in a garden, holding her little sister in her arms, though she had not left her room. Bozzano has discussed this bilocation in the best critical spirit.<sup>1</sup> Its authenticity has been particularly well established.

Observations as to phantasms of the living are much more

<sup>1</sup> It can be read in the *Annales des Sciences psychiques* of March, 1911.

numerous than one imagines. One finds them everywhere. In "*Les Hallucinations télépathiques*," for example, we may read on page 357 the story of a friend, seen by two young girls, who was passing before the window behind which they were talking, and was recognized by them, with no grounds for doubt, though he had stayed at home despite his intention to go out; and, on the following page, the presence in a business office of a friend of the narrator. The writer spoke to him without receiving any reply; he was seen for rather a long time by two other persons as well. People say "collective hallucinations," which explains nothing at all.

These are real, objective, external apparitions. If they were but subjective, if they came only from the brain, they should be visible with the eyes closed as well as with the eyes open.

Now, nothing of the sort happens: one sees an apparition in a half-wakeful dream, is afraid of it, hides beneath the covers, sees nothing more. One looks again: there the apparition is. It fills a definite space.

The phantasms just brought to our notice are manifestations of the living, unrelated to death, and simply prove to us the reality of these phenomena, as yet unexplained. They show that one would be wrong to be alarmed when they occur. The following experience, on the contrary, preceded a death in most singular fashion.

One of my readers wrote me on February 26, 1899:

In the month of November, 1850, having been invited to the marriage of one of my cousins, at Lapalisse (Allier), I had gone there in company with an uncle, Monsieur Meulien, of Chalon-sur-Saône. We were both sleeping in the same room. The morning of our departure for Lapalisse, when we had to take a carriage early, I woke up about seven o'clock, and saw my relative standing at the foot of my bed, his arms crossed over his burnoose, a cloak in the fashion of that time; he was gazing at me very sadly. I sat up

and said to him, aloud: "What? Already up! But we've lots of time!"

The apparition vanished. I looked behind me. My uncle was sleeping peacefully in his bed.

*Two hours later*, as our carriage was bowling along the road to Donjon, my fellow-traveler and an aged woman-servant within the vehicle, I upon the seat, I felt a tug at my sleeve and heard the changed voice of the old woman: "Monsieur Jules, your uncle is ill!"

I turned. The unfortunate man had his head thrown back; his eyes were white; a little foam was on his lips; he was dying in his burnoose.

That morning he was just as he had been the day before. Nothing in his demeanor gave rise to any suspicion that he had afforded me the strange spectacle of his duplication, by showing himself in two forms at once; here in his traveling costume, there in bed, undressed and asleep, living and a phantom at the same time.

I was then twenty-one; my mind was perfectly sound and well balanced.

As a witness I can give Madame Alix Burelle, living at Saint-Géraud-le-Puy (Allier), my cousin, on the occasion of whose marriage the occurrence took place, and who remembers my account.

JULES GARNIER,  
Of Aiguebelle, Drôme.

The coincidence that death followed the apparition of the phantasm does not absolutely prove an interrelation between the two facts, since there are cases of bilocation without consequent deaths. It brings us, however, to the study of apparitions of the dying before death, a subject we shall soon investigate.

The manifestation just related is one of the most curious in my collection. It would seem that the traveler, the uncle, still asleep, dreamed that he was making ready to get into the carriage, and exteriorized his own image. Still more remarkable is the fact that he was on the point of dying, and of departing for the Beyond!

Farther on, we shall devote a special investigation to phantasms associated with death. What we had to establish

was the reality of phantasms of the living. We are thus prepared for that which is to follow.

I shall now cease giving these examples, although, as I said above, I have a great number of others on my writing-table at this moment,—others verified no less exactly. The reader may well admit that *my certainty is well grounded*.

Like all the phenomena revealed in this work, phantasms have been observed for hundreds and hundreds of years. To recall only one example, we may read in Tacitus's Roman History (Book IV, Section 82) what happened to Vespasian with regard to the Egyptian, Basilides. Space is lacking for its citation.

Our personalities are more complex than is generally believed. Every one has been able to note that those of normal life differ considerably from those of nocturnal dreams. As yet we know almost nothing of our true natures. Can this complexity teach us anything in explanation of phantasms?

For thousands of years, let us repeat, the phenomena here examined have been known to a certain number of the initiated. Phantasms were an integral part of the Egyptian religion, and it was the same with the Greeks. Plutarch and Tertullian constantly remind us of this, in the case of the Latin classics. But there has been so much exaggeration, so much credulity, so much superstition, that people ended by wiping the slate clean as to all stories of phantasms and of ghosts.

Charles du Prel adopts the theory of the *od* and of the astral body. He writes:

The certainty that the exteriorized astral body is capable of an independent life, allows us to appreciate the fine speech of Abbot Steinmetz, who, seeing his double seated in his garden, in his favorite place, while he himself was in his room, in company with several friends, said to them, pointing first to himself, then showing his phantasm seated in the garden: "Here is the mortal Steinmetz, and there the immortal Steinmetz."

One will agree that these observations of phantasms of the living are well calculated to convince us of the reality of the phenomena. A man, a woman in good health, may in the form of a phantom be in a spot other than that in which the normal body is. This is a bold affirmation. But let us not have the cowardice of those who dare not avow what is contrary to the general belief of the mob.

Paris, France, Europe, Asia, America, the ocean, are at this moment flying through space at a speed of 107,000 kilometers an hour, in their revolution round the sun. An affirmation equally audacious!

Every dispassionate reader desirous of being enlightened as to the reality of these enigmatical, hardly credible facts—unbelievable, even, to those who have not investigated them sufficiently—knows his ground when he accepts as true these psychic manifestations. To explain them is another matter. But let us seek further instruction. The *number* of observed facts is not a negligible quantity.

The duplications we have just passed in review were formed, for the most part, unconsciously. Alfonso da Liguori had left his body in a state of catalepsy in his convent, while he appeared to the pope; Goethe's friend did not know that he had shown himself to Goethe on the road to Weimar, etc. But will power can produce experimental phantasms. That is what we shall prove.

There are not only phantasms formed unconsciously; there are also phantasms produced by the will. We shall here consider several experiments carried out with great exactitude, and compare them. People have tried, with success, to bring about experimental apparitions between the living. On page 124 of the first volume of this work we are told of a most remarkable one,—of Mrs. Russell, wife of the Inspector of Public Instruction in Bombay, who wished to appear to one of her sisters, in Germany (she herself was then living in

Scotland), and who, in fact, appeared to the sister, to her stupefaction. We told of this apparition before, as well as that of Mrs. Wilmot. The readers of "Uranie" have already been able to note, too (page 219), the experimental apparition produced by the will of the pastor Godfrey, which appeared to a friend of his, a woman. We shall have here, before our eyes, other examples not less precisely verified than those we already know.

The classic schools of learning have, up to the present, been on a wrong tack. In the human organism nothing is seen, touched, analyzed, dissected, but what is coarsest, most evident, most superficial. People are still ignorant concerning the inherent subtleties of that organism; nevertheless, it is most essential that we understand these.

Among other uncomprehended things, it is not to be doubted that the proximity of a person influences us, at times very strongly, and almost instantaneously. There is about our bodies an invisible, active aura. My late lamented friend Colonel de Rochas, who, from 1892 to 1895, made a great number of experiments as to this point (I was present at these, in his rooms of the Polytechnic School, of which he was the head), ascertained the nature of this phenomenon of the exteriorization of sensibility. Reichenbach had given the name of *od* to this fluid body, a substance not electricity, but polarized, and his partizans invented the term *odic* phantasm. Perhaps there is in this only the electricity of the human body setting the ether in vibration. But, whatever its nature, there can be no doubt as to an enveloping sphere of influence. Human beings are bound together by invisible emanations.

This fluid body, this astral body, may detach itself from our material bodies in certain circumstances and certain conditions.

One day a Canadian came to me, in Paris, to tell me he

wished absolutely to banish all doubts as to the reality of the phenomena attributed to the fakirs of India, and that he had left his wife and his children, to go personally, that he might gain an understanding of this question, with the firm intention of verifying all by his own experience. Three years afterward he came back to me. "I acceded," he said, "to all demands. I had been assured that in one or two years I might acquire the same faculties, upon condition (1) that I no longer eat either meat or fish; (2) that I myself cultivate, gather, clean, and cook the vegetables for my nourishment; (3) that I drink only water; (4) that I preserve an absolute chastity; (5) that I plan my days according to such and such rules. By force of will I succeeded. It was not long before my double projected itself from me. I grew accustomed to it. But I have had enough, for I feel myself going mad, and I am returning home. Why, this morning, at the Grand Hotel, where I am stopping, I was still in bed, when I saw myself stretched out on the sofa opposite, and it was not long before I had the impression that I was really on this sofa. Then I saw myself rise, hover in the air, go toward the window, and make ready to jump from the fourth floor to the boulevard. Instantly, I sprang from my bed: terrified, I preferred to see my astral body and my soul again enter my physical body. And I came to pay you the visit that I had promised you I would make upon my return."

How distinguish illusions from realities? It is not always easy, and it took the narrator, with all his methodical spirit, more than a year to assure himself of the real existence of his phantasm.

I admit that I do not see how clothing can be explained. The astral body is not merely of the imagination. It is founded upon various kinds of observations.

This impalpable, invisible body, which exists during life and subsists after death, was known to ancient religions, notably that of the Egyptians. It is the *ka* represented in the subterranean chambers of Egypt, the "spiritual body" of Saint Paul, the "astral body" of the theosophists, the "Peri" of the spiritualists. This imponderable body possesses forces all its own. We might call it the garment of the soul, despite the crudeness of this designation.

I am the possessor of a certain number of painstaking observations concerning this envelop of the soul. Here is one among others. One of my readers wrote me from Geneva, on November 1, 1920:

It is not a scientist who writes you, but a financier, so, like you, a man of figures, but in another realm of ideas.

I had a disease of the heart, which is now cured, but which played me some nasty tricks. On one occasion, among others, I remained for a certain time plunged in a lethargy. I heard all my family talking around me, but I was not I: my *self* was beside me, standing, a white and fluid body; I saw the grief of those who were striving to revive me and I had this thought: "Of what use is this miserable cast-off skin that they seek to bring to life again?" Nevertheless, perceiving their sadness, a great longing came over me to return to them,—a thing which happened. However, it seems to me that if I had wished it I could have remained in the Beyond; I saw the door to it half open, but cannot say what was behind.

J. RAMEL.

(Letter 4295.)

In my search for a solution of the problem I asked the author if his double were naked. His reply was that he had not noticed, that he remembered only that it was larger than he, of vague contours and a clear gray color.

Let us continue our researches.

Among the experiences of duplication of which I personally have had knowledge, I shall here note those of Made-moiselle Alma Hœmmerlé, daughter of my friend Madame Agatha Hœmmerlé, the translator of the works of Charles

du Prel, whose acquaintance we made in the first volume (page 207).

Here are two of these experiments, which my friend Colonel de Rochas has already published in the "*Annales des Sciences psychiques*" of September, 1906. The experimenter was then about eighteen years old. She herself wrote the following account:

(1) My first experiment took place at Kherson (southern Russia), where my brother was concluding his studies at the college. His classmates often came to our house, and, as my mother concerned herself with psychic questions which interested us all, we resolved one evening to make an experiment.

Consequently, we set a time at which two of these young men, Messieurs Stankewitch and Serboff, would try, on the following day, to send their doubles toward us, one at eleven o'clock at night, the other at half-past eleven. We set our watches together, and it was arranged that Monsieur Stankewitch should go and find my brother in his bedroom, while Monsieur Serboff would show himself in the drawing-room.

The evening of the following day my sister Irma sat down in the dining-room, whence she could see the open door giving on the drawing-room. My brother, as had been arranged, remained in his bed-chamber.

After I had stayed with my sister a moment, I entered my brother's room. The lamp in the dining-room gave enough light in the bed-chamber to enable objects to be discerned. At the same moment I felt something push against my shoulder, and I saw beside me the very distinct form of Monsieur Stankewitch; I could distinguish his dark uniform with its buttons of white metal. At the same instant my brother said to me: "There he is, beside you.—Did you see him?" he added almost immediately, for, after his exclamation, the apparition had vanished.

My sister, hearing us speak, came up to us, saying that she had just seen Monsieur Stankewitch enter by the door of the drawing-room, pass near the table in the dining-room, and then disappear from her sight. She, too, had seen him in uniform and had been able to distinguish the buttons of white metal.

Immediately afterward all three of us went into the drawing-room, which was lighted by the dining-room lamp, to wait for the apparition of Monsieur Serboff. It did not come until about midnight. This apparition seemed to us more pallid than the preceding one, and less distinct. It went into the drawing-room by way of an outer chamber; there it halted for a moment near the door, and went to the right, toward one of the bookcases, then to the left, toward the other; then it disappeared suddenly.

My brother then wrote upon two sheets of paper the results of the experiment, put these in an envelop, and sealed them. The next day, at the college, he asked his two friends if they had not forgotten their promise. They began at once, before their comrades, to relate all the details, which corresponded exactly with all my brother had written. Then he gave them the sealed envelops, which were opened, and the contents read aloud. After having read the statement concerning him, Monsieur Serboff said that at the moment of entering the drawing-room he was undecided as to which bookcase he wished to approach, for he had had the intention of opening one and taking a book out; but he lost the power of concentration and returned to himself. Feeling too tired, he could not begin the experiment again.

This experiment is most interesting, and would have been still more so if the observers had not been warned of the trial which was to be made, as in the following case:

(2) My sister Irma went to spend several days in the country, with one of our friends, while I remained with my parents. It was the first time I had been separated from my twin sister; and, as her absence was very painful to me, I decided to go and see what she was doing.

It was eleven o'clock at night, and I was in bed. Soon I saw myself in the room that she was sharing with our friend, and I perceived my sister, lying in her bed, a book in her hand, reading by the rays of a lamp with a green shade. She felt my presence, lifted her eyes, and saw me standing near the stove. When I saw that she was looking at me, I tried to hide behind the stove, for fear she might be frightened by the apparition, not being sure that she would recognize me.

The following day, I wrote her the details I have just given, and received a letter telling me that she had seen me the day before, at eleven o'clock at night, near the stove.

My sister and I have repeated this experiment several times, but it does not always succeed.

ALMA HEMMERLÉ.

My friend Colonel de Rochas, having hypnotized Mademoiselle Hæmmerlé on the occasion of a trip to Paris, thought that the experiment might perhaps succeed with him, between Sweden and France; but he saw nothing on the day and at the time agreed upon.

Hypnotists, Baron Dupotet among others, relate, however, a great number of experiments of this sort which have succeeded. Dr. Charpignon cites the following facts in his work "Physiologie, Médecine et Métaphysique du magnétisme":

On one occasion one of our somnambulists (from Orléans) wished in one of her trances to go to see her sister, who was in Blois. She knew the road, and followed it mentally.

"Why!" she cried, "where is Monsieur Jouanneau going, anyway?"

"Where are you?"

"I am at Meung, near les Mauves, and I came upon Monsieur Jouanneau, all dressed up; doubtless he's going to dine at some château."

Then she continued her trip.

Now, the person who had shown himself spontaneously to the somnambulist was a native of Meung, known by several persons present, and letters were immediately written in order to learn from him if he was really taking a walk at the time given and the place designated.

His reply confirmed minutely what had been said.

What food for thought! What psychological research lies in phenomena of such chance occurrence! This somnambulist's sight had not *leaped*, as is so often the case, to the desired spot; it had *passed over the whole distance* from Orléans to

Blois, and she had seen in this rapid journey things which might attract her attention.

To return to the experiments of Mesdemoiselles Hœmmerlé, I must add that I knew them personally, as well as their mother, and that their sincerity cannot be doubted.

We spoke, not long ago, of Colonel de Rochas's experiments. Space is lacking here to reveal even a part of these, and I can only send the reader who is curious to know them to the special works of this ingenious experimenter, and of his emulators.<sup>1</sup> It can no longer be doubted that human beings possess fluid phantasms which may, under certain conditions, become visible and tangible. The phantasm possesses powers of its own, which it may augment by taking over various elements. Is it this phantasm which, in Crookes's experiments, produced the phantom Katie King, which differed greatly from the medium Florence Cook in her height, her hair, her heart-beats?<sup>2</sup> Is it of such elements that the medium Eusapia Paladino formed the so-called John King, whose silhouette I discerned one day?<sup>3</sup> Then, too, an "etheral body" is spoken of,—different from the "astral body,"—a "mental body," a "causal body," etc.; but let us not leave the domain of the positive method. Let us admit only what has been proved. *Quod gratis affirmatur gratis negatur*. All this must be investigated, discussed, and analyzed by observation and by experience.

The facts are numerous and varied. We shall investigate a few of those that are better established.

<sup>1</sup> A. de Rochas, *L'Extériorisation de la Sensibilité* (Paris, 1895); H. Durville, *Le fantôme des vivants* (Paris, 1909); Georges de Dubor, *Les mystères de l'Hypnose* (Paris, 1920). See also G. Delanne, *Les Apparitions Matérialisées des vivants et des morts* (Paris, 1909); Leadbeater, *L'autre côté de la Mort* (Paris, 1910); A. Primot, *La psychologie d'une conversion* (Paris, 1914); the works of Reichenbach, etc.

<sup>2</sup> See *Les Forces naturelles inconnues*, p. 460.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* p. 101.

An experimental apparition was told of by the eminent professor William James, as having been produced by one of his colleagues of the celebrated Harvard University. It was published in the "Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research" of April, 1909, and in the "Annales des Sciences psychiques" of the following August. Professor Blank, then studying Buddhism, conceived the idea "of projecting his astral body" into the room of one of his friends, eight hundred meters away, and hidden by a hill; and the latter, without having been told of this in any way, saw him, looking through the half-open door. He got up and went to meet him, but found no one there.

The following experiment is, perhaps, still more particularly worthy of attention, for it was verified by several witnesses.<sup>1</sup> The narrator writes:

One Sunday evening in November, 1881, I had just read a book in which there was given evidence of the power of will. Suddenly I made a firm resolve to make every effort to appear, in person, on the second story of a house situated at 22 Hogarth Road, Kensington, in a room in which slept two persons of my acquaintance, the Misses Verity, aged twenty-five and eleven. I lived fifty kilometers away, and I had spoken of the experiment to no one, for the simple reason that the thought of it had not come to me until that Sunday night, when I was going to bed. I projected my will at one o'clock in the morning, firmly resolved to manifest my presence.

The following Thursday I went to see these ladies, and in the course of our conversation (without my having made any allusion to what I had attempted) the elder told me that on the preceding Sunday she had seen me standing near her bed, and had been greatly frightened; that the apparition advanced toward her, that she had screamed and awakened her little sister who also had seen me.

I asked her if she had been really awake at this moment, and she affirmed that she was. "At what time?" I asked.— "Toward one o'clock in the morning."

<sup>1</sup> *Phantasms of the Living*, I, 104. *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 38.

At my request this young lady wrote out her story of the occurrence and signed it.

It was the first time I had tried an experiment of this sort, and I was greatly struck by its full and complete success.

It was not my will power alone that was brought into play, for I was also conscious of a mysterious influence which flowed through my whole being, and I had the impression of making use of a power I had not been conscious of up to that time.

Miss Verity told of the occurrence in the following words:

I saw Mr. B—— distinctly, in my room, toward one o'clock in the morning. I was perfectly awake and was much terrified; my screams woke my sister, who saw the apparition also. Three days afterward, I had an opportunity to tell our friend what had happened to me. For some time I did not recover from the shock I had received, and the remembrance of it is too vivid ever to be erased from my memory.

L. S. VERITY.

The younger sister wrote in her turn:

I remember the occurrence my sister tells of. Her account is absolutely exact. I saw the apparition that she saw, clearly and under the same circumstances.

E. E. VERITY.

Still a third person gave, from her angle, similar confirmation. The two sisters had seen their friend in evening dress.

These three different bits of testimony allow us to cast no doubt upon the experiment. Moreover, a special investigation of the English Society for Psychological Research has shown its perfect authenticity.

The following experiment was published in the same collection of documents:<sup>1</sup>

Mr. H. P. Sparks and Mr. A. H. W. Cleave were both

<sup>1</sup> *Phantasms of the Living*, II, 671. *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 45.

students in the School of Naval Engineering at Portsmouth. The former writes:

For the last year I had been in the habit of hypnotizing one of my comrades. After a few trials, I perceived that the sleep grew deeper when I made long passes with my hands, after the subject was already asleep. It was then that, in this particular kind of hypnotic sleep, he believed he saw the places which interested him.

Last Friday evening (January 15, 1886) my friend expressed a desire to see a young girl who lived at Wandsworth, and to be seen by her. I hypnotized him and continued to make passes for about twenty minutes, concentrating all my will power upon his idea. When he came to, he declared that he had seen her in the dining-room, that she had seemed to him agitated, that she had gazed at him and had covered her eyes with her hands. Last Monday evening (January 18th) we began the experiment again, and this time he declared it his belief that he had terrified the young girl, for, after gazing at him, she had fallen into a sort of swoon. Her brother was then in the room.

Wednesday morning my friend received a letter from this young woman, asking if anything had happened to him; she said that on Friday night she had been seized with fear at seeing him standing in her room. She had thought this might be an imaginary vision, but the following Monday she had been still more frightened to see him again, this time more distinctly; she had even been frightened to the point of feeling almost ill.

The account that I am sending you is perfectly exact: I can prove it, for I have two witnesses who were in the dormitory at the moment when my friend was hypnotized and when he came to. The name of my subject is Arthur H. W. Cleave; he is eighteen years old. I myself am nineteen. A. C. Darley and A. S. Thurgood, our comrades, are the two witnesses of whom I have spoken.

H. PERCY SPARKS.

The authors of "Phantasms of the Living," Messrs. Gurney, Myers, and Podmore, add that Mr. Sparks and Mr. Cleave are students in the School of Naval Engineering at Portsmouth, that they know them personally, and "can tes-

tify as to their intelligence and the care with which they are capable of observing.”

All psychists have long revered the honored name of Frederic Myers (1843-1901), which we have just mentioned once more. He related elsewhere<sup>1</sup> that an experimenter wished to make an attempt of the same sort with the Reverend Stainton Moses, also well known. Here is the abridged account:

One evening last year (1878) I decided on an attempt to appear to Mr. Moses; I did not inform him in advance of my intention. I concentrated all my thoughts upon him with intensity, though I did not know where he lived. It was about midnight, and I ended by going to sleep. I had no knowledge of what might have taken place. When I saw Moses some days afterward, I asked him, “Did anything happen in your home Saturday night?” “Yes,” he answered, “something most remarkable happened. I was sitting near the fire with So-and-So, smoking and talking. Toward half-past twelve my friend rose to take his leave, and I accompanied him to the door. I then came back to the fire to finish my pipe, when I saw you seated in the chair just left vacant by the man who had gone. I gazed at you attentively, then took up a newspaper to convince myself that I was not dreaming; and when I put it down you were still there. While I was looking at you, without speaking, you disappeared gradually. I thought you must have been asleep at that hour; nevertheless, you appeared to me in your ordinary garments, just as I see you every day.”— “Capital!” I answered. “I wished to make an experiment: it succeeded. The next time I come, ask me what I want, for I had determined in my mind upon certain questions I wished to put to you; but I was waiting, probably, till you should ask me to speak.” Some weeks afterward, the experiment was repeated with the same success; this time, as well, I had not previously informed Moses. Upon this occasion he not only questioned me upon a subject which we had long discussed, but he held me back, by the influence of his will,

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1907, p. 185.

some time after I had manifested a desire to leave. As on the first occasion, I retained no memory of the occurrence upon awakening.

Mr. Moses wrote on September 27, 1885, to confirm this story. He adds that those were the only circumstances under which it was his lot to see a living person in a place where that person was not. In considering this example, we again have the impression that it is, indeed, thought which is transmitted and which produces the customary image.

Baron de Schrenck, well known among psychists, succeeded with an experiment of the same sort in Munich, in February, 1887. Walking along a street, toward midnight, before a private dwelling in which lived relatives of his, he concentrated his will power, for five minutes, upon the person of a young girl, who saw him before her, to her great surprise.

I shall bring up still one more experiment, given in the "Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research" (New York, December, 1907), and vouched for by Professor Hyslop. This experiment took place in a hotel in the city of Buffalo. It was on a Saturday night. This is what occurred:

At one o'clock on Sunday morning (the clergyman C. W. S. wrote) I awakened from a deep, dreamless sleep with the feeling that there was some one in my room. When I was thoroughly awake, I saw my wife standing at the foot of my bed. She had on a dress she wore ordinarily when, in the morning, she was busy with household duties.

I sat up and cried, "What are you doing there?" She answered, "I came to get news of you." She then advanced to the foot of the bed, leaned toward me, embraced me, and disappeared. Immediately I sprang up: the room was absolutely dark; no one was there. I lit the gas; I was trembling, and a cold sweat bathed my whole body.

The following morning, when breakfasting with Dr. K. and Mr.

P., I spoke to them of this occurrence. I was so overwhelmed, despite all the dictates of reason which I brought to bear, that I decided to send a telegram to my wife, but without daring to explain to her openly that she was my real concern. Some hours later I received her reply, "We are all well."

When I returned home, several days afterward, I was at once struck by the fact that my wife was particularly interested to know if I had slept well on Saturday night. After some questions and answers not to the point, I ended by asking her why she put these questions to me. She then confided that she was reading Hudson's "Psychical Phenomena," in which it is said that if a person, at the precise moment when he loses consciousness in falling asleep, fixes his thoughts upon another person and wishes to appear to that other person under certain conditions, the latter will experience the impressions the experimenter wishes to make him feel.

After having read this passage, she had fixed her mind upon the desire to appear to me and to embrace me.

Such is this odd experiment. The questioning of the pastor and his wife, separately interrogated, proved its exactitude.

The clergyman asked his wife not to repeat this sort of attempt on Saturday night, because it upset him for his work on Sunday.

Is there not a remarkable analogy between this woman being borne to her husband and the case we gave above,—that of Mrs. Wilmot going to see her husband during a sea voyage? These observations as to the transmission of thought and images, do not date from our epoch of psychic research, as is generally believed. Let us recall, among others, that of Wesermann, which dates back for more than a hundred years (1817). It was related that more than once he had been able to impose dreams upon distant friends, and the matter was being discussed. One day, he decided to make a lady who had been dead for more than five years appear in a dream to one of his friends. He assumed that the friend was at home, but it happened that he had made a trip to another town, with a companion unknown to Wesermann.

Though they were at the time wide awake, and engaged in conversation, the experiment succeeded none the less: the two friends saw a form resembling the lady in question enter their room noiselessly, by a door which usually creaked, make a gesture of greeting, and go out. Here is this curious story:<sup>1</sup>

A lady, dead for five years, was to appear (according to Monsieur Wesermann's desire) to Lieutenant N—. The time was set for a certain night, at half-past ten. Now, contrary to his usual habits, Monsieur N— was not at home, but at the house of a friend, Lieutenant S—. They were talking, that evening, of the French campaign when suddenly the door opened and the lady entered, dressed in white, with a black scarf, her head bare. She lifted her hand three times in a friendly greeting to S—, then, turning toward his comrade, she nodded to him and went out at the door.

This occurrence was so extremely singular,—and unbelievable,—and it seemed so extraordinary to the narrator himself, that, in order that it might be proved with certainty, he wrote to Lieutenant S—, who lived about ten kilometers away, to ask him to make a statement concerning it. The reply tallied exactly with the preceding story.

It would be difficult to maintain that Wesermann really made the dead woman appear. The only alternative, it would seem, is to admit that his will acted upon the mind of his friend, and that this influence was transmitted from his friend to the latter's neighbor. That is much simpler and more logical than to suppose that the dead woman returned. My readers have already been able to estimate psychic influence. Have we not seen a hypnotist, wishing to deceive a somnambulist who was convinced that she saw angels of heaven in her imaginary visions, show her her angels seated about a table, eating a turkey? ("L'Inconnu," page 344.)

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1891, p. 226.

In this experimental case we are concerned with suggestion, which is well known. It is produced by the will of the hypnotist, who can make his subject see everything he wishes, and make him feel all imaginable sensations,—those of drunkenness, of nausea,—cause him to mistake pure water for absinthe, make him think he is struggling with a ferocious beast, etc. In most of the cases having to do with seers there is autosuggestion. That is quite obvious. But apart from hypnotic suggestion and autosuggestion certain cases perplex us greatly when we try to find a satisfactory explanation. Such is, for example, the following. I learned of it in April, 1899, from Professor H. Cuendet of Geneva, vice-president of the Geneva Society for Psychological Research, who wrote me:

The scene took place at Begnins, in the Canton of Vaud, on a Tuesday of the month of July, 1894. We were having dinner. A member of my family asked my father, pointing to a painting in water-color hung on the wall, "Whom is that a portrait of?"

"It's of my Grandfather Oswald," he answered. "Speaking of him, I remember the following anecdote: Oswald was the violin soloist in a Paris theater. One night, when he was leaving the theater (it was in the midst of the Revolution), he was stopped by sansculottists, and was, without doubt, about to suffer the fate of numerous victims of the Terror, when, by a sudden inspiration, it occurred to him to play the 'Ca Ira' on his violin. The fanatics, who had doubtless mistaken him for some one else, realized their mistake and released him."

It was the first time my father had ever told us of these facts. None of the persons present—I no more than the others—had ever heard it spoken of. I remarked upon this at that very moment.

Wednesday, the next day, while still in Begnins, I received two letters from Geneva, one from the medium of the experimental group of which I am a member, the other from my friend P—, a teacher belonging to this same group. It is to be noted—a strange coincidence—that the medium, without being at all related to me and mine, was named Oswald, as was my dead great-grandfather. Here, in substance, is what these two letters informed me:

Three days before, on Sunday, my friends were holding, in Carouge, a little place near Geneva, a séance in which the medium had a very distinct vision of a person clothed as people were during the Revolution. He had a violin in his hand and seemed surrounded by hostile people. Suddenly, he played upon his violin, and the medium heard the tune of "Ca ira. . . Ca ira!" At that moment those who surrounded him and who showed themselves ill-disposed seemed to change their demeanor abruptly, and freed the violinist.

"Who were you when you were alive?" my friends then demanded.

"Oswald," the table answered, with rappings.

"Doubtless one of my relatives," observed the medium.

"No; a relative of Monsieur Cuendet," the table answered.

The medium Oswald, astonished, decided to write me in order to throw light on the occurrence. My friend P—— also made the same resolution. Whence the two letters in question. One may imagine my stupefaction when I received them.

I have already said that the medium was not in any way related to me or mine. Is it necessary to add that my friends in the group had never heard this story spoken of,—still less than I, who had not known it until that day? They know, moreover, nothing or almost nothing, of my family, have never had any connection with my father, and were far from supposing that I had had relatives of the name of Oswald.

Therefore, *two days before me* they had had through the medium, whose astonishment equaled theirs, a communication of a fact that had remained buried in my father's memory for long years, a fact—I cannot repeat this too often—unknown to them as it was to the medium and to myself.

Given these conditions, an explanation through telepathy would seem to me extremely difficult to concede as true.

H. CUENDET.

(Letter 603.)

Since I knew of cases of unconscious telepathic communication between the living, for example that of Dr. Nicolas of Corfu (Volume I, page 153), I wrote to Monsieur Cuendet for a special investigation. Here is his reply:

The medium had never gone to Begnins, in the Canton of Vaud.

He had, therefore, never seen this portrait, the only one of my great-grandfather that we possess.

While on this subject, I must add that several weeks after the letter he had sent me, the medium came for the first time to pay us a visit at Begnins, where we are spending our summer vacation; I then had the curiosity to put him before the previously mentioned portrait, without any warning.

"Why," he said, "that's the person I saw, with a violin in his hand!"

What are we to conclude? As we remarked above, there is in this case neither hypnotic suggestion nor normal auto-suggestion. The direct interpretation would be that the dead Oswald, living at the time of the Revolution, really manifested himself. But it would be unwise to be so easily contented with this solution. We still have comparative investigations to make. Have we not good reason to think that the whole of human psychology is, as yet, unknown?

Is it not possible that Monsieur Cuendet's father should have thought of the story of his grandfather for several days, and that his thoughts radiated far enough about him to reach the medium? A daring hypothesis, certainly, but not one to be rejected on principle. We have examples of images projected by thought which would seem to justify it. *We are living in the midst of a psychic atmosphere unknown to us.*

I am sometimes accused (above all, by certain spiritualists with preconceived convictions) of being over-exacting in my interpretations, of not easily affirming the influence of spirits.

But I ask people not to lose sight of this: the aim of our metaphysical researches is the attempt to apply to these facts, still so mysterious, the principles of the experimental method,—severe principles that allow of no evasions. If the science of astronomy is the most exact and the most positive of all human realms of knowledge, this is due to the precision

of its methods of reasoning, which have had, too, so beneficent an influence on those sciences with which astronomy has come in contact, such as optics, physics, the making of instruments of nice construction, etc. One acquires the habit of being satisfied only with that which has been verified, and of applying a mathematical rigor to all researches. A mathematician, an astronomer, a physicist, a chemist must, above all, reason truly, precisely, like a calculating-machine which never deviates from the basic fact that two and two make four. It becomes a mental habit, and we must try not to abandon this rule of conduct to which the sciences founded upon observation owe their value and their progress. It is, indisputably, this method of reasoning alone which may establish the psychic sciences, until now so vague and uncertain, upon a solid, unshakable foundation. But its application is not always easy. At any rate, let us always be fair, impartial, and conscientious.

Phantasms of the living, apparitions of the dying—and even of the dead—were considered by Schopenhauer to be a sort of projection of the will. Let us listen to him for a moment on this subject. He writes<sup>1</sup>:

It is enough for a person to think of us with strength and intensity to conjure up in our brains a vision of his form, not only through imagination, simply, but in such wise that this vision presents itself to us as a corporeal image, that we should not know how to distinguish from reality. The dying, in particular, manifest this power, and appear in consequence, at the hour of death, to their absent friends,—to several at once, and in different places. The cases have been so often affirmed and attested in various quarters that I consider them certain beyond a doubt.

He cites a great many examples. For him, phantasms are always subjective images produced in the minds of those who see them, but have no real existence. He does not admit that

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires sur les Sciences occultes* (Paris, 1912), p. 249.

the soul is a substance which may detach itself from the body during life, or after death. "It is imperative," he says, "that spiritualism be replaced by idealism."

It seems to me that in this case Schopenhauer was mistaken.

I have just skimmed through the work of Iung-Stilling, the pages of which he cites. This psychist was a professor at the University of Heidelberg and Marburg and Aulic Councillor to the Grand Duke of Baden. In it there are, indeed, curious accounts of apparitions, but also much dreaming and error. One can see that he did not understand astronomy, and that he believed the earth to be motionless in the center of the universe!

Schopenhauer here seems to have been determined not to admit an *objective* external reality, while admitting with certainty a subjective reality, but the examples that he gives show him to be entirely in the wrong. Thus, he tells of the occurrence related by Dupotet in his "*Traité complet de magnétisme animal*" (1856, page 561). When we open this work we read in it of the visit, made in a dream, by Mr. Wilson of Toronto, who showed himself as a phantasm in a house of the town of Hamilton, was received there by a manservant, asked for a glass of water, and told the *valet de chambre* to express to the lady of the house his regrets at not having seen her. That was on May 19, 1854. Ten days afterward he went into this house, *where the servants recognized him*.

As another example he cites the case of a writer for the "Telegraph" who, in Ausonia, received a visit from a Mr. Bailey of Philadelphia; the latter vanished after having spoken this sentence to him: "A thick cloud has spread itself over the terrestrial destinies of mankind." The next day, he met this same man in a railway carriage; he conversed with him, and his interlocutor ended his talk with these words: "A thick cloud has spread itself over the terrestrial destinies

of mankind.” In most cases, the apparition gives a complete impression of being real, of flesh and blood, even to several persons at once, and not to the person of whom the visitant might have been thinking; since, in the case of the visit to the lady of Hamilton the servants saw it, not the absent mistress of the house. The problem is more complex than supposed by Schopenhauer (who, it may be said in passing, strongly denied that he was a German, declaring that nationality “despicable to the last degree”).

But let us draw conclusions from this chapter on *phantasms of the living*.

This accumulation of testimony, which I might augment considerably with a series of like documents<sup>1</sup> actually before my eyes, leads us to admit two kinds of phantasms, (1) those due to projections of thought acting upon the brains of percipients who are more or less in harmony with these projections; (2) those which are exterior, real, objective. The human being may have a duplicate form analogous to the ordinary one; this form may detach itself from the body, take on a certain consistency, become visible, even tangible, may speak, may produce mechanical effects.

In order to deny this logical conclusion, we should have to admit that all the observed cases are false, are either lies or subjective hallucinations without reality, which would seem manifestly impossible.

It may be answered that the conclusion we put forward is still more inadmissible by its strangeness, and that in any case, since these phenomena are very rare, they throw no new light upon our knowledge of how a human being is constituted.

But, on the contrary, it is precisely the anomalies which reveal unknown realities, as do irregularities in the motions of heavenly bodies in astronomical science.

But what can these *phantasms* be?

<sup>1</sup> See, among others, Saint Augustin, *Cité de Dieu*, XVIII, 18.

I repeat that, so far as I am concerned, what puzzles me most is the fact that they are clothed.

If we admit that there are three elements in a human being,—the material body which every one knows, the soul or thinking spirit, bound up with a subtle intermediate body, as Egyptian theology formerly acknowledged,—it would seem that this subtle, ethereal body (spiritual, to use St. Paul's expression), a kind of soul-substance, should have no form, or else, if the conditions of organic terrestrial life imposed one upon it, this form should be that of the human body, of the nude body, man or woman.

What prevents this? What clothes them? Decency?

No. In nature, as in truth, there is neither shame nor indecency. These are conventional sentiments that are absolutely artificial.

A fluid phantasm of a human being, an ethereal or astral body, with a blue blouse, a hat or a cap, a burnoose, a straight skirt or a crinoline, according to the fashion, yellow or green gloves, a cane or an umbrella, is grotesque and incomprehensible.

It will be said that this is to insure recognition. But is not the face enough? Moreover, should not an astral body be vague, showing simply the general form of the body, without details?

The fact of the garments alone might lead us to reject the real existence of these phenomena and to think that these apparitions, these specters, exist only in the minds of observers.

This interpretation, however, presents great difficulties. In the cases which have just been related, for example, we should have to assume that the forty-two pupils of Mademoiselle Sagée's school were the victims of an hallucination, or that the narrator told us an untrue story; that all Miss Clary's family had imperfect eyesight; that the two maid-servants who saw Miss Jackson's double warming itself at

the kitchen stove were the dupes of an illusion, despite the conclusive investigation made by Dr. Wyld; that Mr. Wilson did not speak, nor Mr. Bailey, nor the clergyman's wife, nor Madame Kruby's Dr. B——; that Mrs. Wilmot was not seen by her husband's companion in the cabin of the ship; that the experiments of Crookes, auscultating the phantom Katie King, so tangible and so feminine, were farcical, etc. In a word, we should have to *reject all these observations* because we do not understand them. Those are not our principles.

Perhaps the series of facts that we have to examine will enlighten us. Let us not despair; let us amass our observations, let us compare, analyze, investigate.

In any case, the testimony seems to me sufficient to affirm the reality of the existence of phantasms.

But let us acknowledge that there yet remain many mysteries to be cleared up. The violinist of 1793 is merely a forerunner of them.

A certain number of philosophic and religious systems, since the time of the Rosicrucians, the theophilanthropists, the Swedenborgians of the eighteenth century, up to the theosophists of the twentieth, present teachings as to the astral body, the mental body, the fluid body, and apparitions that are in harmony with our present deductions. Our deductions will teach nothing to the followers of these religions; they will understand that the aim of this work is the establishing of proofs that are experimental, scientific, positive, beyond refutation; upon them the religion of the future will be founded, instead of upon revelations declared contrary to reason, upon words, upon metaphysical reasoning. It seems to me that if one of the mummies lying in the Egyptian sarcophagi of the museum of the Louvre should return to life to-day and read this chapter, it would find nothing new here.

Our conclusions may be summarized thus: apart from thought-forms, subjective phantasms, all those who have given themselves the trouble of studying the question have

experimentally proved the existence of real, objective phantasms. In the case of the first there is thought-transmission, the transference of mental vibrations by the action of the will. In the case of the second there is activity in the realm of the material. In the present state of science any definitive explanation is impossible.

Whatever the explanation may be in the future, these investigations teach us, above all, a very evident truth,—that there are still many things to be learned, that science is not a finished book, that we are extremely ignorant, and that the nature of human beings, of life, of death, remains for us an interesting mystery to be fathomed.

For the moment, we divine that thought generates images projected to a distance. We shall prove it by our positive method, and the observations given will put us on the road to apparitions of the dying and the dead.

### III

#### THOUGHT AS A GENERATOR OF IMAGES PROJECTED TO A DISTANCE

The word *supernatural* applied to  
a fact is an absurdity.

ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE.

**P**HANTASMS of the living have shown us images produced by thought; we shall have numerous examples of this fact in manifestations of the dying and the dead.

Round and about death, various unexplained happenings take place, an attentive study of which will bring us gradually to a knowledge of what exists after death. Such are, among others, apparitions of the living and the dead dressed as when one knew them, whose looks, demeanor, and clothing present veritable enigmas. We shall not put these observations in the class of manifestations that take place after death, although a discussion of them would indubitably seem to lead us to that classification; we shall investigate them in complete freedom and try to understand them.

The soul is a substance, a reality, like an atom of oxygen, of nitrogen, of iron, of radium, but without extent in space: a subtle entity beyond our conceptions of material measurements of weight; a psychic atom, a thinking atom, an energy-atom.

It is joined to the body by a fluid organism, certain manifestations of which we have just seen in the phantasms investigated in the preceding chapter; other aspects of it will soon present themselves for examination.

Your body is not your absolute ego. Your spirit is the force which moves it, through an invisible organism, one

totally distinct from the body, endowed with special senses,—sight, hearing, touch, *and others*,—of a psychic order.

Every thought acts with more or less intensity, virtually as an agent that is called “material” acts,—as a projectile, a stone, a bit of metal,—and may project itself afar. If a man thinks of a murder, he emits into the air a murder-element.

A telepathic apparition of some one living or dead may have an objective and real origin. It may also be subjective, in the mind that perceives it, and in the being whence it emanates, which would explain the existence of garments. Let us investigate.

Certain apparitions seem, very often, to be projections of a sort, animated telephotographs, cinematographic pictures. A human being, such as he is, or such as he conceives himself to be, projects his image to a distance, with his clothing. It is autoprojection.

A thought, an image, an impression, an emotion, existing in the mind of a person, may wake a similar impression in the mind of another person. This fact, proved to-day, certainly lessens the difficulty as to the clothing and the accessories of “spirits,” since it is natural that a mental impression should depict a person under his habitual aspect. The observed apparitions and manifestations correspond to something objective and real, as the image reflected in a mirror corresponds to reality and shows its true aspect. But the problem presents a question complex enough.

Our thoughts act materially and carry with them a kind of effluvium. They may stamp themselves upon an object, upon a sheet of paper. One day, at the Salpêtrière Hospital, in 1889, I made some experiments, together with Charcot. He asked me to take up a pack of white cards, to choose one of them, to imagine that my portrait was upon it, and to show this portrait to a certain nervous invalid. I then made upon the back of the card a mark that the hypnotized woman did not see, I shuffled the cards, and held them before her with-

out turning them around, and asked her to try to find my portrait upon them.

She succeeded at once; this struck me as amazing enough.

And she wished to take this white card to her room, and keep it as a souvenir, positively seeing my portrait upon it.

The hypnotist was there, it is true. But, after all, the authenticity of the hallucination was incontestable.

Even though we are sure that it is impossible for us to explain everything, we are always seeking to learn. My friend Colonel A. de Rochas wrote me in February, 1904, that in hypnotizing two young girls of Voiron he had noted that one of them was able to exteriorize her phantasm at will, and that both girls saw it, this phantasm assuming the aspect that the young girl wished to give it. This point, he remarked, is very important, for it would indicate that these forms are in the mind, the thoughts, the memory of the medium producing them. Oliver Lodge has already suggested that "garments appear because they are imagined." (Speech of January 31, 1902, to the Society for Psychical Research.)

It is not to be doubted that thought produces images and gives birth to apparitions.

From among the curious facts which my readers have already weighed I shall repeat this one, taken from a letter which was sent me from the Bouches-du-Rhône, in 1899 (Letter 715, "L'Inconnu," page 185):

On May 31, 1895, my eldest son, a volunteer with the First Hussars, at Valence, was taking part in field manœuvres. Being at the head of the advance-guard, he was walking his horse, making observations of the country occupied by the assumed enemy, when suddenly, from an ambushade, a bullet struck my unhappy son full in the chest. Death came with almost lightning swiftness.

The man who had involuntarily caused this fatal accident, seeing his comrade drop the reins and topple over upon the neck and shoulders of his horse, hurried toward him to hold him up, and was

able to catch the last words that the dying man breathed out in a sigh: "You 've hurt me badly—but I forgive you. For God and country always—present!" Then he died.

Now, this same day, May 31, 1895, about half-past nine in the morning, while my wife was at home, busy with household duties, our little daughter, then aged two and a half, went up to her mother and said in her childish speech:

"Mamma, look at Godfather [my eldest son was his sister's godfather]; look, Mamma, look at Godfather. I'm having fun with him."

"Yes, darling, have your fun," her mother answered, attaching no importance to the child's words.

But the little girl, in the face of her mother's indifference, redoubled her insistence, and added: "But, Mamma, come and see Godfather. *Look at him, he's there.* Oh, how nicely he's dressed!"

My wife noted that in speaking to her in this way the child was as though transfigured. She was affected by it at first, but soon forgot this little scene, which had lasted only a few minutes, and it was not until two or three days afterward that she recalled all the details.

Shortly before noon we received a telegram telling us of the terrible accident that had happened to our beloved son, and I found out later that this incident had occurred toward eight o'clock.

ROUGÉ,

Villa des Tilleuls, Salon, Bouches-du-Rhône.

This vision of the child is not the least interesting vision; it would be difficult to apply to it the so-called explanation of hallucination on the part of a percipient, and the phantom's uniform, as well as the coincidence with the death, are so many guaranties of the reality of the phenomenon.

I can see scarcely any possible explanation of the facts other than this:

When dying, the young man must have seen his home again, and the child, and this thought reached her. The little girl saw her godfather, just as he was, in his military uniform. It was not the child's spirit which was borne afar, as in

certain cases, for she would have seen the accident; it was the dying man's thought which struck the child.

This is an example of thought as a generator of images: in this case the phantom's garments should not surprise us.

Such a direct projection seems to me more probable than a series of circular waves reaching every brain.

It is the same in the case of which we are about to read. This concerns the apparition of a dying person, its authenticity equally indisputable, told of by Metzger in his book "*Essai de spiritisme scientifique*."

A physician (Dr. Rowland Bowstead of Caistor) tells of the following personal experience:

I was playing cricket. A ball which I should have caught rolled over to a low hedge. I ran toward it, with a comrade. When I had drawn near the hedge I saw on the other side of it my brother-in-law, to whom I was greatly attached. He was dressed in hunting-costume, and carried a gun on his arm. He smiled and waved to me. I told my comrade to look at the apparition, but he saw nothing, and when I wished to fix my gaze upon it again it had disappeared. Greatly depressed, I went up to my uncle's home and told him what I had just seen. He pulled out his watch: it was ten minutes past one.

Two days afterward I got a letter from my father, telling me of the death of my brother-in-law, which had occurred at precisely that time. His death came about in a curious way. The morning of that very day, since he was feeling fairly well, after an illness, he had declared that he was able to go hunting. Then, having taken up his gun, he had turned toward my father and had asked him if he had sent for me. My father having answered in the negative, he had flown into a rage, and had said that he would see me, in spite of everything. Suddenly he fell down as though struck by lightning, a blood-vessel in his lungs having burst. He was wearing at that time a hunting-costume and had a gun on his arm, exactly as in the apparition that had startled me.

Why this apparition, and how explain it, in this costume, with this hunting outfit, a gun on its arm?

There is here a whole series of questions. Our adversaries will answer them by saying that the story is not true, that there was, in this case, only an hallucination. This is simple enough. But it is no solution. The *facts* we have; the real, complete explanation remains to be found.

We may seek it.

It was during an argument concerning his brother-in-law that this man, leaving for the hunt, suffered a congestion. He was, then, thinking of him. We may suppose that an ether-wave, leaving his brain, struck upon that of his brother-in-law. We would have rejected this idea scornfully fifty years ago: wireless telegraphy justifies it to-day. And even if it were not justified, our duty is not to deny facts.

Was this an apparition of the astral body? No. Let us not seek so far afield. This case is the same as the preceding one. The hunter's image was borne to the percipient's brain, just as the godfather's image, told of a moment ago, was borne to his little goddaughter.

Another example, also especially remarkable, is that of a drowned man appearing to his brother, with soaked garments, at the moment of drowning:

Commandant Mennelshisch was talking, in his room, with another officer, when he saw his brother Georges enter and sit down, with his clothes running water. He was at sea, and his ship was sinking at that very time.

These apparitions are projections emanating from the soul of the dying. They assume the forms taken by the dominating idea of the person who appears. The last thought of the drowned man was of his brother. He appeared clothed in wet garments because his garments must have hampered his efforts and have impressed upon him the idea of the hindrance he felt. There was no trace of moisture on the spot in which he had been, though they had seen water running from his clothes.

We have, then, in this case, too, an image projected to a distance, like a photograph transported by an unknown force. If photography had not been invented, or the telegraph, or electric transmission, we should understand nothing of this. But, for all that, these facts would none the less exist.

These transmissions of images are more numerous than one thinks, very varied and often complex. Here is one of the most curious examples, an account of which was sent to me very recently by the observer himself.

A man who believed himself at the point of death (who believed himself dead, even) appeared at a distance, made his position known, and transmitted his thoughts. This personal observation, absolutely authentic, was made by the narrator himself, who was sufficiently versed in psychic studies to appreciate their value. In thanking him for this communication, I take pleasure in acknowledging also a debt of gratitude to my erudite friend Monsieur R. de Maratry, to whom I owe my knowledge of the document, received from London on September 19, 1920. We shall examine it with a very particular interest.

For a certain number of years I have been at the head of a group of young men, most of whom regarded me a little as a relative, a guardian, on account of the interest I had always taken in them as well as in their families. Several of them made the supreme sacrifice during the war, and I have been the intermediary for several in bearing messages of consolation to their bereaved parents.

On July 12, 1918, I was with a friend, a Miss X——, in her drawing-room, and we were talking of indifferent things, when she said to me suddenly: "It seems to me that one of your young men wishes to communicate with you. He is a tall fellow, dark, in khaki; his shoulder is turned toward me, so that I can see the letters 'R. E.' on it, very distinctly."

I remarked that I knew only one young man corresponding to

this description, belonging to the corps of Royal Engineers, named W. M——, and that I did not believe him dead.

Miss X—— answered, smiling, "He says it is really he, but (he is smiling) he thought you would call him by the nickname by which he was known to those near to him."

I answered at once, "Why, Father [such was the nickname], it's news to me, indeed, to learn that you are dead!"

Then he related that he had been buried alive in his underground shelter by the caving in caused by a German shell, and that he was still there; my interlocutor, a seer, a sensitive, a medium, told of the suffering she herself experienced, similar to that felt by the young soldier. She asked him for what reasons he had manifested himself to them.

"It was," he answered, "because in fainting away it seemed to me that my brother Jock would soon rejoin me. He is leading a dissipated life in Egypt, and you are the only person," he added, addressing himself to me, "whose advice, given without delay, might save him from this dangerous life."

I promised to consider this wish favorably, although I imagined there would be great difficulty in tracing Jock, for I did not know the address of his family.

"Has n't he also a request to make concerning his other brother, Duncan?"

"No," W. M—— said; "Duncan is not in danger, and will come back home safe and sound."

I promised once more to carry out the wish of the dear young soldier, and, having commended his soul to God, I said good-bye to him.

I immediately sought a means of entering into relations with young Jock. The most certain seemed to be to write to the daughter of the head of our gymnasium, who knew most of my young men and their families. I demanded that she help me in my search. Three days afterward I got a reply from her, expressing her regrets: she had tried in every quarter to trace the family in question, but without success.

Now, the next mail brought me a second letter, informing me that a moment after sending me the preceding message she had met

a school friend, who had confided her anxiety: she had received no news of her fiancé, in Egypt. "Who is your fiancé?" she demanded.—"What! Don't you remember Mr. Jock M——?"

That was precisely the young man whose address I was seeking.

Was this a chance coincidence, or may it not have been an intervention on the part of friends in the Beyond, who were witnesses of my difficulties?

After this odd occurrence I was able to obtain Jock's address, and I wrote him an affectionate letter, informing him of his brother's anxiety, and beseeching him to tell me if it were well founded, and if he did not think that, for the salvation of his soul, he would do well to change his mode of life.

During Christmas week of the same year I received, in my office, a business visit from Jock and his younger brother, Duncan. By another coincidence, not less singular than the first, they had met in the street in which their mother was living, one coming from France, the other from Palestine; each arriving at a different station and both in haste to reach their home in London.

Jock told me that my letter had reached him at a most critical moment, when, sickened by all the perversity of the life in Cairo, in which he was participating, he was hesitating between two alternatives,—either to put an end to his useless life, or to ask to leave for the front, with the armies in Palestine. My letter had made him reflect; he remembered our old relationship, and this memory saved him! That same day it was proposed to him that he drive the general's automobile in Palestine, for he was well known as a particularly skilful chauffeur.

"But," Jock added, "our brother Will is still alive. Yesterday our mother received a letter from him. I cannot understand how he could have sent you such a message. I believe in communication with the dead, but how was it possible that a psychic manifestation by a living person could take place, such as that you witnessed?"

"Your brother was certainly not dead," I answered, "but he was menaced by death, and the fact that he implored my aid for you in such circumstances is sufficient proof in itself."

And on that memorable night, at the precise moment at which he manifested himself, he was in a trench, and had seen most of his comrades blown up by the enemy's fire as the Germans discovered

their whereabouts more and more fully, and he was waiting, from second to second, until the last shells fired at their dugouts should reach him, in his turn.

He remembered perfectly that he had, at that moment, thought of all his family, of those he loved, of his home, and especially of his two soldier brothers, rejoicing in a belief that they might be spared, though he himself died. Now, at that very moment, the English artillery had sighted the enemy's battery, had blown it up, and my young friend had been saved.

The other brother, Duncan, as to whom there was no anxiety, was killed three weeks after his visit to my office, when he was bearing important messages, as a liaison officer, through a zone violently raked by enemy fire.

BERNARD H. SPRINGETT,  
14 Earl's Court Square, London.

(Letter 4271.)

There are, in this account, several extremely striking facts:

1 The appearance of a living man, who believed himself at the point of death, a soldier on the English front in France, to a seer, a sensitive, a medium (whatever the word be). *Thought as the generator of an image.*

2 The fact that this soldier communicated with a friend, a guardian, whom he requested to watch over his brother, then in Egypt.

3 A combination of circumstances allowing the guardian to find the address of this brother.

4 This brother being sent to Palestine at the predestined time, as though psychic influences had guided events.

5 The hero of the apparition not being killed, as he had feared: the apparition of a living man.

6 The prevision that the third brother would return safe and sound to the paternal home, and the absence of any prevision that he would then be killed in the war.

Would it not seem that we have here the feeling, as in other cases, that the invisible world acts, at times, on the visible world, and also that we do not know everything?

Duncan did, indeed, return home; but he was killed afterward.

It is certain that when a man known for his intelligence, his learning, his sureness of judgment, and his sincerity, tells us of an observation which he himself has made, this testimony warrants our conviction. If an astronomer sees an aërolite leave the vicinity of Vega, pass toward Arcturus, and there become extinguished, if he has determined its course on the dome of heaven, he will not allow his observations to be doubted on the pretext that he alone made them. Since Mr. Springett's account, that we have just read, bears in itself all the marks of veracity, I might well have wished no confirmation of it. Nevertheless I have always taken care to reënforce my own personal convictions by the proper investigation, and I must say that, with very rare exceptions, the exactness of the narrations I have received has always been confirmed.

In the preceding case it seemed to me that it would be helpful to obtain an independent personal account from the individuals connected with these psychic observations. The words "Miss X—," "W. M—," "Jock M—," "Duncan M—" hardly satisfy us. I therefore asked the writer to be good enough (1) to give me the full names on condition of not making them public, if the family preferred it; (2) to ask Miss X— to send me, herself, a separate account, according to her own recollections. My request was graciously received and acted upon. On October 29, 1920, Mr. Bernard Springett sent me all the names and pertinent documents and Miss X— a narration signed by herself, Julia Smith, Cyprus House, Havre des Pas, Jersey, where she was then living, without asking me to conceal her name. Though told in very different terms from those of Mr. Springett, her description of the scene was identical. The young soldier William M— (his family, which is Scotch, would not wish to see his name made public)

—this young soldier believed himself dead. Here are the medium's phrases, word for word: "I asked, '*Have you passed over?*' The answer was 'Yes.'—'How?' I asked. —'I was buried by earth falling on me.'"

Thus he believed himself dead, entombed by the caving in of the trench.

We feel, from Mr. Springett's comments, that we are here concerned with facts religiously observed and scrupulously garnered by austere Christians. He concluded:

I am a humble believer in the divine authority which, in these last years, has allowed us to communicate with those who have passed into the Beyond—clearly, to the end that they may attain perfection.

(Letter 4292.)

It is not to be doubted that the soldier who believed himself dead, but who was not, and who is now living, thought of his spiritual guardian, Mr. Springett; nor is it to be doubted that this thought conjured up for the seer a visible image. Nevertheless there is not, in this case, a *phantasm* like those we studied in the preceding chapter, there is a different thing,—a thought that gave rise to an image projected to a distance.

The following case of image-projection may be compared to it. As in the case of the experience of which we have just read, we are concerned with apparitions seen in a state of wakefulness, and not in dreams:

One morning, some months ago, when I was in bed, wide awake, my eyes turned toward a mirror near me. In one of its panels I saw, very distinctly, the head and features of a person whom I had known very well some years before,—a most friendly relationship which had been broken off in consequence of calamitous circumstances.

This person had left Geneva for her own distant country, and I had never had any news of her.

When I saw her in the mirror, looking at me fixedly, I felt, though frightened, a certain happiness; I sat up in bed, talking to her, asking her if it were really she. Her features, rather hard, softened, her eyelids fluttered with pleasure, and a peaceful smile appeared on her lips.

I kept on looking at her, but the vision vanished. Some days afterward, I learned that this person had died at that precise date.

MADAME ANTOINE HORNING,  
Geneva.

(Letter 611.)

According to this account, the vision lasted long enough to make the hypothesis of an hallucination very improbable. We may guess that at the moment of death a thought was irradiated with intensity, and projected its image to a distance.

I have already told of the following apparition of a mother to her son, from Bologna to Modena, while her other son was with her in Bologna:

At the age of twenty I was studying in Bologna, while my brother had just entered the military academy in Modena.

One evening, before going to bed, my mother complained of a slight indisposition and showed herself rather uneasy as to her absent son. But, being above all good, sweet, and resigned, she withdrew quietly into her room, after kissing me tenderly as usual. Our bedrooms were communicating. I spent a part of the night on a difficult piece of work, and only toward morning did I succeed in dozing off.

Abruptly, I was awakened by the sound of a voice, and, opening my eyes, I was struck to see, in my room, my own brother, pale, his face agitated. "Mother," he murmured; "how is she? At ten minutes past twelve I saw her distinctly at the foot of my bed in Modena; she smiled at me; with one hand she pointed to the sky, and with the other she blessed me. Then she disappeared. I assure you, Mother is dead!"

I hurried into the hallowed room of our mother; she was, indeed,

dead, a smile on her lips. Later the doctor told us that she must have ceased to live at about midnight.

E. ASINELLI.

(Letter 443.)

We have here a very curious experience: the mother appearing to her distant son, and the son communicating with his brother, near the dead woman. This brother in Modena was suffering greatly from the separation, and was in continuous mental communication with her. It is possible, but not probable, that he was borne as a phantasm toward his brother, and spoke to him: we must suppose, rather, that he acted telepathically upon the brain of his brother, who believed he saw him and heard him:—the transmission of sensations.

We ascertain in this case, once more, the fact that *distance does not exist* in telepathy: space and time disappear so far as our sensations are concerned.

“Phantasms” are certainly, at times, thought-productions projected to a distance.

We do not suspect the extent of our incarnate spirits’ sphere of action. Recently I was looking over the works of the ancient hypnotists, and I noted an odd example of transmission to a distance, that we might call “Telepathy in 1822, in a Hypnotic Sensation of Odor.” I found it among the observations of Deleuze, librarian of the Paris Museum of Natural History, and one of the masters of hypnotism at that time. He hypnotized a very sensitive subject, a young girl, who lived near the Théâtre Français (he himself lived on the rue Royale, near the Place de la Concord). Here is the account which he gave of observations made on September 9, 1822:

At half-past nine in the evening, as I was making a final draft of my latest interview with this somnambulist, I smelled, several times, puffs of the odor of a vulnerary. Since my wife and my daughter, who at this season are usually in the country, were by an

unusual circumstance in Paris that very day, I went to see if an accident had happened to either one of them,—one that would have necessitated the use of the vulnerary. I found them very calm, and did not remark this odor where they were. I went back to my office; I experienced the same sensation. My maid-servant entered the room at this moment; nothing had happened to her, either, and she did not even notice that there was an odor of any sort in my room. I then said to her, "I'm sure an accident has happened to one of my somnambulists, and that she is using a vulnerary."

The next day he went to verify this; it was the exact truth.

My readers will remember, perhaps, that I have related an experience of the same sort in "L'Inconnu" (page 113). We may learn by comparing facts. Here it is:

Day before yesterday in my home, we were talking of your learned investigations. A person absolutely worthy of confidence told us that when she had been with her mother in her last moments she had, almost at the very instant of her death, sprinkled a great quantity of eau de Cologne about the dying woman. At that same time the sister of the narrator, more than thirty leagues away, had the feeling that her mother was certainly dead, and she remarked an odor of eau de Cologne very distinctly, though no flask of this liquid was within her reach. This lady knew that her mother was very ill.

OCTAVE MARALS,

Former president of the Barristers' Association of Rouen.

A most painstaking observer, Madame Laboissière, sent me, on November 28, 1920, from the Department of Loir-et-Cher, certain noteworthy psychic documents, from which the following may be selected for this chapter:

I have always remembered—without, however, attaching any importance to it—a bizarre incident having to do with my poor son, killed in the beginning of the war, at the age of twenty, whose

<sup>1</sup> *Entretiens sur le Magnétisme animal* (Paris, 1823), p. 189.

death was announced to me by the sounds of which I have told you. In his childhood, when he was at school, he had, during a play-hour, fallen on his wrist and hurt himself slightly. I was then in a field, two or three kilometers away: from three o'clock until four, I noticed an intense odor of camphorated brandy, that they had put on his little wound. How can that have happened? Had he thought of me?

(Letter 4332.)

One might see in this only chance. Would this explanation suffice?

I know of only a small number of these observations as to the transmission of odors. Here is another, complicated by telepathic projection.

Monsieur Agniel, a member of the Morocco branch of the Astronomical Society of France, in sending me his observations as to the partial eclipse of the sun of November 10, 1920, wrote me, on that date, from Rabat:

Nineteen years ago it was the reading of "L'Inconnu" that completely changed my existence. From the materialist I was, I became a sincere propagator of the spiritualistic ideas which I have sought to fathom.

Allow me to report my own testimony touching upon the manifestations of our being acting at a distance. The facts concern me personally.

I have a sister of a most impressionable nature who lives in Nîmes. In 1906 I went to pay her a visit. I was then residing in Nice. I had taken an express that left toward midnight. My sister greatly loves orange-blossoms, and Nice, as you know, is the center of the region where this tree of the golden fruit flourishes. So I had gathered for her a flowery sheaf which I had put in the luggage-rack opposite me. Its penetrating perfume kept me awake.

Having neglected to inform my sister, in advance, of my trip, I tried to make amends for my forgetfulness through telepathic channels. Alone in my compartment, I tried an experiment while the train was rushing along at full speed between Golfe-Juan and Cannes. Concentrating my thoughts on the flowers and then closing

my eyes, I sent myself, mentally, into my sister's room in Nîmes, and spoke to her thus: "I am arriving. I am coming to see you and to bring you the flowers you love." I imagined myself at the foot of her bed, showing her my bunch of flowers, of which I formed a mental image.

At ten o'clock in the morning I got off the train, and at once I hurried to my sister.

"It's very odd," she told me, when she had kissed me. "I dreamed last night that you were coming, and that you were bringing me orange-blossoms!"

"Capital!" I answered. "Here I am,—and there are the orange-blossoms."

I have often enough renewed this experiment with success, save once, when my sister had not gone to sleep at the time when I was experimenting.

I may add that this phenomenon of thought-transference is usual enough, and serves as mental employment in the theosophic world. (Letter 4310.)

Our colleague's sister could, of course, upon her brother's arrival, perceive the odor of orange-blossoms. The dream was no less authentic on this account.

Among these rare transmissions let us note the following: Monsieur Célestin Brémont, in Lyons, was separated from a medium, a woman with whom he had made experiments, by a distance of three hundred kilometers. He got a letter from her, telling him this:

I was with you, taking care of a dog with sore ears; I was giving him injections of a liquid I had prepared by boiling oak-bark mixed with walnut leaves; then I sprinkled the wounds with powdered gentian roots. Since I am afraid that some of you may be ill, will you please answer as soon as possible, to reassure us all, for, understanding nothing of this dream, we are uneasy.

Monsieur Brémont said:

No one of my little family was ill. On the contrary, we were all in splendid health; but this was not true of a dog, abandoned

by his owners, that we had taken in. This animal had canker of the ears, from the inside of which was discharged an abundant, intermittent flow. Nevertheless, having taken the creature in, I did not wish, like his first master, to abandon him again to the unhappy lot of a stray, and I had resolved to try in every way to cure him. At that moment the idea came to me to write to this medium, whose special faculties find employment, above all, in healing the sick; still, I did not act on this plan at once. So I was greatly surprised when, two days afterward, I received the account of the aforementioned dream. *My thoughts had carried to a distance*, and, what is even more curious, the medium had seen with perfect accuracy, for, by applying the remedies indicated, I succeeded after some days in curing my dog. Such are the facts, in all simplicity.<sup>1</sup>

The hypothesis of chance is, indeed, improbable.

May thought, imagination, fear, apprehension, *develop latent microbes* and bring on death by hydrophobia previously acquired? No, an anatomist would answer. Yet we may read in a book by Léon Daudet ("Le Monde des images," page 196) of the following observations which he declared he had from his friend Dr. Vivier:

A peasant was going, with his brother, to the ship which was to take the latter to America. On the dock a mad dog bit the two men. The first, the one who remained and who knew the dog was mad, died six weeks afterward in terrible suffering. Upon the doctor's advice, the family hid the cause of this death from the emigrant, who came back two years afterward, full of health and courage. When he disembarked he learned the true reason for the death of his brother,—and he died of hydrophobia six weeks afterward! Such are, with some, the organic effects of apprehension.

Another problem: can one hear a voice seven kilometers off? Certainly not. Now, the authors of "Phantasms of the Living" vouch for the following story:

October 17, 1883.

A young girl, a friend of my wife, lived with us in Australia, in the brush. She had been out horseback-riding for several hours

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, April, 1906, p. 318.

(to the town where the post-office was, about twelve kilometers away). All of us—my wife and I who were at home, a man-servant, a maid-servant, and my adopted son, a young boy—heard this young person calling and crying out, "Oh, Johnnie Johnnie!" It was my boy's name; he was the pretty horseback-rider's constant companion. All of us went out of doors at the same time, but we heard and saw nothing. An hour afterward, when she came back, she told us that in a certain spot about seven kilometers away she had had to open a gate, had wished to do it without dismounting, and had leaned from the saddle to unhook a kind of ring. Something had frightened her horse, and he had leaped to one side, leaving her hanging on the gate. She told us that she called for help, and had imagined that Johnnie was behind her. When she had caught her horse again she reached our home unharmed by anything but fright. It would have been absolutely impossible to hear her voice across the wooded region between her and us. What seems strange to me is that the others, who have not the same mesmeric sensibility as I, should have heard the cry at the same time, and as distinctly.

All answered the call at once, by leaving the various buildings where they were working, and by making their way toward the entrance, thinking they would find the girl in some sort of trouble, and all were astonished not to see her even on the large plain bordered by the wooded space that she had to cross.

J. WOOD BEILBY.

Mrs. Beilby confirmed this story as follows:

I remember perfectly that the voice was heard, as is told above by my husband. I can answer for the exactitude of the statement.

CATHERINE W. BEILBY.

Mr. Beilby added:

The house is isolated; there is no other residence within a radius of about five kilometers; no one was there at that moment, except the servants and the employees in this building.<sup>1</sup>

In the case of the fact just related, a voice telepathically projected was certainly heard. What took place in the fol-

<sup>1</sup> *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 263.

lowing case? The narrator attributes it to the efficacy of a prayer.

The "Mattino" of Naples published on April 22, 1906, the item here given, sent in by its Reggio (Calabria) correspondent:

The other day, at the central station of Reggio, a young seminarist boarded the Reggio-Battipaglia-Naples express, which leaves here at 5:55, and took his seat in a compartment in which was the comptroller-in-chief of the road, Signore Dominic Fischetti.

When the train had started, Signore Fischetti asked the seminarist what his destination might be. The latter answered that he had to go to Catona, to be present at the Festival of Saint Francis. The comptroller then gave the future priest to understand that he had made a great mistake, for the train in which he was did not stop at Catona, and in order to get off at that place he should have taken the other train, which leaves Reggio at 6:17.

One may imagine the grief and disappointment of the seminarist! He began to work himself up, to ask help, to pray to the Holy Virgin, with tears in his eyes; when his traveling companion confirmed what he had already said, he threatened to throw himself out of the door if the train did not stop at Catona.

All this time the train continued on its way. When they had got to the bridge, which is reached before the Catona station, they heard the repeated whistling of the locomotive and, immediately afterward, the emergency whistle. The train began to slacken speed, then finally stopped.

What, then, had happened?

The seminarist, full of joy, triumphant almost, threw himself from the railway carriage, crying out that Saint Francis had just worked a miracle in his favor, and the travelers on the train learned from the engineer, a certain Signore Trieppi, that the halt was due to the presence of a nun, clothed in white, and two other women, in the middle of the track; despite the whistling of the locomotive they had not stirred.

The passengers got off to see them, but saw no one, save the seminarist, running toward the station as fast as his legs could carry him.

Signore Fischetti, astounded, told what the young man had said, to the stupefaction of those who heard him; the engineer, in the most explicit way, gave assurance of having seen the three women on the track, motionless, immovable. Then, since no explanation of this strange fact could be given, talk of a miracle began.

Such is the highly veracious account furnished by a young employee of the railroad, in the presence of several persons; he added, as documentary proof, that the train's extraordinary stop upon the Catona bridge is entered, according to regulations, on the daily record.

How can we explain the engineer's act? May we assume a telepathic influence, leaving the seminarist's brain, and producing a visual hallucination on the part of the engineer?

The same thing happened to me, without there being, it seemed to me, any occult cause.<sup>1</sup>

All these observations remain highly enigmatical, despite telepathy, despite the saints, despite the Virgin Mary, despite prayers. Unknown forces come into play. Here, among others, is a letter, curious enough, telling of a dying man's most extraordinary deed:

Grodno, Bessarabia, July 24, 1900.

This manifestation took place about seven years ago. Monsieur Paul Ménétche, together with an officer, was busy making powder-

<sup>1</sup> At a time when alterations were being made in the Austerlitz Station in order to extend the tracks to the *quai d'Orsay*, I was returning to my observatory in Juvisy on an evening train, toward ten o'clock. I took the wrong train, in consequence, I believe, of a change in the time of departure, and when I arrived at Juvisy I saw with chagrin that the train did not stop and went on toward Orléans. I expressed my despair to my fellow-passengers, adding: "Oh, if it could only slow down, I would jump off, for my wife would be most uneasy if I did not return, and, besides, I must positively observe Mars to-night." The train slackened its speed, almost stopped, and I leaped out upon the track. Where was I? A small light was shining at a distance; I went toward it, along the track. A guard was there, and gave me the name of the station, Marolles. I made inquiries, and found out that a train was about to pass, on its way to Paris, but it was a fast train that would stop neither at Marolles nor

cases for fireworks, in the room of a hotel in Warsaw. In the evening he was the first to go down to the restaurant, leaving his friend to finish his work. The friend rejoined him soon. Ménétche demanded, "Well, did you put the cases away in my table drawer?" — "No," the officer replied; "I left them on the window-sill." — "That's a little imprudent," Paul remarked, and they said nothing more about it.

At midnight he went away from the restaurant, returned to his room, and left the officer in the company of his friends. He undressed, blew out his candle, and soon fell asleep.

In the course of the night he was suddenly awakened by a noise. He heard, distinctly, a door below open and shut, then steps making their way toward his room on the third floor. This made him a little uneasy; he sat up in bed and waited.

Then it was that his door, which he had locked, opened to let a cool wind come through, and he felt some one enter, pass softly near his bed with a little, cold puff of air, and halt before the window. There he heard the cases being moved about, and saw distinctly that some one was taking them up and putting them in the drawer of the table. Then the nocturnal visitant opened the door and closed it again, and his steps died away on the stairs.

Scarcely had this strange apparition disappeared, when P. Ménétche leaped from his bed, lit the candle, and ran to the window. To his great astonishment, he found all the cases there, as on the day

at Juvisy. I asked the employee to give the signal to stop; I gave him my card; I got into the locomotive, with the engineer; I had him stop once more at the Juvisy station, telling him not to lose a moment more, but to make all speed for Paris. I did not think, until afterward, of how culpable my action was. Three legal charges were made: against the employee at Marolles, against the engineer, and against me. I declared myself, naturally, responsible for everything. The company at Orléans showed the greatest kindness, excusing me in the name of the Sky and in memory of a friend of France, Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, who had recently made me a visit in my observatory. "It is usual," I was told, "to allow for five minutes delay in the case of a sovereign. One day, when you brought Monsieur Raymond Poincaré to the station," they observed, also, "the train was two minutes late. It is nothing of importance. There are exceptions to every rule." Despite these gracious speeches, I promised never to do this again.

before. He looked at his watch: it was two o'clock at night. He went back to bed, fell asleep again, and awakened late the next day. A servant of the hotel, entering, told him that at two o'clock at night the officer *had died suddenly in the restaurant.*

HÉLÈNE SCHOULGUINE.

(Letter 930.)

We think at once that it must have been the narrator's dream. Yes, but this coincidence with death! Chance in the case of the dream and chance in the case of the death? No, this simple explanation no longer satisfies us. Then, too, it was not a dream, since he was awake, sprang from his bed, and went to substantiate. The experience seems to have occurred at the very time of the death. Was the officer on this or the other side of death's door? But what is "time"? Even in the case of sudden death the transformation takes several seconds. A second is long in certain electric measurements. He may have thought of the powder-cases, may have wished to go and look for them, may not have been able to take them up, being a phantom, but may, perhaps, have believed that he took them up. Whatever hypotheses one may put forward, the fact in itself shows us, as do our hundred observations, that a human being is not made up of only the body and the senses which we know. There is something else. The thoughts of the dying man may have influenced the brain of the observer, who, by a repercussion, may have heard the door open, the steps of the visitant, the window, the cases, the drawer being moved,—everything that the dying man thought he was doing. How many queries! But the facts are there, to be explained. A new science.

These manifestations of the human soul, as yet so little investigated, are in their variety truly fantastic; our thought may project images to a distance, sensations of all sorts; we have already proved that by these strange "phan-

tasms." Very naturally, we ask ourselves if we can be absolutely certain of all the observations, if there is not room for some illusions, some possible errors. Readers have always appreciated our critical sense and our method.

People say, sometimes: "Chance is such a great factor! It can do anything." No, not so great as that; it cannot do all things.

Let us simply make use of our reason,—always make use of it. Reason is superior to mathematics, even; mathematics does not govern living nature. One of our most clear-sighted French philosophers, likewise one of our most learned mathematicians, D'Alembert, himself asks us to distinguish mathematical formulæ from vital phenomena. I have heard it maintained, by eminent mathematicians, that *according to the principles of the law of probability* one might admit that the arrangement of letters forming a poem such as, for example, Homer's "Iliad," or Dante's "Divine Comedy," could be brought about by chance. This reasoning seems to me simply absurd, even granting that the procedure were pushed to infinity during eternity. Let us revert to the simple good sense extolled in the first chapter. Here is, in this connection, what we may read in the works of D'Alembert:

Assuming that a thousand letters which one might find disposed upon a table form connected words and have a meaning, I ask, who is the man who would not stake everything in the world that this arrangement is not the result of chance? Nevertheless, it is absolutely evident that this disposal of words, with a meaning, is just as possible, *mathematically speaking*, as another disposition of letters which would have no meaning. Why does the first arrangement seem to us, indisputably, to have a cause, and not the second? If only for the reason that we tacitly assume that there is neither order nor regularity in things over which chance alone presides; or, at least, that when we see order, regularity, in something, a sort of design and plan, we would wager much more that this

is not the result of chance than if one saw in it neither design nor regularity.

In order to elaborate my idea with still more nicety and precision [the French philosopher adds], I shall assume that we find, upon a table, printer's letters arranged as follows:

Constantinopitanensibus,  
or aabceilnnnnnnnooopssstttu,  
or nbsaepitolnoiauostnisniectn.

these three arrangements containing absolutely the same letters. In the first arrangement they form a known word; in the second they do not form a word, but the letters are disposed in their alphabetical order, and the same letter is found there as many times, in succession, as the number of times it is found in the twenty-five letters which form the word Constantinopolitanensibus; in the third arrangement the letters are pell-mell, without order, and according to chance. Now, first, it is certain that, *mathematically speaking*, these three arrangements are equally possible. It is not less certain that every sensible man who looked at the table on which these three arrangements are assumed to be, would not doubt, or at least would stake everything in the world, that the first arrangement is not the effect of chance, and that he would not be much less disposed to wager that the second arrangement is not, either. Thus, this sensible man does not consider, by any means, the three arrangements as equally possible, *physically speaking*, though the *mathematical* possibility would be equal and the same for all three.<sup>1</sup>

This reasoning is absolutely sound. Chance does not produce the psychic phenomena studied here. The intelligent action of spiritual forces, however inexplicable it be as yet to our comprehension, cannot be eliminated.

The observations just placed before our eyes show us the effects of thought. Not only visual images may be transmitted by telepathy, but also auditory and olfactory sensations, molecular movements, germs of death, cinematographic sensations. These transmissions generally come into

<sup>1</sup> D'Alembert, *Doutes et questions sur le calcul des probabilités*: Œuvres de d'Alembert (Paris, 1821), 1, 458.

play at the critical moments of life. The most critical moment of all is unquestionably that of death; upon old sundials, one of the mottos which occurs most frequently, to describe the hours, is this:

All strike;  
The last kills.

It is at the hour of death that transmissions of images and of sensations are most frequent. Nevertheless, the general investigation that I have been able to make enables us to distinguish, amid the whole number, a certain number of manifestations and of apparitions of the dying preceding death by a considerable time. We shall ascertain the truth of these promonitory apparitions. They are singular enough, but no less instructive than the others.

## IV

### APPARITIONS OF THE DYING SOME TIME BEFORE DEATH

Βάλε ξέυτήν ὑπόληψω, σέσωσαι

Reject the common opinion and  
you will be saved.

MARCUS AURELIUS.

THE preceding examples of phantasms of the living, and of the transmission of images, have prepared us for what is to follow. Assuredly, no literary preparation, no rhetorical transition is necessary for the admission of facts. They exist or do not exist. But our regular classification demands methodical research, and the general plan of this work might have been foretold after the first pages of our first volume: to prove by observed facts, apart from any religious belief, and in complete and impartial freedom of judgment, the existence of the soul, its independence of the bodily organism and its survival.

Our method must preserve the same severity from beginning to end. Let us not be content with words, nor with illusions.

Human testimony is always debatable, and we must not accept it without rigorous examination. *Testis unus, testis nullus*, says the ancient Roman judicial adage: one witness is no witness. It is often the same with several. Nevertheless, there are exceptions. If I had been the only one to observe the total eclipse of the sun of May 28, 1900, I should be sure of its reality. Let us repeat, tirelessly, that in accepting statements the greatest circumspection must be maintained. How many times have people not come to me, to show me

false *aërolites*—assuring me that they had seen them fall from the sky—which were only slaggy lava or more or less spherical masses of mineral matter which they had picked up, the day after the appearance of a meteorite, in the direction of its fall, which had taken place ten, twenty, thirty kilometers farther off! But we must not, through excess of skepticism, lose ourselves amid the errors of the academicians and the writers who denied the existence of meteorites until 1803 (the classic example of the fall of one near Aigle, in the Department of the Orne). “We must exact of ourselves a rational scientific method in all investigations and most particularly in those which concern the phenomena, often incomprehensible, which we are here examining. Let us be circumspect, not blind.

But before going farther, I should like to answer an objection very natural to the analytic spirit of the scientific method. One might think that these coincidences have not the value we attribute to them, since, for one that is noted, a thousand dreams, a thousand presentiments have no consequences. This objection would be admissible if we were not here concerned with particular sensations, with exact facts, with circumstantial details, with incidents that could not be foretold, at times with the perception of scenes as real as if they had been photographed. The objection could not apply to the proof that the reader has had before his eyes in the first volume of this work; for example, to the presentiment of Madame Constans (page 68) refusing, despite her physician, to take a draft that would have poisoned her; or to the death of Madame Arboussoff (page 71); or to Garrison’s nocturnal journey, when he was summoned by his dying mother, twenty-eight kilometers away (page 75); or to Monsieur Porché-Banès’s clock (page 96) etc. Our convictions as to psychic transmissions will, moreover, be gradually strengthened by the facts themselves, facts absolutely consistent.

It is not only at the time of death that manifestations and apparitions occur; it is often before. It has seemed to me quite in order to put facts in chronological sequence on the one hand, and, on the other, for absolute clearness, to distinguish *apparitions* from various manifestations.

These observations are not merely of the present, but they have usually been disdained, been characterized as hallucinations, without trouble being taken to study them, to compare them, to examine them seriously.

The Duchess of Abrantès, who was born in 1789, and died in 1838, wrote her Memoirs under the Restoration. Junot, Duke of Abrantès, who was born in 1771 and died by suicide in 1813, appeared to his wife, after his attempt at suicide, but before his death, and this case merits our special attention. The woman who witnessed it tells it in the work I have just mentioned, in these words:

It was the night of July 22d-23d. I was sleeping uneasily, as in a feverish slumber, when I was gripped by a sensation such as I had never known, and painful, moreover.

I awakened and saw distinctly, near my bed, Junot dressed in the same gray coat that he wore the day of his departure for Illyria, looking at me with a gentle and melancholy expression. I uttered a piercing scream which awakened Blanche (my head chambermaid who is still living) and Madame Thomières, who at once leaped from her bed and came to me, asking me what was the matter. Alas! I still saw this fearful apparition, for Junot's face was pale and profoundly sad; it seemed, already, as though we were separated here on earth! But what terrified me most was to see the apparition walking round my bed, and yet—heavens!—one of its legs was broken. At length, through an intense revelation, I saw Junot's condition; and yet no news had reached me or could reach me, since the event was taking place at that moment. And later on my brother long hesitated to tell me the truth, for he feared for my life, in the state I was in.

"Light up my room!" I cried, in my ever-growing terror. "Give me lots of air,—lots of light, above all!" and my gaze followed the

apparition, still visible, that now approached me, now withdrew into a dark corner of the room, beckoning me to come to it. This sight made me believe at moments that I was going to die; then there escaped from my lungs a cry, hollow and prolonged, that seemed an appeal to Death. It was only toward morning that the apparition vanished by degrees, and grew to resemble a cloud, almost indistinct. I am not explaining this phenomenon; I am telling it as it was.

When, on July 30th, Albert, returning to Sécheron, told Madame Thomières of the terrible accidents that had preceded the duke's death, she could not restrain a cry of astonishment, and told him what had happened to me.

Even to-day I cannot thrust from my mind the thought that there was in this case a close connection between two souls bound by so many ties that they formed a single soul. I believe this, believe it *firmly*. The mysteries of Providence are too deep for our eyes to penetrate.

What shall we conclude from this story?

We said above that Junot had committed suicide. The grief caused him by the defeat of the French army in Spain, where he had received the title of duke after his capture of the city of Abrantès, a grief augmented by the rather cold reception accorded him by Napoleon upon his return, and by a sort of decline, had completely unnerved him. In the hope of recovery he had gone, in July, 1813, to Montbard, his father's home, when, in an access of fever, he threw himself out of the window and broke his leg. He died some days afterwards (July 29th). His apparition to his wife, after the accident and *before his death*, is a most striking case. The duchess was then on the shores of Lake Geneva, having gone there before her husband's return.

We can add to this incident a great number of like observations of *phantasms of the living*.

What we know to-day of telepathic communication convinces us that the Duchess of Abrantès was not the victim of

a groundless hallucination, and that chance is not an admissible explanation.

Indisputably, Junot appeared to his wife six days before his death, exhausted, dying. It was not a phantasm like those of Liguori, of Mademoiselle Sagée, of Mrs. Wilmot, of Sir Carne Raschse, of Mrs. Milman, of Miss Clary, and other objective phantasms: she alone saw it; it was a case of thought and image-transference analogous to those we considered in the preceding chapter; it was an apparition of a dying man, before death. Others will pass before our eyes.

My readers already know—and will see in detail farther on, in Chapter X—examples of the dead who came to announce their death even before it had happened, and who said calmly, “I am dead,” when they were not, but when the event was imminent. The first of these examples of which I learned was that of René Kraemer, a cousin of the composer André Bloch (“L’Inconnu,” page 70), who on June 12, 1896, appeared to his aunt, then in Rome, while he himself was in Paris. He appeared six hours before his death, and said to her, “Yes, I am really dead!” The young man, who was dying, was then in a state of coma.

Among examples of apparitions before death, here is a particularly remarkable one, in that it preceded death by two days, and that it followed upon a promise made, of which no one had thought. These curious observations were written out by Countess Eugénie Kapnist, and painstakingly discussed by the London Psychical Society.<sup>1</sup>

Let us read them:

In Talta, in February, 1889, we made the acquaintance of Monsieur P—— and his wife, when we were spending the evening at the home of friends we had in common, who had insisted on bringing us together. At that time, Monsieur P—— was already in a rather

<sup>1</sup> Myers, *Human Personality*, II, 49.

advanced stage of consumption; he had just lost his brother, in Petrograd, through the same disease. My sister was asked to play a little music, and she chose, at random, Mendelssohn's "Prelude." To my astonishment, I saw Monsieur P——, whom we had met only that night, go and sit down near the piano, very much affected, and follow my sister's playing with a sort of anxiety. When she had finished he told her she had just reawakened in him thoughts of his brother, who played that selection in precisely the same way. After that time, whenever he saw my sister, he loved particularly to talk to her. We spoke of death, a frequent thing at Talta, always peopled by invalids. "Do you know," he said to my sister, "it always seems to me that my spirit is very near yours; I am certain that I've already known you; we know it was not in this world, so it was in a former life." One March evening he said to her, "If I die before you, which is most probable, I shall come back to you, but I shall appear in such a way as not to frighten you." My sister, taking the thing very seriously, answered that she would do the same if she died first, and I was a witness to this mutual promise.

We met now and again at the homes of friends, and we often saw him walking on the quay, in a nut-brown overcoat which excited our hilarity, and which remained in our memories, I hardly know why.

In the month of May we left Talta.

The following year, at Petrograd, on March 11, 1890, we went to the theater; "The Merchant of Venice" was being given. One of our friends was with us; she had come from Tsarskoe on this occasion. When the play ended we had just time to go back home and change our clothes, after which we took her to the station. She was leaving by the one-o'clock train. We put her in her car, and did not leave her until after the signal-bell for departure had rung for the second time.

Our servant had gone on ahead, to find our carriage. My sister took her seat in it first; as for me, I kept waiting, having descended the stairs more slowly; the servant held the door of the landau open. I was half-way up on the step, when suddenly I halted in this posture, so surprised that I no longer understood what was happening to me! It was dark in the carriage, and yet, opposite my sister, looking at her, I saw in a dim gray light,—one

would have said it was artificial,—growing brighter toward the point that attracted my eyes most, *a vague silhouette of a translucent face*. This vision lasted but an instant, during which time, however, my eyes took in the least details of the visage. It seemed to me that I knew it,—*rather sharp features, hair parted a little to one side, a large nose, a very thin chin with a sparse beard of a chestnut yellow*. What strikes me, as I think of it now, is that I distinguished the different colors, although the grayish glimmer, which lighted up the unknown man but dimly, would not have sufficed, normally, to make them discernible. He was hatless, and, too, was dressed in an overcoat of a rather light nut-brown color. His whole person bore the stamp of great exhaustion and emaciation.

The servant, greatly astonished to see me thus brought to a halt on the step instead of climbing in, believed I had stepped on my skirt, and helped me to sit down. I asked my sister, taking my place beside her, if it were really our carriage.

I had so lost my head, since I had felt a real mental stupor in seeing this stranger opposite her, that I had not taken into account this fact: in the case of the real presence in front of her of such a person, neither my sister nor the footman would have remained so calm at the sight of him. When I was seated I saw nothing more, and asked my sister, "Did n't you see anything before you?"—"Nothing at all. And what could you have been thinking when you asked me, getting into the carriage, if it were really ours?" she answered, laughing. Then I told her all the foregoing, describing my vision minutely. "It seems to me we know that face," she said; "that part on one side, that nut-colored overcoat; but where did we see this person?"

Some days later, on a social call, we were suddenly told that Monsieur P—— had just died at Talta. My sister and I looked at each other. At the mention of this name the sharp face and the nut-brown overcoat found their possessor. My sister realized this at the same time I did, thanks to my precise description. We looked in the newspapers for the exact date of his death. The demise was given as having taken place on March 14th, two days after the vision that I had had. I wrote to Talta for information. They told me that he had kept to his bed since November 24th, and that he had since been in a state of extreme weakness, but that sleep had

not deserted him; he slept so long and so deeply, even during the last nights of his life, that this raised hopes of amelioration. We were astonished that it was I who had seen Monsieur P—, despite his promise to show himself *to my sister*. But I must here add that before the occurrence described above I had been a seer a certain number of times. This particular vision is the one which struck me most, with its minute details, and with the various colors of the face and even of the clothing.

COUNTESS INA KAPNIST.

COUNTESS EUGÉNIE KAPNIST.

The second signature is that of the sister who was present.

Monsieur Michel Petrovo-Solovovo, who sent me this account, adds that he vouches for the fact that this vision of Countess Kapnist was related to him before he had learned of the death of the subject.

We have here an apparition of a dead man *before* he breathed his last, and even a rather long time before; but in his state of sleep, of coma, the fatal outcome was certain. It was a phantasm of the living, however, like the apparition of the Duke of Abrantès.

We are now presenting observed facts, without trying to explain them. We must first know that they exist. That these are hallucinations, optical delusions, as people have until now been content to assume, is no longer an admissible hypothesis for our scientific, critical examination, which needs must reconcile examples of coincidence, not ignore them. No questioning mind can be satisfied that the Duchess of Abrantès saw with such intensity from her bedroom, on the banks of Lake Geneva, her husband, who was committing suicide at Montbard, and saw this by pure chance. And the Russian, who had promised a lady to appear to her in case of his death, showing himself in a carriage, after an evening in the theater, to carry out his promise—how can we assume that this, too, is a groundless hallucination? Now, it is not

one, two, or three facts of this nature that I have before me, for this investigation; it is *several hundred*.

Let us say at once that, in our opinion, a phantasm of the dying Russian did not seat itself in the carriage. The question of clothing, with these apparitions, has always, I repeat, puzzled me greatly. The fluid body, the astral body, the Peri, are inconsistent with these clothes. We must suppose that the soul of a person appearing acts by telepathy on the soul of the person who sees, that it is a subjective vision which seems objective, and that these phantoms are not material, capable of being photographed. There are other varieties of them. We shall return to this subject.

These phenomena occur much more frequently than one thinks. My own personal investigations have brought hundreds beneath my eyes, and *in general people hide them!* Most of them are so circumstantial in their details that the revelatory vision is quite adequate to portray the event.

Because a person has not, himself, experienced these phenomena, he has no right to deny them, nor even to doubt them. If some one told me he did not believe in meteorites because he had never seen one, that he did not admit the existence of comets because he had never observed one, that earthquakes do not exist because he had never felt one, I should in my turn doubt his intelligence.

A famous traveler, on his return from Senegal, told me that he had never had a man make fun of him with more assurance than a negro to whom he had had the audacity to affirm that in France water was sometimes as hard as a stone. Water as hard as a rock! It is, indeed, something to guffaw at, for a negro who has never left the lakes of tropical regions.

Let us not be so—negroid. For our general enlightenment we must, on principle, deny nothing, but must investigate, discuss.

Let us, then, examine the facts, with the sole object of self-enlightenment, without any preconceived ideas.

The technical observations that we shall give will, perhaps, throw a little light.

The following account of the apparition of a person about to die, was sent to the London Psychical Society by an eminent English scientist, Dr. C. J. Romanes ("Proceedings," Volume XI, page 440):

Toward the end of March, 1878, in the middle of the night and at a time when I considered myself awake, I thought I saw the door near the head of my bed open, and a white form come in, which grazed the head of the bed as it passed, came to a halt at its foot, and stood before me; this allowed me to see that its head and body were enveloped in white veils. Suddenly, lifting its hand, the form withdrew the veils which hid its face, and I was able to distinguish the features of my sister, who had been ill for some time in that very house. I called to her, crying out her name, and I saw her vanish instantly.

The following day, a little disturbed by this occurrence, I called Dr. Jenner into consultation, whose diagnosis was that my sister had only a few days to live. And, indeed, so it was.

I enjoyed perfect health, and was not a prey to anxiety of any kind. My sister was in the care of our regular physician, who had suspected nothing serious in the illness, so that I had not been disturbed, or my sister either. Apart from these singular observations, I have never had a vision of any sort.

C. J. ROMANES.

What hypothesis must we put forward as an explanation? The commonplace one of an hallucination does not explain this premonition, and must be eliminated. We may suppose that the *subconscious mind* of the invalid had a perception of imminent death, as opposed to the conscious personality which did not suspect it. We may think, with Bozzano, that this perception, awakening in her tender feelings for the brother she was about to leave, produced in the brother's

mind an impression capable of bringing about the observed effect. We may also think that Romanes's sister underwent a real duplication and was borne as a fluid body to her brother.

The following observations, taken from the same volume of "Proceedings," greatly resemble the foregoing. They were sent to Gurney by the observer herself, Madame Sophie Chapronière, who writes:

I was in my bedroom and was undressing with the help of my chamber-maid, Madame Gregory, who had been in my service for forty-one years. As she was taking a bracelet off I saw suddenly, appearing behind her and about two feet away, a form which resembled her absolutely. At that time she enjoyed perfect health. I said to her, "Why, Madame Gregory, I see your double this very moment!" She answered me, smiling, "Really, Madame!" and seemed in no way impressed. The following Sunday she announced that she felt very tired and ailing. I sent for my doctor, who diagnosed the case as a slight indisposition. Despite this favorable diagnosis, she died suddenly on the following Wednesday. Her death took place at almost the same time as that of the appearance of her double to me, a week before.<sup>1</sup>

S. CHAPRONIÈRE.

After reading the foregoing chapters we are prepared to listen to accounts of this sort.

All these facts are most disturbing, most puzzling, impossible to explain. There is virtually only one way of escape; it is to deny them utterly, to attribute them all to errors, or even, if it seems necessary, to lies, to fantastic imaginings.

If a single one of my readers thought in this way, I should, in my turn, doubt his sincerity or his good sense.

The apparitions of phantasms do not always announce death, as the preceding chapters have shown. But these just given must here be put under the heading of manifestations of the dying.

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques* (1911), p. 145.

I, for my part, have received so great a number of statements that it is impossible for me to publish even half or a quarter of them. We are much puzzled as to which to choose. The following communication can enlighten us especially. It is one of the first which I received.

March, 1899.

I believe I should bring to your knowledge three telepathic occurrences as to the authenticity of which I can testify.

*First Occurrence:* A lady, now dead, who was my first cousin, born and brought up in Paris, had married a physician of La Corrèze, a department, in which, consequently, she had gone to live.

She had left her parents, whom she loved dearly, with much sorrow. At the time of which I speak there was no communication with this region by railway or by telegraph. One night my cousin, sleeping beside her husband, was awakened by a glow lighting up the room, and by this light she saw, at the foot of her bed, the face of her father, smiling at her sweetly and sadly.

When she awakened her husband, all had vanished. Her father, my uncle, died the next day after this apparition, or the day after the next. (Let us remember, in this experience, the glow lighting the room.)

*Second Occurrence:* In Chabris, a little village near ours in the Department of L'Indre, there lived, about thirty-five years ago, a notary, Monsieur S——, who was closely related to another native of this town, Monsieur Camille B——. The latter had several brothers, one of whom, Eugène B——, who lived in Thésée, twenty kilometers from Chabris, was also a friend of the notary; he came to Chabris rather often.

One day Monsieur S——, walking in his garden, saw Monsieur Eugène B—— coming toward him from the end of a pathway; he approached without saying anything, then went away, and disappeared. Very much astonished, Monsieur S—— went to the home of his friend Camille, thinking he would find his brother Eugène there. Now, at the very time when the notary had seen his friend Eugène B—— in his garden, the latter, who had gone to the Mont-richard market, fifteen kilometers from Thésée, was dying in this town from an attack of apoplexy.

*Third Occurrence:* On April 7, 1888, there died, in our little town, Monsieur Henri T——, several years older than my wife, whom I have had the misfortune to lose since then. This Monsieur T—— and she had been brought up together like brother and sister; but certain occurrences had destroyed their former relations, and for a long time they had remained total strangers to each other. This is what happened on the day of his death:

In the evening the weather was very fine; we went for a walk, leaving a lighted lamp upon the drawing-room table. The drawing-room is on the ground floor, and its windows give upon the garden; between the lamp and the windows were two arm-chairs. When we came back from our walk it was night; that is to say, it may have been any time between eight o'clock and half-past eight. We walked a few steps, before going in, along the pathway which runs beside the house, and my wife, looking in at the window, said to me: "Why, some one has come, in our absence, and Josephine [the maid] has let him in; there is a gentleman in the arm-chair, waiting for you." I hastened to enter. I opened the doors which lead from the hallway into the drawing-room. No one! My wife, most surprised, said to me: "I assure you, there was some one in the arm-chair; I did not see his face, since his back was to the window, but I saw, and saw clearly, a rather stout gentleman in an overcoat." Then, after reflecting, she added, "Why, one would have said it was Henri T——." And though she believed neither in spirits nor apparitions, she retained an impression that it was he whom she had seen again.

Thus, in the case of the first occurrence, there was an apparition before death.

In the second at the moment of death.

In the third, about twelve hours afterward.

L. LOTTIN,

Justice of the Peace in Sells-sur-Cher, Loir-et-Cher.

(Letter 32.)

I have given this narration here for the sake of the first of these three cases, especially, which belong in this chapter. I shall also put before the eyes of my attentive readers the following statement, because of the first case described.

These observations were sent me in 1899. The first tells

of an apparition fifteen or twenty hours before death, the second a year after.

One morning, toward seven o'clock, I heard our maid go into my parents' room; I was thoroughly awake. About ten minutes afterward the door of my room opened, and I recognized my father distinctly. Frightened to see him at such an early hour, thinking that he had come to tell me that my mother was worse, I raised myself half up, and gazed at him; I wished to ask him what had happened, but hardly had I said, "What is it?" when I saw his legs, his trunk, and then his head disappear in succession. A moment afterward our maid entered in her turn. Still completely upset, I asked her if some one were ill: she reassured me absolutely. The day passed without incident; I was no longer thinking anything of the matter when, that evening, my father had a stroke of apoplexy, and *died in the night*.

Eleven years after this sad event the first anniversary of my mother's death was approaching; on this occasion I had just made some calls to invite people to the religious ceremonies at the end of the year; I not only was tired, but I had taken cold, and should have gone to bed; I feared greatly that I should not be able to go to the church. When the day came, and I was thoroughly awake, I heard a creaking of the boards in the direction of my mother's room: I recognized her step, which drew nearer little by little. She was close to me; I did not see her, but I heard her, very distinctly, call me by the pet name that she had given me as a child, and in a voice so sweet, so plaintive, that it seemed to me to express the regret she felt at my condition, and at the trouble I had taken for her. At the sound of her voice I felt an incomprehensible excitement; I was as though electrified; I had the strength to get up, and I was able to be present at the prayers and even to go to the cemetery.

E. M.

(Letter 46.)

Let us select the first of these two experiences for this chapter on apparitions of the living, here investigated. We shall discuss in Volume III manifestations of the dead.

Here is another apparition of the dying, some time before death.

I find among my documents (Letter 806, of October 20,

1899) a letter from my very good friend Madame Victor Dobelmann of Strasburg, a member of the Astronomical Society of France since the year 1899, relating a curious story given as a bizarre and uncomprehended case by the narrator who, according to what she has told me since, was not at all abreast of the times as to these phenomena, though she had practised table-turning since 1853, with my friend Jean Macé, in Beblenheim. We are concerned with the wafting, the day before her death, of the spirit of a young girl into the church where her fiancé, a pastor, was preaching: she saw him and heard him, and was seen by him, a story analogous to that of the young mother, dying, of which we shall soon speak, who went from Egypt to England to see her children. Here is Madame Dobelmann's story:

My friend Madame Turban was taking care of a younger sister who was ill. The home of their father, Monsieur Heitz, a printer, was in a corner of the Place du Temple-Neuf; the younger sister announced all the people of their acquaintance who came out of the street at the opposite corner, although she could not see them from her bed. Soon they lost hope of saving her. One Sunday afternoon she expressed to her sister her great regret at never having heard her fiancé, the pastor several leagues from there, preach. She fell into catalepsy, and lay for two hours as one dead. When she awakened she told of having seen her fiancé, and of having heard him preach in such and such a way. She died the next day. After the burial Madame Turban asked the fiancé if on Sunday afternoon he had preached on such and such a subject. Struck by her question, and very much surprised, he asked, "How do you know that?"—"Your fiancée told me."—"It's very strange," he answered. "Just imagine—in the middle of my sermon I thought I saw a white form enter the church, which resembled my fiancée; she sat down in an empty seat in the midst of the assembly, and disappeared toward the end of the service."<sup>1</sup>

(Letter 806.)

<sup>1</sup> An identical occurrence may be read of among Stead's observations in England.

One person appeared to another at the moment of losing consciousness, some hours before death. This account was translated from the "Journal of the Society for Psychological Research" and published in the "Annales des sciences psychiques," 1891, page 59:

In the spring and summer of 1886 I often went to visit a poor woman named Ewans, who lived in our parish (Caynham). She was very ill, suffered from a painful disease, but was given, she told me, great pleasure when I went to see her. I often went to talk with her. Toward the middle of October her condition had grown worse, but she seemed to be in no immediate danger.

I had not seen her for several days, when one evening, when I was in the dining-room with the rest of my family, I saw a woman's form, dressed like Mrs. Ewans, and wearing a large apron and a muslin cap. This form crossed the room, from one door to the other, and vanished.

I cried, "What's that?"— "Why, what's the matter?" my mother asked. I answered, "That woman who just passed." Every one began to laugh at me, and to ask me if I were dreaming; but I was fully persuaded that it was Madame Ewans, and *the following day we learned that she was dead.*

BERTHA HURLY.

Miss Hurly's mother confirmed this story with a letter which it would be superfluous to give here, and which ends thus:

When we went to her home to inquire about her death, we learned that she had fallen into delirium and lost consciousness at the moment of her appearance to Bertha, and that she had died toward morning.

February 25, 1890.

ANNIE ROSS.

Thus the phantom, the simulacrum, the phantasm of the dying woman, was seen several hours before death, when she had already lost consciousness, a case analogous to those we already know. From our comparative research we may think that this was not a case of the transmission of a phantasm,

but Mrs. Ewans acting upon Miss Hurly's mind. The garments (the apron, the muslin cap) indicate this subjective character.

The following apparition is of the same sort.

About eight days before the death of his uncle, a native of the Department du Nord, known to Monsieur A. Erny<sup>1</sup>, was awakened, in the night, by a hand touching his hair. Sitting up in bed, he saw before him his uncle; he was astonished by this apparition and by the fact that his uncle's face was *unshaven*, which was not his habit. He spoke to him without receiving any reply, though the visitant had begun to pace up and down the room. Getting up to assure himself that he was not the victim of an illusion, he could discover no one.

Eight days afterward he learned of the death of his uncle, who, since he had been ill for some time, had not had himself shaved, as was his daily custom.

But why put before the eyes of the reader all the facts I have before me? We have so many varied investigations to bring to a focus here, for our new enlightenment. This volume must not be filled too full. Those omitted will not be lost, for we are beginning a whole collection of books on the psychic. Yet I should not like to end this chapter without the following lines:

Theosophists have given the name of "astral visits" to the apparitions which precede death. Leadbeater has told of a most remarkable one, taken from "Glimpses of the Supernatural" by Dr. F. G. Lee (Volume II, page 64),<sup>2</sup> which it is interesting to consider here. Here are the facts:

*From Egypt to England.*—A husband and wife (the husband holding a rather high position in India) were returning to England after an absence of four years, there to rejoin the children left in the mother country, when the young wife fell ill in Egypt. The ill woman manifested the most alarming symptoms, and her weak-

<sup>1</sup> See *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1898, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> See *L'autre côté de la Mort* (Paris, 1910), p. 178.

ness was soon such that all hope of saving her had to be abandoned. Her only preoccupation was an immense longing to see her children again, a longing she did not cease to voice to those nursing her. Day after day, for more than a week, her aspirations and her prayers had only this one object: she would die happy, she said again and again, if this longing could be satisfied.

The morning of the day on which the ship had once more gone on its way toward Europe, the young woman fell into a profound sleep. During these long hours of sleep she lay perfectly calm and tranquil. A short time after twelve, however, she awakened suddenly, crying: "I saw them all the same. I saw them! God be praised!" She slept again until evening; then she breathed her last.

The children of this dying woman were being educated in Torquay, in charge of a friend of the family. On that day they were playing, each amusing himself in his own way with books and playthings, watched over by a nursemaid who had never seen their parents. Suddenly the mother, just as she had done in former days, came into the room, stopped, looked smilingly at each of the children for some moments, passed into the next room, then disappeared. The three oldest recognized her at once, and were greatly disturbed by this silent apparition. The youngest child and the nursemaid saw a woman clothed in white go into the smallest room and immediately disappear.

The date of this manifestation (September 10, 1854) was carefully noted, and it was established later that the two occurrences coincided exactly. The story of this occurrence was written upon one of the leaves of the family Bible, on which were devoutly entered life's principal happenings.

In this case, too, then, the apparition of the dying woman took place before her death. I do not propose to admit that a phantasm was borne, clothed, from Egypt to England; it seems to me that the mind of this young mother acted at a distance upon her children and upon any who were near them; that she really saw her children and that they themselves saw her, through an impression which they experienced making her image manifest. In this, as in the preceding

cases, we must either deny or accept the facts given. And, once again, the proofs are too numerous and too consistent for people to be able lightly to deny them, as they have generally been content to do.

Numerous, indeed; but one must know when to stop. The reader desirous of enlightenment has been informed. I have wished to lay before him some few of the most significant cases. These facts are of all dates, and we might in our investigation behold many more follow in succession. But our rich, immense panorama of observations forbids it.

It is with regret that I leave unknown many significant observations. At the very moment of correcting the proofs of these pages (January 8, 1921) I received still another, so odd that I cannot help adding it. Here it is:

Stockholm, Herserud Wrangelsberg,  
January 3, 1921.

It was in 1869. My brother, aged ten, my cousin, nine, and I, seven, all three recovering from scarlet fever, were in bed in my mother's room. The house was sixty kilometers from Odessa, where my father was, ill of dropsy.

One morning my brother and my cousin asked my mother, at the same instant, why my father, who had come in the night, had not awakened her, and why he was no longer there. My mother, astonished, told them that he was in Odessa, ill, and that he had not returned.

"What!" my brother and my cousin answered together. "He came back, *because we saw him.*"

And they told how, though they were not asleep, they had most clearly seen my father come into the room; how he had drawn near my brother, who had wished to speak, but had been unable to utter a sound. Next, he went up to my cousin, who, seeing him, was frightened and hid his face under the covers; then he went toward the little bed in which I slept, not far from my mother; he gazed at us, then went toward the door opening into another room, and disappeared.

Such is the two little boys' exact account.

Four or five days afterward my father died.

Since that time, and during his whole life, my cousin, who died only a year ago, was afraid of the dark: it was like a malady.

I can guarantee the authenticity of these facts, all the details of which I remember. As for the explanation, it is for you, dear Master, to discover it.

COUNT AUGUSTE DE MALACHOWSKI.

(Letter 4362.)

This experience fits in, of itself, with all the preceding ones of apparitions before death.

The information as to phantasms yielded us by this chapter is in accordance with that in Chapter II: during life the soul may detach itself from the body.

We have just ascertained the truth as to apparitions of the living coming before death and announcing it, and apparitions of the dying some time before the last hour. Besides these *apparitions*, various *manifestations* are observed, not less interesting, nor less instructive. It was necessary to set them apart for clearness in our investigations. We shall devote the next chapter to them.

## V

### MANIFESTATIONS OF THE DYING SOME TIME BEFORE DEATH (OTHER THAN APPARITIONS)

We must examine all without preconceived convictions, and by the most exacting method.

FRANCIS BACON.

WE have just had, before our eyes, examples of apparitions of the dying before death. Apart from apparitions in the strict sense, there are various manifestations of the same sort. We are here entering upon a really extraordinary world, so strange—let us acknowledge it—that one understands the constant denials of which these phenomena have been the object.

Manifestations of the dying, other than apparitions, are as varied as they are numerous. The subject is of unsuspected amplitude, and so vast that, in order to see our way clearly, we must resort to judicious classification. It is a world in itself, as we were saying, the *occult* world, which we must investigate and which, in consequence, must cease to be occult. Light! Light on all things!

The progress of the new branches of learning and their propagation, in the cause of general education, encounters unforeseen obstacles every instant, and that on every rung of the social ladder. Besides eminent minds, there are those of the lower orders who do not reason, and who are hostile without realizing it. These simple, rudimentary minds fear everything. They do not like to be shaken out of their mediocrity.

Plainly, in that which concerns psychic research, all are not prepared to accept freely the result of these investigations

as to the understanding of the soul and its destiny. The number of cowards, of tremulous, fettered men, is greater than one would think. It will be remembered that in 1899 I was continuing the research which I had long since undertaken through various publications. I had chosen, together with its estimable and erudite editor, Adolphe Brisson, the weekly review of the "*Annales politiques et littéraires*" for an inquiry among its readers, as serious-minded as they are numerous, and, it will be recalled, they responded in large numbers. At the height of success a certain number of them complained of this free investigation, in the name of their religious beliefs, stopped their subscriptions, and, in consequence, led the editor of this review to end the investigation. I received a great number (more than a hundred) expressions of regret and demands that I seek to persuade my good friend Brisson to revoke his decision. This I did not do; I sent him none of the protests, for I should not have wished his personal feelings to interfere in anything that might risk harming his periodical in the slightest. Friendship must be, above all, impersonal and devoted. One of these letters has just come under my eyes. It is Letter 633 of my investigations (dated April 27, 1899); the writer, after having told me of a most important telepathic observation, added:

Since I have the pleasure of writing to you, allow me, dear Master, to protest vehemently against the resolution you have taken to stop the publication of the interesting articles appearing in the "*Annales*." You do not wish, you say, to give annoyance to even a small number of subscribers. But you will give annoyance to a much greater number by not continuing to seek, with them, the solution of these intensely interesting problems. Naturally, each subscriber finds in the "*Revue*" articles which displease him. What would become of the editors if all the subjects which do not win the approbation of all readers had to be eliminated?

Why, it is in the very periodical in which Monsieur Sarcey has so long been preaching tolerance to us that an intolerant group of

the meanest sort is allowed to deprive the vast majority of subscribers of a great pleasure!

These psychic investigations dealing with the search for the Unknown will be published in book form, you say? All very well, but apart from the price of this book, which will not, doubtless, bring it within reach of all purses, various other reasons—which I shall not bore you by enlarging upon—will keep many of us from making the purchase. But Heaven knows how interesting these problems are, and what a pleasure it is to study them under your guidance.

If the distressing decision that you have made could be revoked I should, Monsieur, be immensely pleased, and with me thousands of readers of the "Annales."

Pardon this long letter. I do not suppose that the smallest portion of it will be made public; but should it please you to publish the least part of it, I should be obliged if you would be so good as to omit my name.

(Letter 633.)

So it goes! Even this objector judged it prudent to ask me to omit the name, which is there beneath my eyes.

Such is humanity!

And we desire progress in general enlightenment!

Most fortunately for our investigations, people continued to impart to me observations concerning these agitating phenomena. Having carefully reread the manuscript of this book before sending it to be printed, the time I spent in this way brought me new documents. I am writing these lines on November 30, 1920, and the last letter I received (yesterday) bears the number 4332. My readers are my best-informed collaborators.

The existence of the spirit independent of the body, and its ability to function at a distance, can no longer be the subject of any doubt for the readers of the foregoing pages, after all the explicit observations which people have done me the honor of sending, and for which I thank my correspondents, who have wished to join, in this way, in the search

for truth, uncomprehended up to the present, outside the compass of the authoritative sciences.

I said above that apart from apparitions of the dying, before death, there are varied manifestations of the same sort. That which follows is really astounding:

Your research concerning this absorbing question has filled me with the most intense interest. Being struck, above all, by the number of facts related by you, I conceived the whim of making inquiries on my own account, as to the existence of like phenomena. You may imagine my surprise when the first person to whom I addressed myself, one of my most esteemed relatives, could tell me of two cases of telepathy such as those you relate. She guaranteed their authenticity, and there is no reason to doubt her good faith; so I am sending them to you, hoping they may help to light up the domain of the new science, still so obscure and so mysterious.

The matter concerns my own great-grandfather. That this occurrence happened long ago does not diminish its authenticity in the least.

My ancestor was an organ-builder and had, as such, worked at his craft in different regions of Alsace, when he undertook to install an organ in the Protestant village of Ernolsheim (on the Lower Rhine): this was to be his last work. Before the instrument was quite completed (all that remained was the tuning) he fell desperately ill, and was borne, dying, to his native land. His death was expected from one moment to another. Silent and sad, relatives and friends surrounded the dying man's bed. Suddenly the latter, who for some time had given no sign of life, sat up and said in a clear, calm voice, "Nothing is the matter; everything is all right." After this, he fell back on the pillows and breathed his last.

No one, it goes without saying, understood the meaning of these last words of the dying man; but light was soon shed on them. Two days later the relatives of the deceased received a letter from the pastor of the parish in which the organ remained uncompleted, telling them of an extraordinary phenomenon which had taken place in his church on the preceding night. Sounds had been heard, suddenly, from the new organ, which had not, so far, been played; he and the schoolmaster had been awakened and had

run to the church; but they found no one there, despite a lengthy search; the keyboard was locked, even; it was inexplicable. What they had been able to hear distinctly was that the organ was being played wonderfully, though it was not tuned. The pastor then had an idea that there might be some connection between the organ-builder and this phenomenon, and it was under this impression that he had written.

This letter opened the eyes of those who had been present at the death of my great-grandfather, and made them grasp the meaning of the dying man's mysterious words.

Indeed, if such were the occurrence, we could not deny that we had in this case a most astonishing example of a manifestation on the part of a dying man,—the uneasy spirit of the artist detaching itself from his body before death, traversing space, and going to convince itself of the perfection of the work left uncompleted! What an unfathomable mystery lies in an act of this sort!

CH. HOFFMANN.

Student of philosophy

(Letter 977.)

Finkmatt Strasse, Strasburg.

I admit that this story is most incredible, most fantastic. It seemed to me inadmissible,—above all, on account of the organ-bellows. But the information I gained shows that it was accepted by the builder's family, which devoutly preserved it in memory. There may have been some exaggeration in the impression that "the organ was being played wonderfully"; still, this story was not founded upon nothing. Besides, the documents gathered in our researches prove the existence of a *psychic force* which may separate itself from the body and function at a distance.

The phenomenon took place *before* death: a case of the transmission of energy.

It may always be maintained that these things are not true, that the accounts were fabricated, were illusory, false, etc. Yes, one may always deny. As for us, now familiar with these facts in considerable numbers, we have compared them, we have proved that they bear one another out, and we affirm

that the will of Man is not confined within the limits of his body.

The will is not a subjective, inner sensation. It is an objective, external agency.

Here is another example of the same sort, equally objective. I am taking it from one of the letters I received in 1918. It is a manifestation of a dying man forty-eight hours before death, in a comatose condition.

It was eight years ago, at the beginning of my married life, and already I bore in myself the hope of my future maternity; we were living in this same apartment which we occupy to-day: 5 rue Nobel, Paris.

One night, it may have been at three or four o'clock, I was awakened abruptly by the noise of the dining-room window opening with violence.

"Why," I thought, "what a windy night!" I got up, and went to close the window, supposing that I had neglected to turn the handle completely; this, however, is not probable.

I was calmly going back to my bed, when suddenly my attention was attracted, in the darkness in which I then found myself, by a luminous spot visible on the wall of a corner of the room. (*I was obliged to pass near this place in order to return to my room.*) This spot looked like a disk, distorted in places, and shed a very soft light, difficult to describe, at once vaguely like moonlight and phosphorescence. I went up and, mechanically, put my hand on the glow, seeking to explain to myself whence it came.

I went toward the window. There was no moonlight; all was dark; everything slumbered in the near-by houses; no light came from without.

So it was not a reflection. At that moment I grew afraid, but it was a stupid, irrational fear, which made me scream and call my husband.

He awakened, switched on the electric light in our room, went toward the dining-room, and could discover nothing.

I then attributed this excessive nervousness to my physical condition; I went back to bed and fell asleep, reassured.

The next day I was awakened about seven o'clock in the morning

by a *very loud cracking*, that seemed to come from the dining-room table (which I can see from my bed). It appeared to me that fearful pressure was being exerted upon this piece of furniture; the noise lasted long enough to enable me to awaken thoroughly, and also to awaken my husband, who heard the end of the racket. We owned a kitten; this creature, being near the piece of furniture at that time, showed a strange uneasiness; it took a defensive attitude, its back arched, its hair on end, its gaze seemingly fixed upon something which it alone could see. We ascertained, afterward, that *the table had split completely, along its whole length*.

At that time my husband's father, who lived in Marseilles, was seriously ill with contagious grip. For the previous eight days we had been kept informed as to his illness. Seized by a sad presentiment, after these strange occurrences, we expected to hear during the day of the death of this worthy man; such was not the case; we learned that at that very hour he had sunk into a comatose condition, and died forty-eight hours afterward.

So, did the flesh still throb, when the essential part of this being was far away?

During these last two days he spoke very rarely.

Thursday morning, the day of his death, he seemed for a short time to regain consciousness; it was to ask his wife what time it was.

"Nine o'clock," she answered.

"So my time has n't come yet?" he said, as if impatient.

These were his last words.

At exactly one o'clock he died.

I shall leave to the great *savant* that you are the task of inquiring into these facts; as for me, in my ignorance and my weakness, I can only state them.

MADAME P. GAYRAUD.

(Letter 4001.)

We are all ignorant, Madame, and I the most so. There was in this case a real physical phenomenon, objective, like that of the organ-builder,—the split table, a window opening, a frightened cat. Doubtless, one may blame the wind, the temperature, the molecular activity of the wood, etc., but

this is hypothetical enough. And this death of a man who knew he was going to die? Must we deny these statements because they seem inexplicable to us? It would be simpler, of course.

These manifestations of the dying, *before* death, are not very rare, although less frequent than those which coincide with death. From the thousands of replies to my general inquiry, a computation of some value might be made.

Let us note the "luminous spot" observed. We shall find it again in other accounts. Our investigation is growing in scope.

The phenomena that we are studying here are all akin in that they reveal to us the existence of mysterious faculties of the human soul; but they differ strangely from one another. In what category should the following letter be put, which was sent to me on January 13, 1913? It belongs, in any case, to this series, and, moreover, tells of material, physical, mechanical action, like the preceding letters. It has been transcribed literally.

MY DEAR MASTER:

I have just reread your works "*Les Forces naturelles inconnues*," and I do not believe that any mind, however lacking in seriousness and power of reflection, could, in future, doubt the reality of these curious phenomena. My convictions are all the more profound in this respect from the fact that once in my life I personally experienced the influence of unknown forces. Though this manifestation did not have the importance of certain of the facts related in your works, I was struck, nevertheless, by its strange nature, completely foreign to the normal sensations of life. I am sending it to you, that it may be added to the numerous documents which you possess.

Here are the facts, told simply and without the least exaggeration, I assure you. Is not sincerity, moreover, its only source of interest?

At the beginning of 1907 my father—then aged eighty-four years—was still a man vigorous and alert for his great age. He enjoyed

perfect health, and it happened very often that he walked his eighteen kilometers in the afternoon; this is what he called "taking his little turn after lunch."

On a certain March day—it must have been between the fifteenth and the twentieth, but the exact date is of no great importance—my father, my wife, and I were gathered together at the table for breakfast. Conversation, after having run its usual course, had halted for an instant. My eyes were fixed upon the things before me, when, lifting my head abruptly, I gazed at my father with a feeling of the most intense stupefaction! It seemed to me that, dead for ten years, perhaps, he had again taken his place among us. That lasted only an instant, but the impression I experienced was extremely intense.

Some days afterward my father took to his bed suddenly and died, on April 24th, after twenty-six days of illness.

I shall hold all my life to the conviction that I received, from this occurrence, the warning of an event that nothing else made us foresee.

Always your fervent, your devoted disciple,

A. CHÈVREMONT,  
Croix-de-Vie, Vendée.

(Letter 2313.)

This strange vision, on the part of a man whose integrity and scientific poise of mind I myself know, is as indubitable as it is inexplicable. It proves to us, above all, that our psychic being is gifted with supernormal faculties, and that there is a whole order of uncomprehended things to be explored.

We shall speak farther on of warnings at the moment of death. We are concerned, in the case just given, with a premonitory vision preceding the day of death by about a month, without any normal indication of what was preordained.

Let us continue our comparative research.

The following curious letter as to the extraordinary phenomena preceding death was sent me from Buenos Aires:

I cannot resist the impulse to take pen in hand in order to ac-

quaint you with certain inexplicable occurrences which happened in my family, in which there are no superstitious, hysterical, nor abnormal persons.

As for me, I am following a liberal profession, with a numerous clientele; I am in the fullness of my physical and mental vigor, and I have never thought of taking part in spiritualistic experiments. I am a convinced materialist, and I believe that what we call "spirit" is but matter, and that the refinements of thought are as material as the function of digestion. Our senses do not allow us to know the mystery which surrounds us; that is the only difference. Instruments by which we may fathom this mystery have not yet been invented.

Now, here are the facts:

We were living in a town in the north of Spain, on the coast of the Bay of Biscay. I was a very young child when my elder sister was taken desperately ill. In a near-by room, which was the dining-room, my mother and two of my other sisters were nursing the invalid. At such and such an hour my mother asked one of my sisters to go and lie down on her bed, and the latter complied. Her room communicated with the dining-room, and was directly opposite the room in which the invalid was.

Some moments afterward my sister came back into the dining-room, saying that it was better that the other sister should lie down, for she did not wish to sleep. This was acted upon; but the sister who had left last came back, in her turn, and asked my mother to go, herself, and rest.

My mother reproached them for being timid, at their age (twenty and twenty-one), but, for fear of being scolded, they said nothing as to the real reason which had sent them from the bedroom.

My mother in her turn went in to rest, leaving the door half open as my sisters had done, for the room was illuminated only by the light from the dining-room, where the invalid was being cared for.

My mother's stay in the room was not long, either, for she came back into the dining-room, pale and greatly affected. It was then that I asked them all, "Why, what happened to you?" By their explanation it appeared that all three had experienced the same thing. Each of the three had lain down, and shortly afterward there had been motion and noise in the mattress; the bed began to

move as though there were some restless animal in it. Each had leaped from the bed and looked under it, to discover the cause of this shaking; they had found nothing and had lain down again; as soon as they were in bed they had perceived once more, in the mattress, the strange noise which had so alarmed them.

So all three had refused to sleep on such an extraordinary bed. At the very moment when they were telling of their impressions, they heard a noise from the cupboard doors in the neighboring kitchen; they were banging as though shaken by a furious wind, or by Herculean arms. Nevertheless, all was quiet in the kitchen, there was no wind, and all the doors were tightly closed.

My eldest sister died on this same day, or a very short time afterward, and this strange phenomenon preceded her death.

I am giving you these facts without comment.

Unless we assume that all narrators of these incidents are mad, it seems to me that we are forced to accept them, despite their unlikelihood.

This was still another manifestation before death. The letter went on as follows:

Some years later my youngest sister (there were four of them,—the eldest, deceased, two others of whom I have spoken, and the youngest) fell ill, suddenly, of smallpox. She was put into the very room in which the eldest had died.

The two other sisters had married and lived in Argentina, in one of the cities of the interior; my brother, the eldest of the children in the family, lived in the capital, Buenos Aires.

One night this brother had lain down and was reading the newspapers, when suddenly he heard, at the head of the bed, a strange noise like that of a large clock which makes this particular sound of the escapement mechanism when striking the hours. The noise was so loud that his wife, who was half asleep, awakened with a start, and it was repeated at intervals for several minutes.

A moment afterward they heard a racket in the bath-room. My brother, believing the noise due to some open window, leaped from his bed to go and close it; but he found that everything was as it should be, and that the doors and windows were quite shut.

At that same time one of my sisters, who lived in a city of the

interior, was seated on her bed, suckling her last-born child; her husband was sleeping beside her.

Suddenly she noticed that the silhouette of her young sister who had remained in Spain had appeared on the wall, and she called her husband's attention to this extraordinary fact. She even maintains that the face was so clear and stood out so well that when she had finished suckling the child she took a pencil and traced the silhouette as well as possible, to show it to our other sister; for they were living together, the two husbands being brothers, and even business associates.

There must be some exaggeration in all this. The most singular thing, in my opinion, is that the strange noises heard by my brother and my sister-in-law *corresponded with the demise* of my sister, who was dying of smallpox in Spain, even though all of them were unaware that she was ill.

I was in Spain at this time. The night before the death of my little sister I had gone to bed, as had one of my brothers, in a house in which a butcher lived, who owned several dogs. During the whole night these dogs did not allow us to sleep, howling plaintively and ceaselessly, as though weeping. My sister died on the evening of the next day.

I gladly authorize you to make any use you wish of this letter, but I must insist on anonymity; with this in view, I am signing a pseudonym, and am slightly changing my handwriting. In view of my profession, I might encounter prejudice if people knew that I am interested in this sort of research. I have not the courage to struggle with the prejudices of an ignorant and superficial society, although, as I have told you, I am a convinced materialist.

In case you do me the honor of acknowledging the receipt of this letter, you have my name and my address at the head of this sheet.

With the greatest esteem, I remain your humble servant.

SARCÉ DAZACAL,  
Buenos Aires.

That all these facts sent from all parts of the world have no cause, nor any meaning, are only illusions, hallucinations—it seems to me that none of my readers can suppose this.

And what of the following manifestation of a dying person,

also preceding death, which was told me by a most serious-minded man of whose well-balanced and thoughtful temperament I have had occasion to learn the value? It has been transcribed word for word, like the preceding one.

Lunéville, September 30, 1900.

DEAR MASTER:

Having read your book "L'Inconnu," I believe it my duty to bring to your attention the following incident which happened in my family:

In 1857 (when I was three years old) my parents were already living in the house in which I am at present. This house is situated in the midst of a garden, and at about eighty meters' distance from all communication with the outer world. We were living on the ground floor, the first floor serving as a store-room, where straw mats and empty baskets were put (we are gardeners, from father to son). The bed was placed in an alcove situated in the east room, with a window to the south. This alcove was shut off by two large doors of soft pine.

One night both my parents heard distinctly a noise in the room above, like that which might have been caused by the falling over upon the floor of several piles of empty baskets. My mother was frightened by this, but my father reassured her, telling her that it must be cats which in fighting had brought about this collapse. (The next day it was ascertained that everything was in order, and that nothing had been disturbed.) Some moments afterward three very distinct blows resounded against the window of the room, which was about a meter from their heads; my father leaped quickly from the bed, opened the window which gives on to the garden, and cried: "Who is there? What do you want?" He got no response. After having explored the grounds near by, he went back to bed, believing that he had been made the butt of a silly practical joke on the part of a neighbor. Scarcely had he gone back to bed, with the windows and doors tightly closed, when three new blows were heard, this time against the very door of the alcove within the room. These blows resembled those that would have been made by a stout rod in a vigorous hand, striking against the door.

This time my father, finding the thing more and more inexplicable, had a presentiment, which he imparted to my mother, of a

supernatural summons from my maternal grandmother, who was ill, but whom they had left that evening in no danger of any complications in her malady.

All sounds ceased, and at dawn they hastened to the invalid, about two kilometers from there. She told them that she had thought a great deal about them in the night, and had feared she would never see them again.

She died in the course of the day, and no sound has been heard since.

I guarantee the authenticity of these facts; my parents told them to me several times, as well as to intimate friends. They are incapable of lying.

A friend to whom my mother related what had happened to her told her that there was no reason to be too astonished by it; that when, one day, she herself was cleaning vegetables, seated in a chair, she was struck on the knees by a turnip which was on the ground and had heard, at the same instant, two cries: "Mother! Mother!" *That same day her son, a soldier, was dying* in our colony of Guiana; she did not hear of his death until very much later.

This is the story which I wished to send you, to aid you, if possible, in the great and splendid task which you have undertaken.

NICOLAS CORDIER,  
Gardener in Lunéville.

(Letter 945.)

There are commonplace things here which astonish us and which seem to us unworthy of the solemn subject which we are studying. The throwing of a turnip! It is idiotic, we think. Nevertheless there is one thought that may steady us, *the knowledge that we know nothing*. Our duty is to examine everything.

The manifestation by a dying person just related took place, as did the preceding one, before death, probably in a state of sleep or of catalepsy.

The authenticity of this account cannot be doubted. I have since made the acquaintance of this gardener, who was then president of the Lunéville Democratic Club. He spread enlightenment by means of a library of popular works, and

was enrolled among the members of the Astronomical Society of France; his is a practical and liberal mind, anxious to be informed on all subjects; he is a great observer of the works of nature, and is of scrupulous honesty.

These manifestations of the dying, *before death*, are worthy of attention and lead us toward the solution of the great problem. I have received a certain number of observations of the same sort, and together we shall here examine them, without preconceived general ideas.

At the beginning of my investigation I received the following letter from Saint-Joseph, Martinique, dated April 20, 1899:

I was living in the country and had a room-mate. My friend and I, having gone to town, went to see an old maiden lady who loved us dearly, and who was about to die.

When we got back home we went to bed with the doors and windows closed. In the morning, about six o'clock, when we were still in bed, and daylight had entered the room, *I heard and I saw*, simultaneously, the door being violently shaken.

With an instinctive movement, my companion and I found ourselves sitting up, our eyes fixed on this door which, a second time, was energetically shaken.

"Mademoiselle Thérèse is dead," I said. "Let's dress and go down."

When we got to town we found our friend at the point of death; she did not die until two or three hours after the incident of the morning. I had no maid-servant sleeping in the house, or any domestic animal.

It is useless to add that the rooms were scrupulously gone over, and that every investigation made proved that this door could not have been moved by any one at all.

For your research, always methodical, I have asked my friend to sign, with me, the story of these occurrences, as fresh in our memories as on the first day.

HORTENSE CODÉ.

CÉCILE LEGENDRE.

I have received this sort of observations from all over the world,—manifestations by the dying, not at the moment of death, but preceding it by a shorter or longer time. Plainly, we understand nothing about them. In former days nothing was understood as to the phenomena of lightning; we shall ascertain, a little farther on, that the explanation of the facts about it and of its extraordinary feats is still far from being discovered. The existence of the phenomena of which we are telling here has been equally established by observation, though they have remained unexplained. When Cicero spoke of the magnet, he had no conception of terrestrial and solar magnetism.

In this same year, 1899, in the month of October, I received from Rome the following account of a most remarkable premonition, sent by the observer himself. This letter is given word for word:

The illustrious Flammarion<sup>1</sup> must pardon the boldness of a stranger; but he must know that the occurrence which will prove to him once more the reality of telepathic transmission happened to me myself; the incident, however, was not closed until two months after the premonition.

In 1862 I was an engineer and lived in Alessandria, Piedmont, and my family—that is to say my father, my mother, my brother and three sisters—were living in Turin, our native city. As I dearly loved my family—who also loved me dearly—I went almost every Sunday to Turin to have dinner with them; the distance was only two hours by train (90 kilometers), and this Sunday reunion was always a celebration. On a certain Sunday in November, I had gone there as usual; I had found all my family in good health, particularly the youngest of my sisters, Louise, an adorable young girl of eighteen, whom I especially loved; I was her godfather and was fourteen years older than she. She had a very good disposition; she was a beautiful, slender brunette, and in splendid health. On

<sup>1</sup> As to these epithets, I repeat what I have already said, in Vol. I, pages 5-6. They simply show that my correspondents are not writing me in order to deceive me.

that Sunday she cheered us during dinner with her good humor, her witty sallies, and after the meal with her sonatas on the piano, which she played rather as an artist than a mere dilettante. I thus had no reason for anxiety as to her health, and I went away without worries of any sort.

The following Wednesday, about one o'clock in the afternoon, I was seated, after lunch, beside the hearth, on which a good fire burned. It was a misty day, with a fog one could have cut with a knife, a coldness that chilled you to the marrow. I had dozed off, and had slept for perhaps a quarter of an hour, when I heard, very distinctly, the voice of my sister Louise, calling to me in tearful tones, saying, "Felix, Felix, help me, help me!" I woke up with a start, completely upset, and in spite of my efforts to persuade myself that it was a nightmare, caused, perhaps, by indigestion, I remained very much disturbed. I was alone in my little bachelor apartment, with the doors and windows closed.

The next day I waited anxiously for the mail from Turin, which I received regularly in the middle of the week; but, contrary to their habit, neither my mother nor my sister had written me. A letter from my brother informed me, with much circumspection, that poor Louise had fallen ill, suddenly attacked by a severe fever, and that her condition had caused them extreme uneasiness.

I left at once for Turin, where I found my parents deeply distressed; the malady was growing worse, and our physician's diagnosis was a dangerous case of typhoid fever. My sister's robust constitution enabled her to struggle with the disease for eight weeks; but, in spite of all the care lavished on her, she succumbed on January 24, 1863.

Stricken by the same malady, and day by day overcome, above all, by grief, my father died two months afterward. He had never been ill before.

My mother, who also enjoyed very good health, gradually weakened and died in her turn, inconsolable.

It was thirty-seven years ago that I heard this cry of my poor sister, and I remember it as though it were yesterday. I have passed through many tribulations in my life, but no sorrow equaled that one.

FÉLIX FOSSATI.

(Letter 779.)

This manifestation took place, as one sees, before death, and even two months before, but during the illness which was to carry off this robust young girl; and it evidently had some connection with her condition. What is most probable is that the appeal came from the sister to the brother,—a mental appeal, become verbal for the hearer. It was not the latter who was borne in a dream from Alessandria to Turin (though nothing is simpler in *telæsthesia*); it was, rather, psychic vibrations passing from Turin to Alessandria.

Those who deny from preconceived convictions will see here only illusions and chance coincidences. Why? Because they are ignorant. It does not seem to me that the lovers of truth who have read the three hundred and twenty-two pages of our first volume and the one hundred and forty-five pages which precede this, and who, in consequence, are familiar with supernormal faculties of the human soul, phantasms of the living and telepathic manifestations, can doubt for a single instant the authenticity of this transmission.

These unexplained observations have been made in all times and all lands. Moreover, have not premonitory signs always been told of? Of late, when I was going over the letters of Madame de Sévigné, always so curious, I noted, under the date of December 13, 1686, in a missive to President de Moulceau, the passage quoted below. We are here concerned with an apparition, strange enough, of a man in a shroud, in a window of the Château de Chantilly, three weeks before the death of the great Condé, which took place at Fontainebleau on December 11th. Let us read the account of it:

An extraordinary thing happened three weeks ago, shortly before Monsieur le prince left for Fontainebleau. One of his gentlemen, named Vernillon, who was returning from the hunt at three o'clock, drawing near the Château of Chantilly, the usual seat of the prince, saw, at a window of the weapon-chamber, a phantom,—that is to say, a man in a shroud. He got off his horse and

approached; still he saw it; his valet, who was with him, said to him, "Monsieur, I see what you see." Vernillon did not wish to tell him anything, lest he influence what he might say. They entered the château, and asked the doorkeeper to give them the key to the weapon-chamber; they went into it, and found all the windows closed, and a silence that had not been broken for more than six months. The prince was told of this. That is what happened. They say that this Vernillon is a sensible man, and as little capable of seeing imaginary visions as our friend Corbinelli; and, besides that, the valet saw the same apparition. Since this is a true story, I am telling it to you that you may reflect upon it, as we are doing. Since I began this letter I have seen Briole, who made me weep hot tears by his natural and sincere account of Condé's death.

We think, very naturally, of optical illusions, so readily brought about, so frequent; but all those who have read Madame de Sévigné's talks with the Abbot Corbinelli upon the objective and the subjective could not well put her in the category of ingenuous and credulous women. One may always call these stories nonsense, and think them merely fallacious. But this reasoning is far from satisfying us. It seems improbable that all these visions are purely imaginary. From the earliest days, not volumes but libraries have been written on the subject. This work is but an echo, a modest summary, brought about by the vibrations of present-day minds anxious to know, at last, reality.

Still, we must not rule out the possibility of optical illusions. For example, in the account which I made public, in my *Memoirs*, of Victor Hugo's spiritualistic experiments in Jersey, in 1853, we may see on page 231 a photograph showing a window behind which a gray spot might be taken for a vague phantom.

The manifestation before death, which I am describing below is, certainly, incomprehensible; but what is still more incomprehensible is the reasoning of the person to whom the adventure occurred. An eminent savant, a friend of mine,

wrote out for me recently the following narration (Letter 4173):

Yesterday, June 24, 1920, I had a visit from an old friend whom I had not seen for several years, and with whom I spoke of your latest book. Her husband committed suicide ten years ago, after unfortunate business ventures, of which he had not informed her. During the eight days—or, rather, the eight nights which preceded his suicide—she was regularly awakened, several times a night, by blows several times repeated, and in the same order,—at first on the window-blinds of her room, then on the door of this chamber, which opened on to a drawing-room. She would get up, would investigate; there was nothing, no one; and besides, there could be no one there. Her husband, who slept in the next room, with the door between the two rooms open, heard nothing. And yet the blows were violent. This phenomenon ended the day of the suicide, and has not occurred since.

I had all the circumstances explained to me minutely. I was, moreover, familiar with the apartment in which she lived at this time, and I concluded that it was a *warning*, of the same sort as certain others you have recorded. Do you know what she answered me?

"Oh, as for me, I'm very practical, and I don't believe in all that foolishness! According to my way of thinking, some people were playing a silly practical joke on me."—"But who? And why? And how?"—"I can't find an explanation. I tried without success, to catch the jokers in the act: I found nothing. As for the blind, it might still be possible to believe that some one was striking it from the floor above or below with a long enough stick; but as for the door of the drawing-room, there is no explanation possible, since I took care to lock the other openings into this room. I don't understand how it could have happened. But on this account to believe in the supernatural—never!"

So it goes.

The number of people that it is impossible to bring to a reasonable way of thinking, the number of those, who in their beliefs, as in their skepticism, are absolutely illogical, surpasses anything one can imagine. All the most convincing proofs that we might furnish them

would be void and non-existent for them. All such people, if they know of occurrences which might be precious to you, will take care not to tell you of them. Such occurrences are, therefore, much more numerous than you think!

I have long shared the opinion of my learned correspondent. We are working only for free minds and for our own instruction. This lady is most intelligent and most sensible; but she thinks that in this case only the question of the supernatural is involved. Now, what *is* supernatural? Why bar the road by a word? (1) Her husband committed suicide; there is nothing commonplace even about this. (2) This suicide was preceded by noises which ceased after the tragedy—noises which she is sure of having heard distinctly, and equally sure of not being able to explain; this is not commonplace, either. Why not see here something interesting to investigate, to debate?

Warnings of death are so numerous that they must be admitted by every one seriously considering them. To resolve to ignore them, even when they happen to you personally—that is, indeed, to make a strange use of one's powers of reasoning.

As for explaining them, that is different from admitting them. Perhaps we may suppose, in this case, that when one determines to commit suicide, one experiences disagreeable sensations; that one thinks of it during the nights preceding the tragic act; that when sleep comes despite torment, it is more or less uneasy and may give rise to physical and psychic phenomena of various sorts. The problem is not without interest.

The readers of this work are familiar with phantasms of the living. We are going to observe one particularly worth attention,—a young girl announcing her own death. Monsieur Bozzano has taken this incident from the "Proceedings of the English Society for Psychical Research" (Volume XI,

page 442). The narrator is the daughter of a major-general.<sup>1</sup>

My sister used to get up at five o'clock in the morning and go into my father's room (he was then indisposed) in order to take him tea and read to him until seven o'clock. One day I asked her to be so good as to awaken me, sometimes, at the hour when she got up. She refused, saying that I worked hard enough during the day and that I needed to stay in bed longer than she. The following morning (it was a Thursday) I woke early, and, to my great surprise, I saw her at the foot of the bed in a white nightgown, her manner joyous. She said to me: "Remember that I came to call you. Five o'clock is striking and *I am about to go away*. Remember this." Shortly afterward I went to sleep again, and did not wake up until eight o'clock. At breakfast I said to my sister, "So you came to call me, after all." She looked at me in surprise, and exclaimed, "No, I did not come!"—"Why!" I answered, "do you deny that you came in to me, and said to me: 'Remember that I came to call you; remember that I am about to go away?'"—"I tell you again," she added, "that I didn't even go near your room." I noted that she laid stress, in her questions, on the words she had spoken.

The following day, Friday, about six o'clock, when my sister was at the head of my father's bed, she suddenly felt indisposed. That morning she had got up feeling perfectly well. The following Friday, at five o'clock in the morning,—that is to say in a week's time from her apparition,—she was dying, and by a strange coincidence she was clothed in the nightgown of white muslin in which she had appeared when she showed herself to me.

Monsieur Bozzano thinks that this occurrence may be explained by telepathy. He says:

It is enough to suppose that during physiological sleep the subconscious mind of the young girl should have had a perception of her condition of latent illness, a perception which she might have transmitted telepathically to the subconscious minds of her relatives. This inference accords with the numerous classic examples of per-

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1907, p. 708.

sons who have dreamed of being stricken by paralysis, or of being attacked by angina or by phlegmons several days before feeling the least symptom in a state of wakefulness; it is also in accordance with the numerous examples given in the works of the hypnotists of former days, such as De Puységur, Du Potet, Deleuze, Bélot, Teste, in which their somnambulists foretold with precision not only the day and the hour of the crises in their illnesses, but also the day and the hour of their deaths. Given this, the supposed fact of a premonition would reduce itself to a simple case of *self-examination in sleep* (that is to say, to a much less extraordinary fact) combined with a telepathic transmission.

It appears to me that we are not in a position to lay down definitive theories.

We shall proceed methodically in our investigation. The chapters just read concerning phantasms of the living, thought as a generator of images, apparitions, and manifestations of the dying before death, are only the prelude to the pictures which are to unroll before our eyes.

We shall prove that death-scenes and scenes of the dying may be visioned from a distance, and have been, with a precision that it is impossible for us to explain by the theory of vague coincidences. A young woman, newly married before the war of 1914, saw her husband killed upon the battlefield, the day on which his last letter had just calmed her completely; a student saw one of his cousins, of whose illness he did not know, given the last sacrament, by a priest, on her death-bed, etc. Here are new documents, new observations for our psychic synthesis. Let us read on. Let us investigate.

## VI

### THE VISIONING OF DEATH-SCENES

The possibilities in nature are infinite.

HUXLEY.

**P**HANTASMS of the living, experimental apparitions of the living to the living, thought as a generator of images projected to a distance, apparitions and manifestations of the dying before death,—all these things belong to the realm of the living, even though they open a path for us toward the kingdom of the dead. Before entering this kingdom, we must further enlighten ourselves by means of certain guiding beams. The chapter we are beginning keeps us within the realm of action of the living; but it will not be long before the dying and the dead will testify for themselves. Beginning with the next chapter, they will reveal themselves through phenomena as varied as they are unexpected.

Let us continue by orderly process. The observers whose testimony we are about to hear have watched death-scenes taking place at a distance, by telepathic transmission; there are no effects without causes, and the god Chance, to whom these occurrences are always attributed, has nothing to do with them. Our point of departure is a human being, at the moment of death.

In the course of the war of 1914-18, which wrecked Europe by brutalizing all humanity to the last degree, and will put a drag on education in general for half a century to come, I received a great number of letters telling of telepathic transmissions sent from the battle-fields.

The study of these problems by positive science constantly encounters a thousand different obstacles. The chief of these, and that most frequently met with, is that in such cases we are concerned with sorrows which it is a pity to reawaken. In dealing with these, great tact alone will lead us to any valid proof.

Then, too, there is often involved a question of religious scruples, against which the wisest reasoning is vain. Such scruples are not always overcome. I thus feel a double gratitude to the devoted correspondent from whom I received the confidential letter which I here set down.

We must give this narration all the consideration it deserves. I have not changed a word of it.

Saint-Mandé, Seine, January 21, 1918.

MY DEAR MASTER:

I must tell you the following facts, for use in your important investigations.

Madame D—— (it seems to us more discreet to give only the initial of the name, since the occurrence is still so recent), a young woman who at the time of mobilization had been married only a few months, adored her husband, who returned her love. Separation had been cruel, in spite of the bravery of the young man, who seemed desirous of persuading his wife that he felt certain of his early return.

He had even begged her not to believe any news of him which might reach her, whatever its nature. The days went by, without letters from him. Then came short health bulletins and, at last, on August 25, 1914, Madame D—— received a long letter from the soldier. Happy and full of confidence, she regained a little gaiety. The afternoon of that day there was a family reunion. She asked her younger sister to sit down at the piano and play a ballad of Chopin for her,—one that she and her husband particularly loved. Her sister did so. Suddenly (it was three o'clock) the young woman rose, uttered a cry, a terrible cry, and fell to the floor senseless. When she came to herself, they questioned her. Opening frightened eyes, she exclaimed:

"What I have seen is dreadful. Dreadful!"

The family, affected by the poor woman's intense nervousness, did not dare to press her. It was only upon the second day following, when she seemed a little calmer, that she told them she had seen, abruptly unrolled before her eyes,—a terrifying field of battle, horrible slaughter, and, *in the midst of it all, her dear husband, falling dead!*

Some days afterward they learned that on August 25th, at three o'clock, this soldier had been mortally hurt.

The young woman's mother and several members of her family furnished me confirmation of this dramatic scene. The coincidence of the vision and of what happened on the field of battle is beyond question.

I am sending you, with this, the letter from her mother and from her friend; but they desire that these painful memories shall not be reawakened.

Such is, dear Master, a brief account of the investigation that I was able to make into the case of this family,—a family that is trying, if possible, to enfold with a little forgetfulness this young woman, who is in despair at the terrible separation, depressed and impressionable to the last degree.

The fact of telepathic communication is clearly beyond doubt, and this seems to me a useful document to add to those which are sent to you from all parts of the world.

MADAME A. MERCIER.

(Letter 4016.)

Objections might be raised. In the course of continuous warfare it is not surprising that a young woman who worshiped her husband should have feared for his safety. The worth of the facts related does not lie in this intuition, but in the precise coincidence of the day and of the hour with the moment of the catastrophe, a catastrophe which happened on the exact day when this poor woman had attained peace of mind! And it lies in the vision of the battle. The laws of probability prove that the chances of this being telepathic communication, beyond doubt, are as a million to one.

My readers are already familiar with a certain number of instances identical with the one presented, and may remember that one of them even indicated death on a date differing from that given by the army bureaux; a date which, when verified, was found to be exact. The official date was not.<sup>1</sup>

It will not be amiss to note that this experience of the young woman cannot be likened to a dream which might correspond to reality by a chance coincidence, but is comparable to an electric shock received from a distance,—a very different thing. In this case the telepathic communication from the young officer who was killed, to his wife, at that moment calm and even happy as a result of the letter received that same day, is as beyond question as a precisely recorded observation in astronomy, physics, or chemistry. The exactness is similar.

As for the explanation, that is still to be found. Our knowledge of this subject is comparable to knowledge of electricity in the days of Galvani, or astronomy at the time of Ptolemy. We are at present at the dawn of a future science.

I am in possession of a great deal of testimony of this kind,—the visioning of death-scenes at a distance. They are of all dates; but we cannot here give more than a few.

On March 17, 1863, in Paris, in a first-floor apartment, at 26 rue Pasquier, behind the Madeleine, the Baroness de Boislève was giving a dinner to several persons, among them General Fleury, Master of the Horse to Napoleon Third, Monsieur Devienne, the first President of the Court of Cassation, Monsieur Delesvaux, President of the Court for Civil Causes of the Seine. During the meal, conversation turned chiefly on the Mexican Expedition, sent out a year before.

<sup>1</sup> See *L'Inconnu*, pp. 194-196: Captain Wheatcroft, killed before Lucknow on November 14, 1857, appeared to his wife, in Cambridge, at the hour of the battle.

The son of the Baroness, Honoré de Boislève, a lieutenant of light-cavalry, was a member of the expedition, and his mother had not failed to ask General Fleury if the Government had received any news.

It had had none. No news is good news. The banquet drew gaily to a close, the guests remaining seated until nine o'clock. At that hour Madame de Boislève rose and went into the drawing-room alone, that she might see that coffee was served. Scarcely had she entered the room when the guests were alarmed by a terrible cry. They rushed into the drawing-room to find the baroness in a dead faint, stretched at full length upon the carpet.

When brought back to consciousness she told them an extraordinary story. Stepping through the doorway, she had seen at the other end of the room her son Honoré, erect, in uniform, but unarmed and without his soldier's cap. The officer's face was a spectral pallor, and from his left eye, now a hideous hole, a trickle of blood flowed over his cheek and over the embroidery of his collar. So intense had been the poor woman's fear that she had thought she was going to die. They hastened to reassure her by pointing out to her that she had been the victim of an hallucination, that she had dreamed, though wide awake; but, as she felt inexpressibly weak, the family physician was urgently summoned. He was the illustrious Nélaton. He was informed of the strange adventure, prescribed sedatives, and withdrew. The next day the baroness had recovered physically, but her mind was strongly impressed. She sent each day to the Ministry of War, to ask news.

At the end of a week she was officially informed that on March 17, 1863, at ten minutes to three in the afternoon, in the attack on Puebla, Honoré de Boislève had been killed instantly by a Mexican bullet, which had pierced his left eye and gone through his head. When the difference in time was allowed for, the hour of his death corresponded exactly to the

moment of his apparition in the drawing-room of the rue Pasquier.

Dr. Nélaton sent his colleagues of the Academy of Sciences a statement of the event, written from beginning to end by President Devienne, and signed by all the guests at the famous dinner.

This visioning of death-scenes at a distance is not as rare as one might think. The two preceding cases are remarkable in that they did not take place during sleep, in a dream, as most of them do. The same is true of the following. It happened in broad daylight, perhaps in a state of momentary somnolence. I received an account of it in March, 1899.

It was in 1888. The mother of one of my friends, a student of medicine, was ill. One day his father, probably fearing an early death, sent him for his aunt, who lived in a village fifty kilometers from their city.

My friend had to travel by carriage. During this trip he had the following vision:

His mother, lying in her room, had her hands crossed on her breast, holding a crucifix; her eyes were closed, and the pallor of her face was that of some one dead. Her relatives were around the bed, weeping. Even the room in which his mother lay was hung with funeral emblems.

This sudden vision had been so distinct, and my friend had been so frightened by it, that he uttered a cry. When the coachman, hearing this cry and seeing his pallor, had learned the reason, he made sport of him.

When he reached the house he was startled to see his visionary picture real! He found, too, that the event had occurred *about* the time he had had the vision. I say *about*, for my friend had not thought of noting the exact time; but he well remembers that the two occurrences took place before noon, and the death preceded the vision.

It is to be noted that my friend was then sixteen, and that his father, when he sent him for his aunt, had not told him of the seriousness of his mother's illness; moreover, the father, himself, did not believe the end so near.

I am giving you my name, but do not divulge it; my future career might suffer if you did.

W., Student of medicine in Bordeaux.

(Letter 302.)

This was a vision experienced in a carriage. The following case is similar, and it could not be taken exception to, either, on the grounds that the number and the diversity of dreams explain the coincidence.

A Paris official, in an omnibus, was present at the death of his mother, who he did not know was ill.

My late lamented friend Dr. Durand de Gros informed me, in days gone by, of the following curious experiences of a clerk, a friend of the doctor, in the Paris Central Postal and Telegraph Office. Let us read this account, which he wrote to his brother:

I came out of the office about half-past five and took the omnibus which runs from Grenelle to the Saint-Martin gate. During the whole day I had not had a single thought about the region where we spent our childhood. Suddenly, when I had got to the rue Jean-Jacques Rousseau, I had a very distinct vision of poor Mamma lying in her bed, ill. I had the feeling that she was going to die, and I remember that, in the sort of dream I had, I said to her, "Wait, Mamma, I'm coming." I had no illusions as to her condition, and I felt drawn, so to speak, to the other world. This made me wish to die, too.

I cannot explain the state of mind in which I was, but this much is certain: I saw myself most distinctly at the foot of Mamma's bed; she was pale and ill, and she recognized me. It was about six o'clock; I was in the omnibus with my friend Léon.

When I got back to where I lived, at eleven o'clock at night, the janitor gave me a telegram, and I must say that I thought at once of what had happened to me in the omnibus, and did not for an instant doubt that the telegram would announce her death. I did not go to bed, waiting impatiently for daylight, that I might leave. Léon was with me when I got back, and when I received the telegram I told him what had happened to me in the omnibus. He then told

me that, as a matter of fact, I had seemed "very queer" at that moment, and that I had answered him incoherently. He can vouch for the facts. It seems, too, that during the remainder of the evening I was not myself. This singular occurrence made a deep impression on me, which is as fresh in my memory as on the first day. Usually the sight of a dying person is painful, but, in my case, I repeat that I felt, rather, the satisfaction of being sure of immortality.

We have there an impression experienced, very simply, in an omnibus. For this reason it is only the more striking. It was the visioning at a distance of an unforeseen death. This was no vague dream, or vision on the part of some one nervously ill: it was a normal impression.

The following observation was likewise made by one in good health, in broad daylight. A London physician, who died at a distance, was seen from the environs of the English capital, in the room where he died unexpectedly.<sup>1</sup> The vision took place ten hours after his death. Madame Dyne, the observer, writes:

This physician had had me in his care for several years, and had been very kind to me. At the time of his death more than a year had passed since I had been in his charge. I knew that he was no longer practising medicine, but I knew nothing of his circumstances, nor the state of his health. When I saw him for the last time he seemed particularly well, and he even made some remark about his vigor and the activity which he was still capable of.

On Thursday, December 16, 1875, I had for some time been visiting at the home of my brother-in-law and my sister, near London; I was in good health, but since morning and during the whole day I had felt oppressed; I was not myself, as they say, and I attributed this to the gloomy weather. After lunch, about two o'clock, I conceived the idea of going up to the children's room, to play with them and to try to be myself again. But I did not

<sup>1</sup> *Phantasms of the Living*, I, 205; *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 84.

succeed, and went back into the dining-room, where I remained, seated quite alone. Thoughts of the doctor came into my mind, and suddenly, with my eyes wide open, I believe (for I did not feel sleepy), it seemed to me that I was in a room in which a dead man was lying on a little bed. At once I recognized the doctor, and I had no doubt that he was dead, and not merely asleep. The room was without a carpet and without furniture. I cannot say how long the vision lasted. I tried to prove to myself that what I had seen had no meaning, above all because, from what I knew of the doctor's circumstances, it was improbable that if he had died he would be in a room that was so simple, so bare of furniture. About ten days afterward one of my sisters read in the newspapers that the doctor had died abroad, on December 16th, the very day on which I had seen the apparition.

The investigation made to verify the details of this narrative established that the doctor died in the hospital of a little village, in a warm country, and succumbed to a more or less sudden illness. The doctor's widow made it known that the room in which her husband died corresponded to the description given above.

The hypothesis that, in this case, there was a simple hallucination and a chance coincidence with reality, plainly unexpected and exceptional, is not admissible. Why should this lady have unconsciously imagined the death-scene of a celebrated physician, who died in a poor room, on a journey, —imagined it upon the day on which his corpse was in that precise spot? To be content with such an "explanation" is really not sufficient. There is something else, the faculty of seeing at a distance as a result of an impression emanating from the dead or dying person.

The vision did not take place at the moment of death, but ten hours afterward.

The authors of "Phantasms of the Living," for the sake of consistency with their title, explain the difference in the time by saying that the doctor's thought was transmitted to this lady before his death, and that the mental impression

remained latent for ten hours, until a tranquil moment, when the transmission could be conscientiously perceived. That there was intercommunication between the dying man and the seer is not to be doubted. This intercommunication seems to have brought the seer really to perceive, from a distance, the bed and the room; that is to say, her thought was borne to that spot. As to the delay in perception, the comparison of numerous facts will, perhaps, clear up the problem gradually.

This visioning of those dying at a distance is as indubitable as it is astounding. Here is another example. Let us note that in all these cases there is no question of nocturnal dreams.

A young girl of fifteen, seated before the fire, had the feeling that her father was dying several kilometers away. The "*Annales des Sciences psychiques*" of 1895 published (page 284) a most curious letter from Monsieur C. Thiéry, telling this story in the following words:

About thirty-five years ago a young girl who was staying with me had gone, with her mother, to take over an inheritance of an old uncle, who was dead,—the parish priest some leagues from there.

She was a child of from twelve to fifteen, of a very nervous—I might say a rather over-excitable—temperament, which she got from her family.

One day, seated before the fire, self-absorbed, her head in her hands, she saw, as though inwardly, what was going on at that moment at her father's home: she saw him dying, was present at his death and the attendant happenings. That very day she told the persons of her immediate circle of this strange vision.

Naturally, they did not believe what they considered wild statements. But she persisted in declaring that her father was dead, though she had left him in good health, and she harassed her mother to such an extent that the latter was obliged to take her back home. Up to that time they had heard nothing of the father. When they were some kilometers away—seven or eight—and had received no

news, and since no one believed in her vision, she thought she had been the victim of an illusion, and began to sing, to shout, to gesticulate, child-like, to show her joy. But then it was that a native of the region, coming from their neighborhood, shouted at her: "You're right to make so much noise; your father is dead."

It was true; her father was dead: what she had seen was confirmed. In this case, then, there was not the least deception. This person is still living, and is the mother of a family.

If you would like to have more details, I might put you in touch with her.

C. THIÉRY.

Upon this invitation, an inquiry was made. Here is one of the letters received from the percipient of the vision, Madame Marie Jacquet:

If I had known that more than thirty years afterward I should be asked for my story, I should have written it down. To-day, however, I must summon it to mind; well, I shall try to remember.

(1) You asked me my father's name: Charles-Antoine-Dominique Jacquet.

(2) The priest to whom I first told my dream was Monsieur Chartier, parish priest of Maselay; he died fifteen years ago.

(3) I also told it in Saint-Dié, at the home of the priest of the faubourg Saint-Martin, where we spent the night. The poor man did everything he could to dissuade me from my conviction. I recall, too, that I bought some socks in Saint-Dié; I wanted black ones, for I said: "I'm going to be in mourning, since Papa is dead." This parish priest was Canon Fleury.

Marie Feys, too, might have told of this occurrence: it was she who went with me to the burial, together with Thérèse Gardeur, but both of them are dead, also.

(4) You ask me how I saw Papa die? In this way: I was seated before the fire, my head in my hands; in thought I was at home; I saw my Father in his bed, looking as though he were dying. Suddenly I saw his eyes roll, then I cried: "Oh, heavens, he's dying!" I was like some one crazed. It was for this reason that I wished to leave at once. All along the road, as soon as I saw a person, I said, "There is a messenger they are sending us."

(5) On the hill near Portieux, Monsieur Pasquier passed by and saw us. "So it's you, my poor ladies," he said to us. "They are waiting for you, for the funeral; he was ill with an attack for twenty-four hours; he received the last sacraments and asked for you again and again."

MARIE JACQUET.

The examination of the civil registry of the town of Charmes established that Charles-Antoine-Dominique Jacquet, son of the deceased Dominique-Victor Jacquet and Anne-Françoise Magnien, husband of Marie-Marguerite Antoine, died on October 12, 1860, in Charmes.

Charmes, September 14, 1893. [Signed] P. VOINOT, Mayor.

We see that despite the thirty-five years intervening between the occurrence and the narrative, the recollections of the writer, Monsieur Thiéry, agree with those of Madame Marie Jacquet. The young girl had a perception of her father's death. This was an example of vision at a distance; was it a telepathic transmission from the dying man?

In this case, as well as in the preceding cases, there was no dream. The sensations were felt in a normal condition. The case of which we are about to learn is a nocturnal vision, complicated by a premonition, still more difficult to understand than vision at a distance. I recently received an account of it, on June 20, 1920, through a distinguished writer already known to my readers, Monsieur R. de Maratray, and it concerns his father. We might call it "Death-Scene Perceived Twenty-Four Hours in Advance." Here it is:

About 1855, Monsieur de Maratray, who afterward became a proficient engineer, and who was then twenty years old, woke up one night in his house in Blois, torn by the greatest anguish, under the spell of a dream in which he had just visioned a death-scene of this sort: a young cousin, of whom he was particularly fond, but of whose illness he did not even know, was stretched out on her bed in her Rouen house; a priest was administering the last sacrament;

her father and mother were on their knees, weeping. The morning of the following day the mail brought the news that this young girl (named Blanche) was seriously ill. Monsieur de Maratray left at once and arrived at Rouen in the middle of the following night; he was immediately led into a room which he had never seen before, and which was the replica, in every detail, of the room he had dreamed of the preceding night, and he was present at the death of his cousin,—in the very posture in which he had seen himself twenty-four hours previously. To the end of his life this memory was fresh in his mind.

(Letter 4168.)

This vision gains in significance from the fact of the premonition twenty-four hours in advance. How many mysteries!

There is not this complication in the example which follows, but it is none the less striking in its instantaneous nature. We are concerned in this case with the visioning at a distance (from Nouméa to Cherbourg), in a dream, of a death-agony. It was described to me in 1918, during my stay in Cherbourg, by a trustworthy technical expert of the navy. Here is his narrative:

In doing my military service in the colonial artillery I had, at the end of five months, been chosen to serve in New Caledonia.

I sailed from Marseilles on September 3, 1895, and arrived at Nouméa on October 13th.

In leaving my family I had said farewell to them, particularly to my father's brother, who had been ill for some months.

The first night that I slept in Nouméa (that of October 12th to October 13th) I had a dream in which *I was present at the moment of my uncle's death.*

I awakened the next morning, extremely tired, my mind obsessed by this prophetic dream.

What was my surprise and my bewilderment to receive, forty or fifty days afterward (letters take about this time to come from France), the announcement of my uncle's death, which occurred on October 12th, in the course of the day.

I was deeply impressed, for I had not forgotten the dream, and shall never forget it.

You know better than I, Master, that in consequence of the longitude in which Nouméa is, the days are about ten hours in advance of ours.

A strange coincidence—is it not?—and one well calculated to disturb our minds!

Upon my return to France I told my family of this coincidence, and since then I have often spoken of it to friends.

If this experience can be of interest to you in your investigations, I shall be happy to have related it to you. You may, if you think it helpful, publish this story, but I must ask you not to print my name.

E. C.,

Technical naval expert in Cherbourg.

I wrote to the signer of this interesting narrative (designated in the course of my inquiry by the number 4040) to ask him (1) to allow me to publish his name, as a complete guarantee to my readers; he did not give me this authorization, but allowed me to give his initials and his calling, printed above; (2) to ask him where his uncle was when the telepathic transmission took place at the moment of his death; if it were at Marseilles, at Cherbourg, or elsewhere. The reply was La Glacerie, a district on the outskirts of Cherbourg, a region that I myself know,—a celebrated village which owes its name to the first glass-factory built in France by Colbert (afterward moved to Saint-Gobain). Here one may still see to-day the first object glasses made for the Paris Observatory in the year 1672, the date of its establishment,—primitive object glasses which remain of great historical interest to us. I have held them respectfully in my hands.

The difference in longitude given is exact. The coincidence of the dream with the event was real. Was it fortuitous? This is not probable. Everything leads us to ad-

mit that there was in this case telepathic transmission between the uncle and the nephew: Certainly, the latter might have thought of his sick uncle and, in a dream, have seen him dying, without there being any direct communication between the two. But these cases of coincidence are so numerous that mere chance does not suffice to explain them to our entire satisfaction. It is by comparing all these facts that we may enlighten ourselves fully. Let us not disdain a single one.

This took place in 1895. We know, to-day, that the transmission of psychic waves between two brains separated by great distances is comparable to that of the ether-waves of wireless telegraphy.

My readers may remember the story of a most circumstantial dream,—an account of how a nephew was with his uncle at his last moments and saw all the details of these last moments. (The encyclopedist Pierre Conil, then a student at the Saint-Louis Lyceum, and his uncle, dying at Courbevoie: see “*L’Inconnu*,” page 460.)

They have also read (“*Before Death*,” page 159) the story of a notary who, in a dream, saw his father dead, stretched out upon mattresses placed on boards, at a time when the scene was taking place at a great distance from his home. Doubt is no longer possible.

The following experience is not less surprising than those we know already; it is one of the earliest of my investigation:

Chartes, March 26, 1899.

My father’s relatives were occupying, in Batignolles, an apartment in a house in which a branch of the Cunéo d’Ornano family lived, and mutual neighborly relations had been entered into. On the occasion of the baptism of a child which had just been born in the Ornano’s home, my aunt found herself at a dinner, beside Monsieur Thadée Cunéo d’Ornano, who had, I believe, been the baby’s godfather. She was greatly struck by the intellectual leanings of

the gentleman next her, and she herself was charming in all respects. So nothing was more natural than that they should have retained, for some hours at least, the best mutual impressions. The very evening of this dinner, Monsieur Thadée Cunéo d'Ornano left Paris, on an evening train, to return to the South. That same night, at an hour I cannot give exactly, my aunt saw distinctly, at the foot of her bed, the bloody head of the man who had sat beside her at table. When, the next day, she told of this apparition, no one attached any importance to it; but a short time afterward my relatives learned with astonishment that the very night of the apparition, at a time which coincided with that of my aunt's vision, Monsieur Thadée Cunéo d'Ornano had had his head carried away at the entrance to a tunnel, when he was leaning from the door of his railway carriage.

It would be easy, I think, to learn from the Ornano family the exact time of this happening.

*One of your assiduous readers,  
who does not sign his name because it is useless, and because his  
fatuous colleagues would accuse him of being ingenuous and gullible.  
(Letter 91.)*

The objection, so often made, that these are chance coincidences, is inadmissible in most of the cases investigated. I have told elsewhere of the proportion which may be attributed to chance, according to the law of probability. In "Les Hallucinations télépathiques" Monsieur Marrillier has made, on his own account, certain calculations, from which it appears that the part played by chance is reduced, for auditory hallucinations, to  $\frac{1}{20,000,000,000,000}$  and for visual hallucinations to  $\frac{1}{40,000,000,000,000}$ ; that is to say, in forty trillion visual hallucinations there would be only one that could be explained by *chance coincidence*.

Plainly, this reduces the hypothesis of chance to a number equivalent to zero; it follows that it is not possible to take it into account in explaining the numberless proved coincidences; it is the proof, as well, that these psychic mani-

festations are real, objective, since, when chance has been eliminated, facts themselves are the only real source.

In cases, like the foregoing, in which a death-scene is perceived, there is no law of probability to be taken into account: there is the evidence itself.

The visioning of death-scenes at a distance and premonitory dreams of death are so very numerous that those who study these questions, definitely regard them as an addition to psychic science, as indisputable, and think it almost superfluous to augment these accounts. I shall, however, give the following facts, indubitably authentic, the knowledge of which I owe to my learned friend Prince Troubetzkoy. This astronomer wrote me from his observatory in Bergamo, on October 20, 1920:

DEAR MASTER:

In this very place Monsieur Aurelio Bonandrini, a doctor of law, my notary, has just told me that he had, twenty years ago, a dream so striking, so horribly painful, that it will always remain in his memory; he never will be able to forget it.

In this dream he saw his father, then in good health, in bed, at the point of death, in a little room unknown to him.

A year afterward his father was stricken, in the cathedral, with an attack of apoplexy; he was carried into a near-by hotel where he expired after some hours. What was the terror of his son, when, called in all haste to the bed of the dying man, he recognized the bed, his father's posture, and the room, just as he had seen them in the dream!

(Letter 4287.)

The man who had the dream gave this confirmation:

I can vouch for the exactitude of the facts related above by Prince Troubetzkoy.

AURELIO BONANDRINI.

In another letter Prince Troubetzkoy had already told me of his mother-in-law's visioning, at a distance, an acci-

dent about which, fortunately, there was nothing fatal. He wrote:

We were in the country, and had installed a hammock in the garden, to the joy of my son, who was then five. My wife's younger sister arrived to spend some days, and after that the two of them never left the hammock, which had become a swing.

One evening the little boy, terrified, came running to us; one of the cords had broken, they had fallen, the young girl had struck her head, and we found her in a faint. For more than twenty-four hours the physician feared complications; he had to make applications of ice, etc. In short, she was delirious during the whole night, loudly calling her mother, who was more than 150 kilometers away.

The day following the next there came a letter, full of grief, from the mother, *telling of this accident, which she had seen in a dream*, and asking, in anguish, if it were true.

PRINCE TROUBETZKOY.

(Letter 4272.)

How can one still doubt these psychic phenomena of vision and sensations perceived at a distance? We have only to stoop in order to pluck them from the garden of human memories.

Dr. Foissac, the head physician of the academy of the *Légion d'honneur* in Saint-Denis, told me, a quarter of a century ago, that Admiral Le Roy's brother, sailing the open seas, had awakened in the middle of the night, under the spell of a nightmare in which he had been present at his mother's death; having entered this dream in his note-book, he ascertained upon landing that on that date, at that hour, his mother had breathed her last.

That, too, was the visioning of a death-scene at a distance. Space is lacking for the publishing of numerous accounts I have received. To point to them may sometimes suffice. Thus, for example, Audibert, a sea captain living in Antibes, sent me on May 31, 1899, a circumstantial account of the

visioning at a distance, in a dream, of his mother's death in Marseilles, while he was sailing distant seas. (Letter 724.)

The writer even solemnized this fact, devoutly, in a little poem.

Certain of these visions are veritable tragedies. Such as the following:

A lady's brother was far away, in the Indies; she did not know where he was. In a dream she saw his head, cut off, lying in a coffin at the foot of her bed! This lady was Mrs. Menner, the wife of the president of Torre College, in Torquay, and her brother was Mr. Wellington, then with the Raja of Sarawak, Sir James Brooke. Captured by the Chinese, as the son of the raja, on an expedition, his head was cut off. They had burned his body and kept his head, which they had borne in triumph, and which, found by Wellington's friends, was buried by them. Meyers and Sidgwick, who made a special investigation of this most curious case, ascertained that the vision had coincided with the tragic event.<sup>1</sup>

Of all the death-scenes perceived with exactness by telepathic vision, the following is certainly one of the most circumstantial. It was Mr. Henry Sidgwick who made it known.<sup>2</sup> The observer wished his name not to be published, for fear of displeasing the relatives of the deceased. Here is his story:

The event which I shall relate took place on the morning of July 8, 1858.

The evening of the seventh, I spent a long time with a friend, talking on different subjects. He was at ease and good-humored. I went calmly back home.

I must now tell how my bedroom was arranged. It had only one window, near the head of the bed and in the wall beside which I was lying. The window-blinds were not completely lowered.

<sup>1</sup> *Phantasms of the Living*, I, 365; *Human Personality*, I, 424.

<sup>2</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1892, p. 225.

That night—or, rather, the morning of the eighth—I woke up with a feeling of anguish. It was day, and light was shed on the floor through the slats of the blinds; there, in this light, that was sufficiently intense, I had a vision of my friend. He was lying on the floor, in his night-clothes, his knees lifted, his hands thrown back, the palms upward. He was extremely pale, his jaw fallen, as though dead. I uttered quite a loud groan, which awakened my wife; she took my arm and shook me, asking me what was the matter. I was leaning on my elbow, looking down at the apparition. I answered, “I see X—— dead on the floor.” As I spoke, the apparition vanished. My wife answered that I was dreaming. I remember having asked myself, “Am I dreaming?” before my wife shook me, and while the vision was distinct. The phantom’s feet were toward the window, and its face was turned almost directly to me and toward the light.

I went to the offices, which adjoined X——’s house. Since the latter had not appeared during the whole morning, the clerk told me that his charwoman was uneasy, not having been able to get any response when she knocked on the door. At once the vision of the morning came into my mind, and I had them look for a ladder and climb up to the window, which was not very high. The clerk went up, and had such a surprise that he almost fell from the ladder. He had just seen X——, stretched out on the floor!

He took a great hammer used in breaking coal, and forced the door in. I went into the room with him. The body was lying on the floor, in exactly the attitude, the position, and the costume of the vision that I had had. It was the exact replica of this vision. He must have got up, half opened the blind, and, feeling himself the victim of an attack of angina, have tried to pour himself some ammonia, into a glass; but, in making this effort, he had fallen back, dead. His charwoman informed me that it was his habit to get up at daylight and to draw the blind.

Is it possible to maintain that the intensity of thought of a man in his death-agony may produce the effect which I felt? His lawful heir was a man for whom he felt the greatest disapproval, while he had a nephew of whom he was intensely fond. He had a large fortune, and might have left everything to this nephew. In a search among his papers a will was found, which he had begun to make with this object.

I have thought of all this for many years; I have discussed it with many people, but I have never been able to reach a reasonable solution of the problem.

The feeling of anguish which I felt on awakening was indescribable. It was somewhat like the emotion felt when one awakens with a start, and finds oneself facing some terrible sight. Thirty-three years have now passed since this happened, and each detail is still as clear in my memory as though the thing had happened yesterday.

The investigation made by the English Society for Psychological Research confirmed this story, taken as a whole, with the exception of some variations in detail.

Doubt that in certain circumstances our minds perceive death-scenes occurring at a distance is, really, no longer to be contended. The visioning of which we have just spoken is most dramatic in its very exactitude. That about to be placed before our eyes is not less so,—is, perhaps, still more remarkable, because of the distance from the scene of action.

The tragic accident to a son, drowned from a boat, in New York, was seen by his anguished mother, living in London. Let us listen to this story.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Clarke, one of the leading merchants of Hull, had known for more than twenty years a certain Mrs. Palliser who lived in this same city. She had but one child, a son named Matthew, who was a sailor. At the age of about twenty-two, he sailed for New York. About a month after his departure Mrs. Palliser sought out Mr. Clarke and told him, weeping:

“Oh, Mr. Clarke, poor Mat has been drowned!”

“How can you know that?”

“He was drowned last night, as he was going on board; when he was walking along the gang-plank it slipped. *I saw it, and I heard him call: ‘Oh, Mother!’*”

She affirmed that she had been in bed at that moment, but wide awake; she also declared that she had seen her own mother, dead for

<sup>1</sup> See *Phantasms of the Living*, I, 449; *Hallucinations télépathiques* p. 148; Myers, *Human Personality*, II, 33 and 343.

many years, at the foot of her bed, weeping. "It is imaginary," Mr. Clarke told her, "and there is nothing credible about it." But she persisted in her conviction and went to see Mr. Clarke perhaps half a dozen times the following week. To calm her he wrote to New York, to the purser of the ship on which her son was. After the letter had been sent, she continued to come, each week, to ask news. At the end of about a month a letter arrived from New York, addressed to Mrs. Palliser, in care of Mr. Clarke. It contained news of the death: Matthew Palliser, of such and such a ship, had been drowned on such and such a night, because the gang-plank had slipped while he was crossing, to go aboard. The night was that during which Mrs. Palliser had had her vision.

Mr. Clarke characterized Mrs. Palliser as well bred, a respectable woman of sixty-five, a widow for some years.

The Rev. J. T. Fowler, of Bishop Hatfield's Hall, Durham, has vouched for this same occurrence.

In conversation, Mr. Clarke's son also confirmed this story, about which there cannot be the shadow of a doubt.

How is it possible not to see, in this, a direct communication from the son to the mother, at the moment when he had fallen, and was about to perish in the waves?

Let us repeat it a hundred times: to deny this phenomenon is simply ridiculous.

Here is an observed occurrence almost identical with that just read. I am purposely putting them in this order, for the edification of my readers, who have, I hope, no fixed prejudices still remaining.

A lady residing in England saw her brother drowning in America. Let us listen to this story:

On October 24, 1889, Edmund Dunn, brother of Mrs. Agnes Paquet, was employed as stoker and machinist on the *Wolf*, a little steamer which towed boats in the port of Chicago. About three o'clock in the afternoon the tug was attached to a vessel, to draw it up the river. While adjusting the buoy Mr. Dunn fell overboard and was drowned. The body was not found for three weeks after

the accident, when it came to the surface near the spot where Mr. Dunn had disappeared.

The observer describes her experience in these words:

"I rose, the morning of the day of the accident, at the usual time; it must have been six o'clock. I had slept well. I woke up, sad, depressed, without being able to shake off this uneasiness. After breakfast my husband left for his work; the children went to school, leaving me alone in the house. Shortly afterward, I decided to make some tea and to drink it. I went into the pantry and took up the tea-caddy, and, turning, I saw before me, some feet away, my brother Edmund,—or his exact image. The phantom was almost turning its back to me; it leaned forward, as if it were falling, drawn by two ropes, or by the coil of a rope pulling its legs. The vision lasted only an instant, but it was most distinct. I dropped the tea, hid my face in my hands, and cried: "Good heavens! Edmund's been drowned!"

About half-past ten in the morning my husband got a telegram from Chicago, telling him that my brother was drowned. When he got home he told me: "Edmund is ill; he's in a hospital in Chicago; I've just got a telegram." I answered: "Edmund was drowned; I saw him fall into the water." I then gave him a detailed description of what I had seen. I said that my brother, when I saw him, was bareheaded, that he wore a blue sailor's shirt and no coat, and that he had been pulled over a hand-rail, or railing. I noticed that his trousers were turned up and showed the white lining. I also described the appearance of the boat at the spot where my brother had fallen.

I am not nervous, and neither before nor afterward did anything like this ever happen to me.

My brother was subject neither to spells of weakness nor to dizziness.

AGNES PAQUET.

The narrator's husband confirmed this story in every detail.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1891, p. 208; Oliver Lodge, *La Survivance humaine*, French translation, 1912, p. 82; *Proceedings Society Psychological Research*, III, 33

There is no doubt of its authenticity.

That the seer had this vision, without any cause, is inadmissible. This cause must be sought in an emotion of the brother transmitted to the sister. It was a message from a dying man.

Thus, the observer not only had a strong impression concerning her brother, at an hour very near that of his death, not only did she know that he had just died, but she *saw* a more or less exact reproduction of the scene of his death.

It will have been noted that the impression did not take effect at the very moment of the happening, but about six hours afterward. It was preceded by a feeling of depression, beginning at the moment of awakening, and one is, at first, tempted to believe that the narrator saw the happening in a dream and forgot it, and that the subsequent vision was the result of a revival of the dream in her memory; but we do not know enough to assert this. We shall continue our explanations in Volume III, in connection with a certain Madame Storie, who saw her brother crushed by a train under circumstances altogether bizarre.

Let us seek further enlightenment in other examples.

The Society for Psychical Research related (Volume V, page 420) the following facts, an account of which was sent to the society by Mrs. Green, a correspondent, on January 21, 1885. We are concerned with a dream

I was looking at two ladies, elegantly attired, in an open carriage, when their horses stopped before some water to drink, but overbalanced and plunged into the sheet of water. As a result, these two ladies stood up and called for help. Their hats fell off their heads, and as all were about to sink, I cried out: "Isn't there any one to rescue them?" Then I woke up and my husband asked me what had made me call out in this way. I told him my dream, and he asked me if I knew these people. I did not know them, and had never seen them. I was, none the less, much affected during the whole day. It was my son's birthday, and mine, also,

January 10th, and it is because of this coincidence that I remember the date exactly.

Three months afterward, I received a letter and newspapers from my brother, who was in Australia, telling me of his sorrow in having lost one of his daughters, who had died by drowning, on a drive with a friend. The account of the accident corresponded exactly with what I had seen in my dream. My niece was born in Australia, and I did not know her.

Numerous attestations have confirmed the exactitude of this account. The bodies of the two ladies were found clasped together and pressed one against the other.

In "Phantasms of the Living" this is also related (case 138, Volume I, page 375) as well as in Myers's "Human Personality" (Volume I, page 431). The vision did not coincide with the accident, Myers says, but followed it by more than twelve hours. He speaks of it again in Volume II (page 55) and seeks to explain this dream, but without success, as a telepathic transmission from some one dead or dying.

Since Australia is on the opposite side of the globe from Europe, when it is night in London it is day in Melbourne, and it is possible that the time of Mrs. Green's dream coincided with that of the accident. Did the newspapers give the exact date of this last? A mistake of a day is easily made. The only time that has been precisely determined seems to me to be that of the dream. But whence can the telepathic transmissions have come? Perhaps from Mrs. Green's brother, at the time when he was being told of the deplorable accident to his daughter. Myers asks himself if there may not, in this case, have been spiritual intervention: "I conjecture that a current of influence may be started by a deceased person." This vision is, certainly, most extraordinary.

These distant telepathic transmissions may take place, in cases of serious accident, without death following.

A lady saw her husband wounded, 240 kilometers away, in a battle; she saw him take a ring from his finger, to send it to her. Mrs. Richardson wrote, on August 26, 1882, to the English Society for Psychical Research:<sup>1</sup>

On September 9, 1848, at the siege of Multan, my husband, Major-General Richardson, Knight of the Bath, then adjutant of his regiment, was very seriously wounded, and, believing that he was going to die, asked one of the officers with him to take the ring he wore on his finger, and to send it to his wife, who was at that time at Firozpur, at a distance of at least 150 English miles. During the night of September 9, 1848, I was in bed, half asleep, when I saw, distinctly, my wounded husband, carried from the field of battle, and I *heard his voice*, saying: "Take this ring from my finger, and send it to my wife." During the whole of the next day it was impossible for me to rid myself of the impression caused by what I had seen and heard. I learned, shortly afterward, that General Richardson had been seriously wounded in the attack at Multan. He survived, however, and is still living. It was only some time after the siege that I learned, through the colonel and the officer who helped to bear the general far away from the battle-field, that this demand as to the ring had really been made, at precisely the moment at which I had heard it in Firozpur.

M. A. RICHARDSON.

Through the society's investigation several questions were put to General Richardson; here is the result of this investigation:

1 Does the general remember having said, at the time he was wounded at Multan: "Take this ring from my finger and send it to my wife," or words to that effect?

Very distinctly; I asked this of the commanding officer, Major E. S. Lloyd, who supported me while my servant went to look for help.

2 Can he remember at what time the thing happened? Was it in the morning, the afternoon, or at night?

<sup>1</sup> *Phantasms of the Living*, I, 443; *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 144; *Human Personality*, I, 398.

So far as I remember, I was wounded about nine o'clock at night, on Sunday, September 9, 1848.

3. Had the general, before leaving his home, promised or said anything to his wife about sending his ring, in case he should be wounded?

So far as I can remember, I had never had any presentiment on this subject. Naturally, I felt that with a fire such as that to which we were exposed, I might be wounded.

Dear readers, attentive and sincere, let us assert once more that those who doubt these facts are not candid—or are deaf. Let them have the fairness to admit that they are ignorant!

The following story is not less worthy of our attention. Dr. Bruce, of Micanopy (U. S. A.) wrote on February 17, 1884<sup>1</sup>:

On Thursday, December 27, 1883, I was returning from Gainesville, a dozen miles from here, to my orange-grove, near Micanopy; I had only a little three-room frame house on my plantation, where I spent most of my time at the cultivating season. I was alone, rather tired from my round on horseback, and had gone to bed very early, probably about six o'clock.

After having slept for some time, I woke up with a feeling of having been purposely lifted up! My first thought was that there was some one in the room. I went into the two other rooms similar to mine, and found that the hypothesis of a burglar was inadmissible, for there was nothing there that might have attracted him.

I then went back to bed, and at once I was conscious of an invisible presence,—not exactly that of a living person, but rather a spiritual presence.

The reader will smile at this idea, but I am telling exactly what I felt.

Nevertheless I went back to sleep. Some moments afterward I saw (in a dream) two men engaged in a struggle; one of the two fell, badly wounded, while the other disappeared instantly. The

<sup>1</sup> *Phantasms of the Living*, I. 384; *Human Personality*, I, 413.

one who had fallen had his throat cut. I did not recognize my brother-in-law in him, for his hands were over his face, and his head was turned toward the left; it seemed to me, however, that he was some one not unknown to me. I looked carefully and saw my wife beside him. She told me that she would not leave until he had been cared for. The wounded man seemed to be lying on an elevated platform, surrounded by chairs, by benches, by desks which recalled a school-room. Outside of this room, I saw a number of people, women for the most part, several of whom seemed known to me. My dream ended there. I awakened again about midnight, got up and went out to observe the weather, then went back to bed, without, however, being able to sleep. This dream had made a strong impression on me.

Some days afterward I got a letter from my wife, telling me of her brother's death. The details she gave me of this death corresponded exactly with my dream. Her brother had gone to a marriage festival. He had gone into a bar, and had met there a young man with whom he had had a dispute. When he had left the bar, the young man had attacked him and had cut his throat. It was a murder without provocation. My brother-in-law wore an overcoat with the collar turned up; the dagger passed through the collar and cut to the bone. He was carried into the store, close to the counter. He seemed bloodless, as a result of his wound. He had received the unlucky blow on Thursday, the night of December 27th, and he did not die until Saturday morning.

My sister-in-law, moreover, had gone to Kentucky. When in bed and asleep on Friday night, the night of her brother's death, she had dreamed that she saw a man with his throat cut, had awakened very much frightened, and had remained in suspense until daylight. Then a telegram announced the death.

The investigation confirmed all these statements.

But it is time to end this chapter.

After all the observations revealed here, it is impossible to doubt the visioning, at a distance, of death-scenes and scenes of the dying. These are psychic manifestations in the souls of the living, related, however, to the souls of the dying, functioning at a distance. Invisible ties, little studied so

far, bind human beings together. The visible world hides a real world almost entirely uncomprehended. What is still stranger is that at times scenes have been perceived before they were played upon life's stage.

Round and about death there still move many living people. But we shall enter gradually the sphere of the Beyond. Even in the following chapter the activity of invisible beings will seem to manifest itself.

What this chapter teaches, in confirmation of the preceding ones, is that Man does not consist merely of the material body, which statistics take account of, but besides that—and preëminently—of an invisible being able to function beyond the limits of the tangible body. The study of Man must be placed upon an entirely new basis, upon the foundations afforded by a knowledge of the psychic.

The sphere of activity of the soul extends far, in time as well as in space. The telepathic, precise visioning, of which we have been spectators, brings us to the door of the temple, closed until now to human investigations. We shall enter it. Warnings of various sorts precede death or announce it; cases of personal prevision of death fix even the day and hour of it. Let us ascertain their truth, let us seek enlightenment, always with the same freedom of mind and without fixed preconceived judgments.

## VII

### VARIOUS WARNINGS PRECEDING OR ANNOUNCING DEATH

What we know is little  
What we do not know is vast.  
LAPLACE.

WE are investigating here, in this second volume, instructive data which may be grouped round and about death, that we may open, as far as possible, the path of research, and may then have before us, for our third volume and our deductions, only the occurrences observed after death itself. Our documents are vast in number and very complex, but let us disdain nothing and investigate all.

Let us continue our methodical classification. Seekers for truth are comparable to seekers for gold in unexplored mines; they must shift many stones of various sorts to detach nuggets of pure gold. These only I should like to offer to my readers. Let us proceed step by step.

The following observations touch upon the sphere of the Beyond. We shall have before our eyes predictions of deaths on stated dates, and deaths by autosuggestion. We shall skirt an unknown domain; we shall be conscious of the influences of a mysterious world which pervades and envelops us as does the atmosphere. Certain warnings will even seem to us to herald the presence of invisible beings.

We have seen, in the first volume, several accounts of the prediction of deaths without explicable reason, in particular on pages 77, 281, 284, 286, 311, 312, and 314.

We must investigate many others. Before going farther, let us stop to consider a most singular case of death predicted on a stated day,—a prediction exactly fulfilled. It was related to me in the following curious letter, and merits our attention:

Winterthur, December 23, 1912.

REVERED MASTER:

I wish very much to impart to you, for your most valuable research, a premonitory dream fulfilled exactly. At the time, I was attorney for a large accident-insurance company, with which I am still connected to-day, as a member of the board of directors.

This is what happened to me personally:

The night of Thursday the first to Friday the second of August, 1901, I went, in a dream, into a beer-garden and saw the general manager of our company seated at table on the terrace with a glass of beer before him, which was, in fact, his habit. I went up to him and sat down beside him. He was very pale, and looked as if he were in pain. I asked him if he felt indisposed. "Yes," he answered; "I'm not at all well; besides, on the fifteenth of August there will be a death of importance, and it is I whom it will concern." For your benefit I repeat below in German, word for word, the reply he made to me: "Ja, ich fühle gar nicht wohl; übrigens giebt es am 15-August ein grosses Sterben, und das geht mich an."

Thereupon I awakened; it was quarter-past six, the hour at which I usually get up in summer. While dressing, I told my wife of my dream, observing:

"It's strange: the manager is certainly in good health. Yesterday, Thursday, he made a trip to Lindau, on the Lake of Constance, and must have got back last evening."

About half-past seven I went to the office; I waited for the mail, which was late. They brought it to me at last, telling me that the manager had, in fact, come to the office the day before, and had begun to look over the mail, but that, feeling unwell, he had had to stop and go home in a carriage. He did not come back to the office, and died on the following Thursday, on August 15th, about ten o'clock at night, carried off by pericarditis.

I am telling you everything just as it happened to me, without

comment, and will merely add that on August 15th my wife had told my dream to our regular physician, who had come to see her that day. Knowing that he was one of the doctors consulted also by my manager, my wife had asked news of him, and had spoken of my dream. The doctor had answered evasively, telling her, however, that the manager was not, relatively speaking, so very ill.

In closing I will add that the general manager, who thus announced in a dream, fifteen days in advance, his early death, treated me, in the office, with the same kindness as he did my colleagues and the other employees, without any special preference for me. So there is, in my opinion, no reason why I, rather than another, should have been chosen to receive this communication. What shall we conclude? Telepathy? I refrain from passing any judgment.

A. VILLINGER.

(Letter 2291.)

We might have included this account in the first volume, in the chapter on the visioning of the future, or that on telepathy: in our investigation everything impinges upon everything else. It fits in better here, however. It would appear that the man who felt himself near his end influenced the narrator's mind. Psychic waves envelop us, as we have already noted.

Plainly, we have a great number of dreams most of which never come true and are meaningless. We must distinguish mental, meaningless dreams from psychic dreams. It is in such cases as the following that the precision is striking: (1) The person affected by the dream is designated; (2) the date of death is stated definitely; (3) the dream coincides with the time when the illness becomes apparent, without, however, the percipient having received any indication by which this illness might be suspected. All these coincidences are too marked not to merit our attention. We should be culpable did we not learn from them. Do we not all feel that there is here a new world to be investigated, an immense psychological world?

With this premonitory visioning the following may be compared:

An account of an imminent death seen in a dream by the doomed man's wife, was given me on September 23, 1900, by the parish priest of Baux-de-Breteuil (Eure): Monsieur l'Abbé Moulin, Master of the Floral Games. The article sent to me was taken from the "Petit Parisien" of that date. Here it is:

During the course of night before last, a tailor, Monsieur Alexandre Drouart, aged twenty-six, living at 67 rue d'Avron, was sleeping quietly in his bed when he was startled into wakefulness by his wife, who, lying beside him, the victim of a terrible nightmare, was uttering despairing cries and veritable lamentations.

The young woman explained to him that in her dream she had just seen him die, after a death-agony of several moments.

"Nonsense, delusions!" the tailor answered. "Calm yourself; you see that I'm well and don't in the least want to die."

After these words he got up to drink a little water, then went back to bed; his wife had already gone to sleep once more.

An hour later, about four o'clock in the morning, Madame Drouart awakened, and soon found that her husband, who seemed to be asleep, was no longer breathing.

Terrified, she called the neighbors, then a physician, Dr. Sussy, who could only state that the young man was dead; he declared that the hapless man's death had occurred about three quarters of an hour before, and was due to heart disease.

A strange coincidence!

Monsieur Deslandes, a police officer, who had been notified at once, gave permission, after having made the customary tests, that the body be buried.

Do not these observations, though less dramatic, remind us of those we related in Volume I, page 77, as to Madame Marichal and her husband?

My trustworthy correspondent added:

The writer has not yet joined you in penetrating the Unknown, else he would not have seen in this case mere coincidence.

(Letter 951.)

In these two examples, death, though announced, was not foreseen by the victim. This is not true in the following case:

A man knew that he was going to die, and told his physician so. His body was worn out, but his mind had remained unimpaired. It was my learned friend Dr. Danjou who related these facts to me,—which he himself observed, in 1912, in Nice:

An invalid attacked by chronic pyelonephritis told me one day (the very day of his death), when I was leaving him for a time: "Don't stay away too long, for I feel it's the end."

This invalid, more than sixty years old, was in a state of complete physical disintegration which had not altered his mental faculties in the least. He felt very definitely that he was in full control of his judgment and powers of reasoning, though he knew that the vital forces of his body were affected. His nervous organism was not in the least changed by the illness, which had left the regions of the brain intact. That portion of his body which had been attacked, very far from his brain, had not affected his power of judgment, and one felt in talking to him that his soul, an inmate of a body in anatomopathological disintegration, was absolutely independent of him. I see, in this, confirmation of your convictions, which you asserted so magisterially on pages 31, 37, 38, and 58 of your book, "Before Death." (Does not this case resemble that of Professor Potier, on page 56?)

When I came back, a quarter of an hour afterward, he was dead. And he died with a sudden cry: "I'm going away!"

These observations of Dr. Danjou form a scientific document comparable to any of those we have here investigated.

Here is another, no less remarkable, sent to me from Bari in 1906, published in the "Corriere delle Puglie" of

December 17th of that same year. It was written by a priest of Bari, Professor Salvatore Filiori, and has to do with the death of a lawyer, Gaetan Re David, a well-known personage in Les Pouilles.

Scarcely five days ago I found myself with him at a meeting of the Agricultural Society, of which he was president. Among those present was the young Marquis Arnaldo Cadaleta. Discussion had swung to the evocation of the dead and the spiritualistic experiments that were going on in certain villages of our province. While talking as some one curious but rather indifferent, Monsieur Re David halted, as though struck by an idea, and said to me:

"Listen, Professor, my mother died forty-one years ago, and never have I dreamed of her. But last night she appeared to me, and I saw her approach me with open arms; I opened my arms in my turn, and we embraced and kissed each other. This dream gave rise in my mind to the conviction that my mother is summoning me, and that my death is near, very near. What do you say to that, Professor?"

"Dreams!" I answered.

Be that as it may, *three or four days afterward he was dead.* The fact is surprising.

This was the visioning of some one dead, in a dream having to do with impending death. It is not rare. We shall again speak of it, farther on (Volume III), in dealing with apparitions of the dead at death-beds of the dying.

Personal previsions of death on stated dates are, also, numerous. I myself know of more than a hundred, apart from the cases given on pages 309, 311, 312, and 314 of our first volume. We shall examine a few of these.

Since we are living, as yet, in total ignorance of the extent of our psychic faculties, it is our duty to observe carefully, without preconceived convictions, all facts which precise documents may furnish for the analysis and knowledge of these faculties.

Madame Frondoni-Lacombe of Lisbon, well known as a writer,<sup>1</sup> told me, in 1911, of the highly extraordinary and absolutely authentic case which follows; she herself gives it:

DEAR MASTER AND FRIEND:

Here in Lisbon, in the Saint-Louis-des-Français Hospital, a sister of Saint Vincent-de-Paul, Sister Marie Souchon, had violent pains in her stomach, and was completely prostrated. The mother superior sent for a physician, Dr. Beira. The latter declared the sister very ill, and, as he was a convinced believer, he thought it his duty to advise the mother superior to have the last sacraments administered as quickly as possible, since a crisis might carry the patient off at any moment.

The mother superior told Sister Marie what the doctor thought, and her confessor, Father Fragues, came without delay. The next day he gave her the last sacraments. It was a Monday.

After the last sacraments had been given, the patient, who was most resigned, asked her companions not to make themselves miserable so soon, and to sleep quietly, for, she asserted, "I sha'n't die until next Saturday."

"How do you know that?" the mother superior asked.

"Through the Holy Virgin," Sister Marie answered. "She just appeared to me and told me so. All my life I have told her of my wish to die on a Saturday, the day sacred to her."

The mother superior believed this an hallucination.

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, up to six o'clock in the evening, there was no aggravation of her condition. It's strange," the sister said. "It's already so late, and the Holy Virgin has not yet come to take me; but she promised to do so, definitely."

"Oh," said the mother superior, "the Holy Virgin could n't take any notice of you: there are so many imploring her aid!"

But all of a sudden the invalid cried:

"No, no!—death is coming!—Feel my feet, they are icy. Yes,

<sup>1</sup> Author of the book *Merveilleux phénomènes de l'au-delà* (Lisbon, 1920).

I am dying, from my feet to my waist—I am dead. A crucifix, quickly—a Holy Virgin! Pray—pray—”

And she died.

(Letter 2158.)

This was a truly strange occurrence. We may think that the dying woman's idea played the chief part and sufficed to bring on death at the stated time. The premonitory certainty is no less striking on this account. To know on Monday that one is going to die on Saturday is something apart from the attributes of matter and biological mechanism. The mother of Jesus Christ counts for nothing in this instance, but the nun's mind did count for something; convinced that the Holy Virgin was hearkening to her, was granting her prayer, this good nun kept herself alive until Saturday, by autosuggestion. This is a psychic phenomenon worthy of attention.

In his work “*Contribution à l'étude de certaines facultés cérébrales méconnues*” Dr. W. de Sermyn tells of an occurrence which he observed in the course of his long career; it is very similar to the preceding one, and still more remarkable. The scientific observation about to be read is, assuredly, most astounding. It was made by a learned physician, an excellent observer, whom my readers already know.<sup>1</sup> Did only—as the author thinks—cerebral faculties come into play in the following account?

Jean Vitalis was a robust man,—stout, full-blooded, married, without children; in perfect health. He must have been thirty-nine when he was suddenly attacked by a raging fever and by pains in his joints. I was his physician. The symptoms were those of acute articular rheumatism.

The present-day treatment of this disorder, by salicylates, was not yet known. We then used quinine, opium, potassium nitrate, colchicum, diuretic drinks, etc. The disease would drag on for six to

<sup>1</sup> *Before Death*, p. 280: His own child seen burned in a stove.

seven weeks, and in most cases would result in a cure. Sometimes, however, death would come in consequence of cardiacal or cerebral complications.

I was surprised, the morning of the sixteenth day, to find Jean Vitalis fully dressed, seated on his bed, smiling; he could move his hands and feet quite freely, and no longer had the least fever.

I had left him in a sad state the day before. The joints of his shoulders, his elbows, his hands, his knees, his feet, were swollen and painful. He had had a high fever, and I could not foresee that I was going to find him so active and looking so well.

Very calmly he told me that he attributed his sudden cure to a vision which he had had in the night. He assured me that *his father, who had been dead for some years, had appeared to him.*

This is, approximately, what he said to me:

"My father came to visit me last night. He entered my room by that window which gives on the garden. First he looked at me fixedly from a distance, then drew near me, touched me pretty much all over to take away my pain and my fever, then told me that I was going to die this evening, at exactly nine o'clock. Just as he was leaving he added that he hoped I would prepare myself for death like a good Catholic. I've sent for my confessor, who will soon come; I'm going to confess and to take communion, then I'll have myself given extreme unction. I thank you very much for your good care; my death won't be caused by any omission on your part. It's my father who wishes it; he needs me, doubtless; he will come and take me at nine o'clock this evening."

He said all this very calmly, with a smiling countenance, and an expression of real contentment and happiness lighting up his features.

"You've had a dream, an hallucination," I told him, "and I'm astonished that you put faith in it."

"No, no," he answered; "I was wide awake; it was n't a dream. My father really came; I saw him distinctly, and heard him; he seemed absolutely alive."

"But the prediction of your death at a fixed time—you don't believe in it, do you, since you're cured?"

"My father can't have deceived me. I'm certain I am going to die this evening, at the time he told me."

His pulse was full, calm, and regular, his temperature normal. Nothing indicated a patient seriously ill.

Nevertheless, I warned the family that at times death came in cases of cerebral rheumatism, and Dr. R., an old and excellent practising physician, was called into consultation. He came, and made, in the presence of the patient, all sorts of jokes on the subject of his hallucination and of his fancied early death; but out of his hearing, before a family gathering, he said that the brain was affected and that on this account the outlook was gloomy.

"The invalid's calmness," he added, "is strange and unusual. His belief in the objectivity of his vision and in his imminent death is surprising. Ordinarily, people fear death, but he doesn't appear to worry about it; on the contrary, he seems happy and content to die. Still, I can assure you that he doesn't seem like a man who is going to die this evening; as for fixing beforehand the moment of his death, that's farcical."

I went back about noon to see my patient, who interested me keenly. I found him up, pacing up and down with a firm step, without the least sign of weakness or of pain.

"Ah," he said to me, "I was waiting for you. Now that I have confessed and taken communion, may I eat something? I'm atrociously hungry, but I didn't want to take anything without your consent."

As he had not the least fever, and as he gave every evidence of being a man in perfect health, I allowed him to eat a *beefsteak with apples!*

I went back about eight o'clock in the evening. I wished to be with the patient, to see what he would do when nine o'clock came.

He was still gay; he entered into the conversation sanely and in high spirits. All the members of his family were gathered in his room, laughing and talking. His confessor, who was there, told me that he had been obliged to yield to the patient's repeated pleadings, and that he had just given him extreme unction. "I didn't wish to oppose him," he added; "he insisted so! Besides, it's a sacrament that may be administered several times."

There was a clock in the room, and Jean, whom I never lost sight of, cast an anxious look in its direction from time to time. When it stood at one minute to nine, and while they were still laugh-

ing and talking, he got up from the sofa on which he was sitting, and said quietly:

"The time has come."

He kissed his wife, his brothers, his sisters, then he sprang upon his bed, with a great deal of agility. He sat down on it, arranged the pillows, then, like an actor bowing to the public, he bent his head several times, saying, "Good-by, good-by!" He stretched himself out with no haste, and did not stir again.

I went up to him slowly, convinced that he was feigning death. To my great surprise, he had died, with no death-agony or death-rattle, without a sigh: he had died a death such as I had never seen.

We hoped, at first, that it was only a prolonged swoon, a case of catalepsy. The burial was long deferred, but we had to yield to the evidence,—the corpse-like rigidity and the signs of decomposition which set in.

This case, told of by a learned practising physician, after lengthy physiological experience, is still more curious than the first. In all probability, the subject's father did not really come to warn him of his early end (any more than did the Virgin Mary come in the preceding case), since it is enough for him to have believed it, to have had a subjective impression, to have been convinced of it. This, too, is auto-suggestion. Nevertheless, since our subject is to learn complete independence of thought, we cannot help remembering the apparition of a mother, told of not far above, on page 186. Be that as it may, his premonition of the exact moment of death is none the less a fact truly extraordinary and astounding,—above all, with this air of satisfaction, of certainty, and of perfect simplicity. A mental derangement? That is possible, but is not a complete explanation. What sort of derangement? and in what way was he deranged? This explanation would, itself, need to be "explained." There is in all this a manifestation of uncomprehended psychic faculties.

What interests us here is the prevision, so exact, so precise,

of an event to come. Even though it were the conviction of death which led to the event, we should still have to know how he had this conviction, how he perceived his state of health and his final dissolution.

If they had thought of setting the clock back ten to fifteen minutes, he would doubtless have died ten or fifteen minutes later, for he had his eyes fixed on it, and he stretched himself out to die as soon as the hands stood at nine o'clock precisely.

One cannot stop one's heart at will. Nature has entrusted cardiacal movements to nerve centers placed in the lower portions of the encephalon, removed from the direct action of the will. These centers have their own energy, not easily exhausted; they furnish the force necessary for the contractions of the heart, independent of the other organs, even when the latter are seriously affected.

They are like governments of provinces, which, when they have received orders from the head of the nation, continue to carry them out, even after his powers have long since been completely done away with.

Let us be in no haste to draw conclusions as to premonitory apparitions. A psychic world surrounds us, but what is its nature? For Catholics the Holy Virgin has a part in most of the religious occurrences, much oftener than the three unapproachable members of the Trinity, and has assuredly as little connection with them as these last. We have just read of this belief in a part played by Jean Vitalis's father, by Re David's mother, and by the Holy Virgin. Let us take note of these impressions for our general investigation.

In the three accounts which we have just read, a dead mother was connected with the first, a promise by the Virgin Mary with the second, and a dearly loved father with the third. Here is a prediction of the same sort made in the name of—Saint Bridget.

The "Filosofia della Scienza" of Palermo published the following account of death foretold in connection with a superstitious belief, and nevertheless quite impossible to explain as autosuggestion, for death was accidental, though most dramatic. Here is the published letter:

Marianopoli, Caltanissetta, May 20, 1911.

DEAR DOCTOR CALDERONE:

I spoke to you of an extraordinary case which happened in this parish called by the people a "Miracle of Saint Bridget," for there is the conviction here that the saint's worshipers are accorded the grace, through her, of being warned of their death at least three days beforehand, in order that they may fittingly prepare for it. You then charged me to investigate the details of the narration, and to write them down as best I could. I took the matter up, and can to-day write you what follows:

In October, 1875, at a time when brigandage was rife, an unknown man, decently dressed but of suspicious behavior, was noticed in the environs of Marianopoli, on the Valte-Enferna (Hell Valley) road. A certain Carmela Guercio, still living, was the first to see him, and she ran to the village to report it. The mayor, Baron Pietro Landolina di Rigilifi, sent several guards to the designated spot, who arrested the man and brought him to the village. According to information furnished by him, and by the prefectures of Caltanissetta and Girgenti, he was a certain Rosario Casareto, a native of a parish in the Calabria, who, after personal sorrows, had left the conjugal home, and, wandering over the country-side in an over-excited state, had reached that spot.

While waiting for the necessary letters of identification relative to his case, Casareto was kept in a room on the ground floor which communicated with other rooms occupied by the guards; he was in their charge.

He had between his lips, an object which he claimed was a relic of Saint Bridget; he declared himself her devotee, and told the persons who approached him that he still had three days to live. The next day he took occasion to repeat, a great many times, that two still remained to him, and the following day that there was only one left. This prophecy roused at the time a feeling of

pity in all those who heard him, and they believed him mad.

At length, after three days, they provided for his transportation from here to Caltanissetta; he was next to be taken to Girgenti.

Mounted guards were ordered to go with him,—Pietro Raso and Salvatore Cali. Just when these guards appeared, to lay hold on Casareto, he cried, "Here are my executioners!" He was then put on a horse which had been saddled by Salvatore Arnone, a wagoner, and all of them, including Arnone, took the mule-path to Caltanissetta, and went through the "Mimiani" wood. There was in this wood a spring, and at this spring a horse-trough.

The group stopped there to water the horses, and, while they were thus occupied, Casareto's horse gave a bound and ran away at a gallop, a distance of some hundreds of yards. The real reason for the horse's jumping and running away was never known. They thought that Casareto wished to escape, and Rasa, one of the guards, rode after him on his horse; but, on account of inequalities in the ground, this horse fell with its rider, and the latter's musket went off; the shot struck Casareto and killed him. Rasa was sentenced to four years in prison, as guilty of having killed through excess of zeal.

Such are the known facts, related by most of the natives here.

I had from Monsieur Salvatore Ferrara, secretary of the local charity organization, confirmation of all the above details; he added that he was present at the moment when the guards appeared to Casareto, and heard the latter's exclamation, "Here are my executioners!" Monsieur Ferrara was then a superintendent of telegraph operators, and his office was situated above the place where Casareto was under guard: at the moment of this exclamation he was leaning on his elbows on the balcony.

I questioned the wagoner, Arnone, as well, and he, in confirming the story, added another detail not less important: When in the journey from Marianopoli to Caltanissetta, they reached the road (about two kilometers from the horse-trough), Casareto got off his horse, knelt upon the ground, offered up a prayer, then said, "I have still twenty minutes more to live," and mounted his horse again.

The investigation of this singular incident brought to my attention another case of a "Miracle of Saint Bridget."

Such are the facts. Let those competent to do so discuss them and explain them.

SALVATORE RIZZO,  
Parish secretary.

The attestations are appended.<sup>1</sup>

What has Saint Bridget to do with the case?<sup>2</sup> Is it admissible that she really took a hand in these affairs, as did the Virgin Mary in the nun's death, told of above by Madame Lacombe?

We have entered a world that cannot be seen, one difficult to chart. But let us not lose sight of the influence of mind over matter.

I have in my collection accounts of several cases of dead persons appearing to friends to announce their early death, and also announcements of death made by apparitions of unknown persons, with no tie of relationship or friendship. We try, in certain instances, to explain these facts by the theory of accidental dreams which have made a strong impression, or to attribute them to various kinds of autosuggestion; but these explanations seem inadequate in the face of observed facts. Let us consider, among others, the following apparition. Let us read this letter<sup>3</sup>:

Sixty years ago a Mrs. Carleton died in Leitrim County. She was my mother's intimate friend, and a few days after her death she appeared to her in a dream, and told her that she would never again see her thus, save on one occasion which would be twenty-four hours before her death.

In March, 1864, my mother was living with my son-in-law and my daughter, Dr. and Mrs. Lyon, in Dalkey. The evening of March 2d she went up to her room, in very high spirits, laughing and joking with Mrs. Lyon. That same night, or, rather, the follow-

<sup>1</sup> See *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1911, p. 263.

<sup>2</sup> Born in 1302; died in Rome in 1373; founder of the Order of the Holy Saviour; author of *Prophetic Revelations*, which was attacked by Gerson.

<sup>3</sup> *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, V, 291; *Annales des Sciences Psychiques*, 1899, p. 170

ing morning, my son-in-law heard a noise, awakened his wife, and asked her to go and see what was happening. She found my mother half-way out of bed, with an expression of horror stamped upon her features. They soothed her as best they could. The morning of the next day she breakfasted, as was her habit, in bed, and very gaily. In the course of the day she took a bath. Having sent for her granddaughter, she told her that Mrs. Carleton had at last, after an interval of fifty-six years, come to speak to her of her death, which was imminent, and that she would die the morning of the next day, at that same hour. She added that she had, as a precaution, taken a bath to make unnecessary the washing of her dead body. She then began to sink, little by little, and died the morning of March 4th, at the time she had specified.

The doctor and Mrs. Lyon corroborated this account. My mother had always told me that she would again see Mrs. Carleton just before her death.

THOMAS JAMES NORRIS,  
Dalkey, Ireland.

Dr. Lyon wrote from Dublin, on August 30, 1883, giving his version :

The late Mrs. Dorcas Norris had told me several times that Mrs. Elisa Carleton had appeared to her in a dream, and had promised to appear to her one last time, twenty-four hours before her death. The night that preceded her death she announced that the warning for which she had waited fifty-six years had been given her, and that she would die on the following night, a thing that happened.

RICHARD SIR JOHN LYON.

Here we have a person in good health, sure of dying in a few hours, who takes a bath to keep her family from washing her dead body. Can we explain her death?

Three hypotheses present themselves. The first is that the deceased Mrs. Carleton really had an influence on her friend; the second is that the first dream, purely accidental, made so deep an impression on Mrs. Norris that when it occurred again (also by chance) it impressed her with the cer-

tainty of her imminent death, which took place by auto-suggestion; the third is that the process of organic dissolution had already begun, was natural, and gave rise to the annunciatory dream.

The first hypothesis warrants retention; the two others are more complicated but tenable.

Does not the following example also show that a dead woman may know the date of a death? It is put before us by Browning, the famous English poet, and may be found in "Life and Letters of Robert Browning," by Mrs. Sutherland (page 277) <sup>1</sup>:

In June, 1863, Miss Arabel Barrett (Mrs. Barrett Browning's sister) died of heart disease, and expired in Browning's arms, as had happened seven years before in the case of the latter's wife. That same day Browning told Miss Blodgen the sad news, and informed her of a strange circumstance connected with this death:

"June 19, 1868.—You know I am not superstitious; nevertheless, here is an entry I made in my note-book under the date of July 21, 1863: 'Yesterday, Arabel told me that her mind had been greatly troubled by a dream of the preceding night (Sunday, July 19th). Her sister [Browning's deceased wife] had appeared to her; Arabel had asked: 'When will the day come on which we shall be reunited?' And the dead woman answered: 'My dear, in five years'; after that Arabel had awakened. In her dream, she had been fully conscious of speaking to some one dead.'"

After five years, lacking a month, the happening came to pass, and Browning wrote: "I had forgotten the date of the dream: I had supposed that not more than three years had gone by, and that therefore, two years were yet wanting for the realization of the prophecy."

How much intensely interesting research has opened up for our investigation! We still know nothing positive about all this invisible world, and have undertaken this work in

<sup>1</sup> See *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1912, p. 203. Investigation by Bozzano.

order to reach some conclusion. Unfortunately, instead of three volumes, ten would be necessary.

Premonitory dreams concerning the dead still remain enigmatical to us. Here are two of them, singular enough in their circumstances; they were told me in July, 1920, by Monsieur Vacheron of Nice:

In 1908 my wife dreamed that one of her aunts, who was very devout, had died. She saw her fully clothed, on her bed, with the windows of her apartment lighted up. This aunt died two years afterward, the morning of December 8, 1910. On that same date, in Lyons, there is held the Festival of the Immaculate Conception, and many religious people light candles. The day before, fully conscious, and feeling herself about to die, she requested those of her immediate circle to light candles on the evening of the following day, as usual, even if she were dead. This order was carried out, and it was thus that my wife had seen her aunt.

*Second Dream:* In June, 1915, we were in Orléans. My wife saw my mother (then aged seventy-nine) in a dream, dead but clothed; parting her garments, she saw a wound on the *left side* of the stomach,—a purple, blood-colored wound. She was greatly struck by this dream. My mother was living in a little district of Auvergne, in the environs of Clermont. Some days afterward we had very good news from her. We rejoined her in July, and left the village in October.

On January 20, 1916, seven months afterward, I received in Nice, from my daughter, who had remained with my mother, a telegram thus worded: "Grandmother operated on, very ill." The next day another telegram announced her death.

This is what had happened. My mother had a hernia (which we did not know of, for she had spoken of it to no one, and had worn no bandage). This hernia had caused a stoppage. The doctor, summoned in haste, decided that an operation was imperative. They sent for an automobile, and she was taken to a hospital in Clermont. She arrived at night, and was not operated on until the next day. Too late! They took her back toward the village, in an automobile, and she died on the way, in her granddaughter's arms.

My wife's dream was thus realized in all its details: a wound in the stomach, on the left side, and my mother clothed, though dead. To see in this a mere coincidence would seem to me fantastic.

(Letter 4212.)

This anticipatory visioning is really unbelievable. Nevertheless, it occurs. Here is another case of it.

Monsieur Jean Vetter, a distinguished Swiss architect, a member of the Astronomical Society of France, told me, on June 11, 1920, of the case which follows:

My friend, who is a Christian, a devout Protestant, may have been twenty years old when the following took place:

Between a neighboring family and that of his parents, with whom he was then living, there was a persistent feud due to questions of inheritance. Since each family held to its views, no word passed between them for several years. My friend suffered from this, and often spoke of it in his converse with God. And this is the splendid answer he had,—a vision, upon waking, lasting a quarter of a second, depicting simultaneously the street before their house, several pieces of furniture disposed here and there as though they were moving, and, in the background, a death-bed on which he recognized a second cousin, a near relative of the other family. About six months passed, and my friend was still wondering what his vision might have meant, when one day, several pieces of furniture destined for their home having arrived, he saw them in the street, placed as in his vision. Shortly before he had learned of his second cousin's severe illness, then of his death; he therefore began to watch closely for what might happen. Soon there arrived the different members of the hostile family; they passed between the pieces of furniture to go to the second cousin's home to express the sympathy due from near relatives. My friend took advantage of this moment to express his condolences; these were the first words exchanged between the antagonistic families, which from that time on resumed friendly relations. It must be added that he went to see the dead man, and ascertained that his bed was like the one he had seen in the background.

For my friend, as for me, there is in this an evident proof of a divine influence having produced this vision of the future in

order that the only moment when the first conciliatory words might be possible, should not be lost.

(Letter 4158.)

Every one must draw his own conclusions. It is difficult to make guesses as to God's love. But, as regards all these psychic observations, it cannot be doubted that we are in the midst of a spiritual world. Did not Saint Paul, before the Athenian Areopagus, quoting Manlius, our poet-astronomer, utter this oft-repeated axiom "*In eo vivimus, movemur et sumus*" ("In him we live, move, and have our being")? Nothing is truer. The complexity of the phenomena which we are here investigating proves this, every instant.

The science of the future will analyze our encompassing environment, which we are far from comprehending. All unsuspecting, we are affected by it. It reveals itself, at times, to sensitive beings, in strange ways.

How shall we define, how seek to explain certain indications of the future as to the imminence of death? I owe the account of the following occurrence to a distinguished psychologist, Monsieur de Maratray, whom my readers already know.

One night when Lord Dufferin had accepted, in Ireland, the hospitality of a friend, he awakened suddenly, preyed upon by an indefinable restlessness. He got up, went to the window, which was lighted by the moon, and saw distinctly in the shadow below him a man bearing a large burden on his shoulder. This man was walking slowly. When he passed before the house, it became manifest that he bore a coffin; he lifted his head; his face was so repulsive that Lord Dufferin was greatly struck. His gaze followed the apparition as it drew away, and he went back to bed, where he had great difficulty in going to sleep once more.

The morning of the next day, he questioned his host, but the latter could give him no enlightenment. He knew no one corresponding to the description of the person carrying the coffin, and no burial was awaited in the village.

Some years later Lord Dufferin was appointed Ambassador to

France. Determined faithfully to discharge the duties of his high position, he went, one day, to a diplomatic reception that was to be held in the Grand Hotel in Paris. His private secretary conducted him to a large lift before which there were several state officials standing respectfully in line. Lord Dufferin, passing them, bowed, and was about to step into the lift, when he gave an involuntary start. The employee who operated the cable was ugly, surly-looking, and had precisely the features of the mysterious apparition of the Irish village!

Moved by an instinctive impulse, the ambassador drew back; he retraced his steps, uttering some words of excuse, and, on the pretext that he had forgotten something, asked them to take up those who had gone on before, without waiting for him; he then went to the hotel office to make inquiries as to the person who had caused his very natural emotion. But he did not have time. At that moment a terrible crash was heard, mingled with cries of anguish. The lift, reaching a certain height, had dropped suddenly to the bottom of the shaft, crushing or mutilating those within it.

The accident is historic, and its precise date could be easily verified. The mysterious employee was killed with those whom he was taking up. His origin could not be traced. He was, it was said, an extra helper, a substitute, a vagrant whom they had temporarily engaged. Lord Dufferin never knew any more about it, and he vainly sought to explain by what sorcery the hand of Destiny had saved him from peril by lifting, in so mysterious a way, a corner of the veil that is over that part of eternity which we call the future.

July 18, 1920.

R. DE MARATRAY.

(Letter 4236.)

This fantastic adventure was an actual happening. Lord Dufferin was a relative of Madame de Maratray, and the family was kept informed of its course. Warnings of this sort are certainly most strange! They prove to us the existence of the unknown world, the mysteries of which we hope to penetrate.

My readers were not surprised that a man might have

been seen in a place where he was not,—a man destined to be found again in a situation so full of meaning. They have skimmed the surface of the mysteries of space and time, without having been able to fathom them. They know, for example, that we *now* observe telescopically and photograph, in the sky, happenings which *took place* thousands of years ago,—as I was doing just a few nights ago when I scrutinized the massing of stars which gives luster to the constellation of Hercules; light from them takes a hundred thousand years to reach us. We who now observe this starry formation are the future for the picture we gaze on,—with a difference of a thousand centuries! We even take pictures of stars which no longer exist, which have been stricken from the life of the skies.

What is the present? What is the future? Certain annunciatory previsions are at times as strange as they are menacing. The one which follows is of this sort.

My erudite friend Mademoiselle Dudley, of the Comédie-Française, has given these details as to the sad end of Mademoiselle Irène Muza, a young actress who was burned to death in the course of the winter of 1909<sup>1</sup>:

She was a convinced spiritualist; and several months beforehand, during a séance in which she was in a deep hypnotic sleep, they asked her if she saw what awaited her, personally, in the future. She wrote the following words: "My career will be short; I dare not say what my end will be: it will be terrible!" The experimenters, much impressed, erased the words before she awakened; thus, consciously at least, she never knew what a terrible thing she had predicted for herself.

Several months afterward her hair-dresser was sprinkling her hair with an antiseptic lotion made of mineral essences, when she let several drops of the liquid fall on a lighted stove. These instantly flamed up; fire enveloped the hair and clothing of the actress, who in a second was wrapped in flames, and suffered such burns that she died at the hospital a few hours later.

<sup>1</sup> See *Annales des Sciences psychiques*. 1912, p. 306.

Bozzano observes in this connection:

It is premonitions of this sort which, collected and arranged in large numbers, would lead us to infer the existence of something like a "fatality" ruling human destinies in mysterious fashion; that is, unless we wish, with regard to this episode, to bring forward the hypothesis of "reincarnation"; according to this, the spirit itself might have freely predetermined this terrible end, as an expiation or a test.

Lord Dufferin's experience shows us, however, that these portents do not always prove fatal. His vision was symbolic; but by what unknown force could he have escaped? The following is an incident of a rather worldly nature.

A singular enough premonitory dream was told me in a letter dated April 23, 1899, by a correspondent really astounded by its realization:

The night before my young brother died, I had a veritable nightmare. I was in my parish church; it was crowded; I saw a priest whom my brother knew; he was walking in the midst of the crowd; then I saw a lady who came toward me with an air of fury and said to me: "You think you're beautiful in your dress,"—a dress which did, in fact, please me (I had just had it made, and had worn it only a few times). She went on, "You won't wear it for long!" Startled, I woke up. In the morning, my brother fell to the ground with a stroke of apoplexy, and he died in the evening at eight o'clock.

(Letter 624.)

What a singular form of warning! People have no idea of the variety of these premonitions. The following one is not less surprising. It is slightly reminiscent of Lord Dufferin's.

A man recognized himself in a corpse, and died some days afterward. This story was related by a priest of Brittany, Monsieur Jules Pachen, in the "*Annales des Sciences psychiques*"<sup>1</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> December, 1906, p. 733.

In the Department of Finistère, the parish rector, after leaving high mass, went to the vicarage, carrying a silver-gilt chalice, and went up to his room to leave it there. In going down into the dining-room, in a corner at the bend of the stairway he was obliged to make room for a corpse which was being brought down from the first floor. He recognized himself in this corpse! The prey of intense emotion, he entered the dining-room, where he found his vicar. The latter, struck by the pallor of his face, said to him, "Are you ill?"—"No, no; but this is what has just happened to me." He told of the incident; the vicar was skeptical. The other held to what he was sure of having seen, and as a means of verification added, "I shall be carried down from my room by So-and-so and So-and-so." He named four priests of the neighboring parishes.

After vespers the priest put his spiritual and temporal affairs in order. He fell ill; in a few days he was dead.

The vicar announced his death. The priests of the neighboring parishes came, as was the custom, to discharge their last duties to their deceased colleague. The four priests designated by the deceased came forward, of their own free will, to take the body down into the dining-room, transformed into a chapel, where tapers were to be burned about the coffin.

The priest's premonitory vision was thus realized. This happened about fifteen years ago. The occurrence is known to the priests of Quimper.

In writing this chapter, it seems to me appropriate to publish here the following letter (received in April, 1899) from an enlightened correspondent of long experience. We are still in Brittany.

*Inter-portents:* Though I myself have not been a witness of the phenomena which you have undertaken to study analytically, I think it no less than my duty to bring to your attention the following experiences of persons of my acquaintance, whose perfect good faith could not be doubted in any respect whatsoever, and who have

declared themselves ready to confirm these accounts in detail, over their signatures.

Manifestations, apparitions, presentiments, etc., have in all times been of frequent occurrence in Brittany. They are called *inter-portents*. Monsieur le Bras, professor of history in the Quimper Lyceum, has published numerous examples of them.

Here is, in a few words, a description of each of the inter-portents fulfilling the requirements of your investigation; they were told me *directly* by the persons concerned, and I consider them absolutely authentic:

(1) A terrific noise was heard during the night, at the same moment, by two women living alone, one of whose rooms was placed directly over the other,—a noise like the falling of their own home. The husband of one of these two neighbors was a sailor on a merchant vessel, on its way to a foreign country. This manifestation coincided with his death.

(2) A similar manifestation took place at the home of a widow, also living in Paimpol. This inter-portent was the precursor of the death of one of her nieces, who lived in Paris,—a death of which she learned two days afterward.

(3) Similarly, it was by an inter-portent that the widow in question learned, before having been otherwise informed of it, of the death of her niece's little daughter, who died in Paris. This child had, after her mother's death, been left with one of her aunts in Tréguier. The manifestation took the form of violent shakings, during the night, of the door-handle of the room in which the widow was lying.

(4) A seraphic chant heard simultaneously, during the night, by two persons, mother and daughter, who were lying in the same room, but each in a separate bed. The mother noted the day of the month on which this manifestation took place. She was in this way able to ascertain later that it happened on the very day of the death of one of her relatives, a missionary martyred in China.

(5) An apparition: A captain, on a long voyage, appeared in the course of the night to his wife, walking up and down the room in which she was lying, not yet asleep. The day before, this captain had set sail for Ireland. Three months later it was learned

that on the very night on which he had appeared to his wife the vessel under his command had been run into by an English ship. This accident at sea cost the lives of all those aboard the French vessel.

I might have added to the manifestation related above, some cases of inter-portents having to do not with the living but with persons in good health, whose deaths, occurring shortly afterward, seem to have been announced in this way.

J. GALOBERT,

Navy Commissioner in retirement in Paimpol.

(Letter 581.)

We shall make, later (in Chapter IX), a special study of sounds, movements, and the striking of blows connected, indubitably, with deaths.

The letter just read is in some respects an abridged version of our collected observations. Brittany has no monopoly of them, though more careful note is there taken of them. Perhaps the natives of Brittany are by temperament more sensitive to them. Has not Cæsar already spoken of this in his "Gallic Wars"?

The experience related below is, perhaps, still more fantastic than the preceding ones, and we should not believe it if it had not brought about the conversion of a man fundamentally skeptical, who called all psychists "idiots" and "befuddlers." The hero of this story is a Monsieur Pyrrhus Bessi, well known in Sicily. He himself wrote the following account <sup>1</sup>:

Last year (1899), in the month of December, at a reunion of my wife's family one evening we were talking gaily, gathered around a good fire on the great hearth, when we heard, suddenly, a terrific noise, as though a gun had been fired close to our ears!

After our first moment of surprise, we sought to explain the occurrence by first finding out whether it was not a practical joke, or something more serious. One of us went up to the attic; as for

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Etudes psychiques*, by César de Vesme, 1901, p. 27.

me, I went down to inspect the cellar. Nothing! We then examined the guns: they were still loaded.

When we got back to the kitchen, we still smelled the same very marked odor of burnt powder,—to such an extent that we had to open the window.

I admit that I was astounded. I was all the more so when I noted that my relatives' attitude denoted depression rather than surprise.

After a moment of profound silence, I asked them what was the matter. My father-in-law said with a melancholy sigh:

"At last you'll believe."

I did not answer.

"My dear boy," he added, "that report is a bad omen!"

"Come, come!" I replied. "Superstitions!"

He shrugged his shoulders, a little annoyed. But, when a moment had passed, he went on:

"Superstitions? I speak from experience, from painful experience. You must know that this isn't the first time this has happened, and it's always been followed by a misfortune in our home. Eight days before my poor sister died we heard the same report. Do you remember it?" he asked, addressing his wife and the old maid-servant.

The two women answered in the affirmative, with gestures of sadness.

"And, besides that, fifteen days before the death of my first son we had this same warning."

I could not yet have entire faith in these words; still, I felt disturbed.

Once more, heavy silence reigned in the room. But it was soon broken by the ringing of a bell.

I myself went to open the door. It was my father-in-law's first cousin, a well-to-do landed proprietor who lived in the farthest quarter of the town.

He entered, without even troubling to say good day. He had an air of sadness and consternation.

These are the first words which he spoke:

"Did n't you hear anything?"

All of us, I included, answered at once, hardly giving him time to finish his question:

"You heard it, too, then?"

"Yes, the loud firing off of a gun. We were eating supper."

The short account which he gave us increased my astonishment greatly. This strange coincidence of two identical and simultaneous incidents made me reflect. Nevertheless, I would not yet admit that "spirits" were concerned in it.

On the following days nothing more was said of the matter. Two weeks went by in this way.

One evening I was alone, writing. Fatigued with work, I halted, lit a cigarette, and stretched myself out in an arm-chair. Before me, in an old mirror, were reflected the bluish coils of the smoke; I was amusing myself by sending it into space.

The cigarette was half consumed when I perceived that the flame of my lamp was sinking. I wished to snuff it, but the wick went out suddenly.

I was greatly astonished to see that despite this the room was still irradiated by a faint grayish light.

Glancing, by chance, toward the mirror, I saw that it reflected a light more vivid than a moment before; in it could be seen a room rather brightly illuminated, with furniture that was different from mine. One would have said that, instead of the mirror, there was an opening through which another room of the house could be perceived. I thought I must be dreaming; nevertheless, I remained motionless, astounded by this scene.

I then saw an old lady come forward; I recognized her as my father-in-law's aunt, the mother of the cousin who had come to our house during that memorable evening when the sinister report of a gun had been heard.

The old lady sat down at a table, took some sheets of paper from a drawer, and began to write slowly, with an air of great absorption, but with great care, without once lifting her head. She then enclosed the written sheet in an envelop, which she put into the drawer. Then she leaned her head against the back of the arm-chair, and seemed to fall asleep.

I gazed without even moving a muscle of my face, but a cold sweat made me shiver. However, I could not take my eyes from the mirror.

But the light that was mysteriously reflected in it grew fainter gradually, as though the invisible lamp which illuminated the room in which the old lady was sleeping were going out; and it was not long before the darkness grew as intense in the mirror as in my study.

This left me, for a long time, the prey of a veritable terror. I wished to rise, to shake off this painful state of mind; but I neither could nor dared.

I cannot say how long I remained thus, in darkness. The dawn would probably have surprised me in the arm-chair, if my wife, seeing that I delayed so long in going to bed, had not come to look for me.

You will say that we are here concerned with a simple phenomenon of hallucination. Well, I thought this when the next day I awoke from a short, troubled sleep.

But some moments afterward I was told that the old lady whom I had seen in the mirror had been found dead, in the course of that very night, in the arm-chair in which it had seemed to me that she had gone to sleep, and that her will, written wholly by herself, had been found in the drawer of the table!

PIRRO BESSI.

The writer Bessi was then living in Cefalu, in the province of Palermo. It was at Panicale that the incidents in question took place. Panicale is a community of four thousand inhabitants, in the province of Perugia. The various persons, who, together with Monsieur Bessi, were the witnesses of this occurrence, wished to vouch for its truth in the following document:

Panicale, April 17, 1901.

The undersigned—the wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, and brother-in-law respectively of Professor Pirro Bessi of Cortone, and his father-in-law's cousin—consider it their duty to declare that the account given by their relative is perfectly exact, as regards the report of a gun heard simultaneously in the dwelling of the first four persons undersigned and in the dwelling of the fifth, although the two houses are on opposite sides of the district.

They consider it pertinent to add that they heard, on other occasions as well, and always simultaneously in the two houses, noises like the firing of a gun, and that this was always a sign foretelling the death of some relative, which was not long in coming.

LOUISE BESSI, NÉE LANDI.

ANGE LANDI.

ADÉLAIDE LANDI.

CÉSAR LANDI.

FRANÇOIS BASTIANELLI.

We may remark, as did C. de Vesme, that the scene perceived in the mirror did not really take place there; no one with good sense can doubt this. The bright surface aids in bringing the subject into a state of semi-hypnosis, in which he *sees* all these things very much as he sees them in an ordinary dream. It is, in some degree, a waking dream.

One may well imagine that this double experience—reports of a gun at the time of a death, and the visioning of the person about to die, at the moment she was writing her will—changed the witness's incredulity into a conviction of the reality of these facts, however inexplicable they be. Vision at a distance is to-day well enough known. But the report of a gun that was heard without the gun having been fired by any one, is still more enigmatical,—although incontestable.

When we ourselves come into contact with occult physics, we can no longer deny; we are convinced of what we have seen and heard.

All this seems as absurd to us as it is unbelievable. But how can we refuse to admit the truth of observations a hundred times attested? The tragic death of Irène Muza the actress was foretold to her in a state of hypnosis; that of the priest of Brittany was seen by himself, etc. Can we put in this category the death of King Ludwig II of Bavaria (1886), struggling with his physician in the lake near his

palace? With regard to this struggle in the lake, Charles du Prel has made known the following facts:

Some days before Dr. von Gudden's departure for Hohen-schwangau to be with Ludwig II, whose transference to the castle of Berg was not yet decided upon, the doctor came to breakfast in an ill humor, and told his wife that the whole night long he had been tormented by a dream in which he had struggled with a man in the water. Later on, the doctor's widow told this dream to the deputation from the Munich Anthropologic Society, on the occasion of her receiving condolences from the members of the society. I had the story from one of the witnesses.<sup>1</sup>

It is plain enough, Du Prel observed, that Dr. von Gudden had, in a dream, a very distinct vision; the strong impression it left made it possible for him to remember it after he awoke. But the king's person faded into that of any man.

On a trip to Munich (1906) I had occasion to visit the Lake of Starnberg, where this dramatic drowning took place. The spot is not deep, and is near the bank, and it would seem that there was in this case a singular act of aberration on the part of the king, who had, moreover, been virtually insane for some time.

Let us investigate everything. Let us seek. How shall we interpret the really extraordinary warning an account of which follows? It is a symbolic, supernormal warning of an accident, in the form of a bizarre dream related by Monsieur Bozzano<sup>2</sup>:

The observer and the narrator was a certain Mr. Brighten, known to Mr. Podmore, who describes him as an intelligent, perspicacious man, practical and well-balanced. He tells us that in 1861 one of his friends, Mr. James Clareckburn, having acquired a steamboat for river navigation, asked him to go on an excursion with him. They left Norwich, and after their first day's trip on the river stopped for the night at

<sup>1</sup> See *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1912, p. 306.

<sup>2</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, Sept., 1907.

Yarmouth, a short distance from the mouth of the river; they attached the boat to a near-by vessel, by means of cords fastened to the bow and the stern. After that, at about half-past nine, they withdrew into their respective cabins. Mr. Brighten writes:

I may have slept for some hours when my dream began. I fancied that I opened my eyes and that I saw, through the ceiling of the cabin, two shadowy phantoms hovering in the air near the funnel! They seemed absorbed in lively conversation, and pointed now to the mouth of the river, now to the ropes which held the vessel. At length they separated, gesticulating and winking as though they had agreed upon a plan of action. Still suspended in the air, one of them went to the bow and the other to the stern, both holding their forefingers extended, with which they touched the ropes, simultaneously; these flamed as though they had been touched by hot irons. The vessel, unattached, was borne along, drifting; it passed beneath the suspension bridge, then the other iron bridge, passed by Braidon, the Yarmouth bridge, and the long line of boats which had cast anchor in this spot. All this time the two phantoms, still hovering in the air above the boat, emitted strange musical sounds. I wished to wake my companion because I well knew that, if the current carried us to the mouth of the river, we should inevitably be wrecked as we passed through the rocks; and in the dream I strove to shake off the incubus which oppressed me, but in vain. We still went on; my eyes discerned every object in our course; we passed Southdown, then the village of Gorleston, and at length we reached the last curve of the river, where the water rushes precipitately over the rocks and mingles with the sea. In a short time we were borne on by these whirlpools, and I saw that the boat was beginning to sink. The musical sounds emitted by the two phantoms then changed to terrifying howls of triumph. The water reached my chin; there was a rattling in my throat; I was drowning.

This was my dream,—or, rather, my nightmare,—which awakened me violently. I leaped from my bunk and went toward the door, which I broke down with one blow. I found myself awake, in my night-clothes, beneath a serene, moonlit night sky. Instinct-

ively I looked toward the rope at the stern, and saw with terror that just at that moment it had broken. I turned toward the hook on the near-by ship, close to our bow, and saw beside me my companion, who had come running at the sound of the shattered door, and was telling me of the other rope, which was gone. We both clung desperately to the hooks with our hands, heedless of our skin, which was bleeding, and we called for help. Men from the near-by vessel came without delay, in time to get new ropes for us. The danger past, my friend began to reproach me for having broken the door. I answered by telling him of the occurrence, which had left me still greatly agitated. On the following morning, in thinking calmly of what had happened, I was able to convince myself that if, at the moment when the ropes had parted, we had continued to sleep, the drama of my dream would have been inexorably realized in all its details.

WILLIAM E. BRIGHTEN.

Mr. J. W. Clarekburn, the narrator's companion in adventure, confirmed this story.<sup>1</sup>

Myers made the following reflection on the subject:

Mr. Brighten was informed in some way of the danger he was running, which no normal faculty of his spirit could have revealed to him. Is this clairvoyance? Is it the manifestation of an uncomprehended intelligence, incarnate or disembodied? I feel that I would not be sincere if I should let it be thought that we are in possession of the explanation.

To interpret this fantastic warning is, indeed, extremely difficult. Other observations leave us in the same predicament.

That the diabolical phantoms seen in this nightmare were there, we cannot so easily admit. But what actually was there? As a contrast to it the result was an effective protection,—a rescue.

Invisible forces, and even invisible beings, are about us; this subject will be especially investigated farther on. Let

<sup>1</sup> See *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, VIII, 401.

us not change our course. We are advancing slowly but surely along a road which we ourselves are marking out and building, on brush-covered ground, almost all of which has to be cleared.

Do we not note from time to time, in the course of human events—speaking generally or in particular—certain occurrences, at once unforeseen and logical, which would seem to indicate the existence of an inherent justice? Is it forbidden to admit the influence of invisible beings, who direct affairs? The ant does not see the foot that crushes it. Microbes govern our health without our seeing them.

The mind of terrestrial man is not supreme in the universal hierarchy. There are intellectual beings superior to him, just as there are in the sky worlds superior to that on which we dwell. There may be, on our own planet, invisible beings whose worth greatly surpasses ours. These beings may perceive our actions. Their seeing them would not keep us from acting freely. You know what your dog will do under certain given conditions; but it is not your knowledge of this that will make him act in that way; one may admit that a being as superior to man as an intelligent man is superior to his dog, might know how man will make use of his remnant of free choice. Without returning to what we said as to the visioning of the future and of liberty<sup>1</sup>, we may suppose that beings superior to us see the future as though it were the present.

Our research will lead us gradually to revelatory investigations.

There are warnings the origin of which is truly enigmatical. To give one example in a hundred, Victorien Sardou told me that when he was one day following the rue de la Banque, a voice in him cried, "Cross over!" He obeyed, and immediately afterward a stone, loosened from a cornice, fell upon the

<sup>1</sup> *Before Death*, pp. 94 and 264.

sidewalk over which he was about to pass. This must be classed with the command given the young girl in her bath. (Volume I, page 90.)

The warnings of a psychic nature with which this chapter is concerned, have been known since the earliest times, but have not been sufficiently understood up to the present. To give only the most celebrated example, the famous "demon of Socrates" represents one of these phenomena. We have read of it in the works of all the authors, in all the commentaries, from Plato, Xenophon, and Plutarch to Lelut. We see in its case precise predictions which cannot be attributed to chance. It was caused either by a dissociation of Socrates's personality, or by an external spirit. Assuredly, the difficulty of explanation is serious. Lelut, professor at the Sorbonne, a rather famous member of the Institute, extricated himself a bit thoughtlessly by declaring, simply, that the wise Socrates was mad! This is no explanation at all, though this interpretation has been the official, standard theory for sixty years. The old hypothesis of an auditory hallucination does not explain everything; the recent discovery of the subconscious is ingenious, but is not a universal solution.

As a matter of fact, the personal previsions of death related in this chapter,—above all, those of Jean Vitalis and of Casareto, the case of Bessi, that of Brighten, etc.,—gradually reveal to us an invisible world wholly unexplored.

With regard to all the phenomena which we have presented so far, we have remained in the world of the living. It was with that world, in fact, that our general synthesis had to begin. These observations antedate terrestrial death. We here reach the frontier of the other world. We shall be witnesses of the direct functioning of the soul at the moment of death, whether it be mentally, without physical phenomena, or materially; we shall render complete, by means of new facts proved with certainty, the documents revealed in the

pages which we have read. These transmissions are often astounding, are illustrated by fantastic visionings—still more strange, at times, than the preceding ones—and are, no less than the others, absolutely indubitable.

## VIII

### MENTAL IMPRESSIONS OF DEATHS OR ACCIDENTS AT A DISTANCE (WITHOUT PHYSICAL PHENOMENA)

He felt himself under the solemn influences of nature: a vast and infinite magnetism which is the life of creation and joins the atom to the universe.

BULWER LYTTON.—TANONI.

**T**HE warnings preceding or announcing death which have just passed before our eyes have brought us face to face with the physiological and psychological phenomena of death. We shall make a special investigation of the psychic phenomena. There is such great diversity in the circumstances connected with the cessation of material life that we must now less than ever deviate from the principles of a rigorous scientific method; we must put our observations into distinct categories, that we may better discuss them. The greatest clearness, the most careful division of labor, the most painstaking classification is necessary. We may hope to lay, in this way, the foundations of the new science.

Certain manifestations of the dying and the dead will in the next chapters be shown as characterized by unexplained noises, by the striking of blows here and there, by the shifting about of objects, by material occurrences affecting the senses of observers, or giving them that impression. We have already, more than once, encountered this sort of manifestations. As to the fundamental distinctions of which we are speaking, this present chapter will be exclusively given

over to sensations experienced by our minds, *without the accompaniment of physical phenomena: mental sensations.* They have their own importance.

Let us collect these proofs, which are much more numerous than is believed, but which remain generally unknown.

As I have remarked a hundred times, the greater part of psychic phenomena remain ignored, hidden,—are useless for our anthropological studies. A painter, a capital fellow, whom I have known for more than twenty years, told me yesterday, while I was working on this chapter, that when he was walking one day in the Bois de Boulogne, flirting with a jolly little actress, and they were talking of rather flippant things, she had halted suddenly, exclaiming: “Oh, how sad I feel! What’s happening to me!” And she begun to weep.

This was what had happened: at that very hour her father was dying, far away, in the country.

“Why did you never tell me of this?” I asked my friend.

“Because it was n’t worth while. It was mere chance! And then—it’s contrary to religion.”

It is not contrary to religion, according to him, to amuse oneself with actresses, but it is contrary to religion to busy oneself with the human soul.

It is, however, just such commonplace reasons which have until now kept the metaphysical sciences from progressing. People judge superficially; they are content to think there is only chance in these telepathic coincidences.

Up to the present how difficult it has been to investigate these facts! In general they are not spoken of; they are denied, are hidden; for one reason or another they are kept out of sight. To give one example out of a thousand: readers have had an opportunity to see, in “L’Inconnu” (page 181) the touching story of a child who went in spirit to kiss his mother, at the moment of his death, and to console her. When I wished to ask the narrator about this vision, which

might have been attributed to an hallucination, I received the following reply :

In spite of my great desire to satisfy you, by asking my aunt to give you, herself, an account of the occurrence of which I have told you, I cannot do it. My aunt has wished always to keep this memory of her son for herself alone, thinking, perhaps, that she would profane it if she spoke of it to strangers, and she has never mentioned it except to her family. These poor parents think with joy of this last good-by of their son.

I do not wish to tell her that I have committed this slight indiscretion in your favor, since I did it only to give you one more example to add to all those, so convincing, that you have already given. Certainly, there was no hallucination or illusion. My uncle and my aunt were absolutely incredulous as to all these questions. When they were told stories of this sort, they laughed, and might easily have called mad those who told them; they now laugh at those who do not believe these things, and this memory is always a very sweet emotion to them, for they are persuaded that their dear son did not wish to leave them without saying good-by.

Thus, the occurrence was accepted as real, incontestable, but—it must not be spoken of!

Let us thrust obstacles aside, and push forward.

We shall give this chapter over to *mental impressions at a distance*. All accounts which we are about to read have to do with definite observations.

I owe to a most learned man—an independent seeker and a courageous experimenter—the following curious narration:

In 1879 I was pupil in Stanstead College, at about 130 kilometers from Montreal.

The principal of the college was at that time the Rev. A. Lee Holmes, a man of great stature, long-bearded, his manner patriarchal; he was good and just and, in consequence, greatly beloved of all the masters and pupils. I had a companionable room-mate, named Charles. I was still very young, very devout; my faith

was, perhaps, ingenuous, but it was sincere and limitless. I had never heard theosophy, occultism, or spiritualism spoken of; the very words themselves were unknown to me.

One day—it was a Sunday morning—I was in the grip of an indefinable restlessness. I had, however, no reason for sadness; I was in good health, had only friends, and stood well in almost all my classes. My room-mate tried to cheer me by all possible means, but in vain; this melancholy grew intense, and took possession of my whole being.

When, at midday, the bell rang for luncheon, I went down to the refectory and took my place at the table, but I could not eat; I was weighed down by a sadness which clutched at my heart. About three o'clock in the afternoon I felt an irresistible need of being alone. I asked my room-mate to be so good as to leave; he consented; I locked the door, that I might not be disturbed. I sat down at my little writing-table, meditative; my head in my hands, I tried to account for my condition, to find a reason for this unaccustomed sadness. Suddenly I experienced something resembling a slight torpor, and I had the sensation of flying through space with the rapidity of thought; but it was so dark that I saw nothing distinctly, and I can only compare this phenomenon to the changes of scenery which are sometimes effected in a theater, when all the lights are out and the curtain has not been lowered. Then I found myself in a room. At first I distinguished only the four walls; then objects appeared vaguely, and, little by little, grew clearer and more distinct.

It was a bedroom; on a bed was lying a woman who seemed very ill; beside the bed another woman was standing, looking at the sick woman attentively; at the foot of the bed another woman was sobbing; I could not see her face, but recognized her all the same; in the opposite corner was a table at which a man was sitting, pen in hand; on the table was an inkstand and paper.

I recognized all these persons: the ill woman was my mother, the two women were my sisters, and the man my brother Adolphe. I then heard Adolphe say to Mother, "What must we write him?" and Mother answered, "Write him that the doctor has said I have n't long to live, and that if he wishes to see me alive, he must come at once." I understood that they were talking of me, and that this letter was

destined for me. Suddenly I again had the feeling of a rapid change of scene, in darkness, and I found myself back in my room. A great anxiety then mingled with my sadness; I longed to get this letter, which I knew had been written; but it could not leave Montreal before Monday, and, in consequence, I could not receive it until Tuesday morning.

I got through Monday as best I could; Tuesday morning came. It was the principal's habit to distribute the mail after breakfast, toward seven o'clock. Too impatient to wait for the end of the meal and until prayers were over, I went to Mr. Holmes to ask him to have the kindness to give me my letter. "What letter?" he demanded. "A letter I'm expecting from Montreal this morning," I answered. "Go and sit down in your place, and wait for your turn, like the others," he said. At last I got this letter I had waited for so impatiently; it contained little else than the words which I had seen the evening before the last. When I touched this letter, something strange happened within me: a sudden and inexplicable joy took the place of sadness; I grew suddenly happy, but without knowing why. I showed the letter to the principal, who said to me: "I will allow you a holiday, and you may go this very morning; there is a train which leaves about noon. Go and get ready."

It then came into my mind that Mother was better, and that this was the cause of the inner joy which I felt. So I told Mr. Holmes that I would not leave that day, that I should wait. "What!" he cried, "you won't leave to-day? But if you put off your departure until to-morrow, your mother will, perhaps, be dead when you arrive. If you need money," he added, "I'll lend you some, and I'll also lend you a nice large cloak, to wrap yourself up in warmly." (For it was winter and very cold.) "I thank you very much," I answered, "but I don't want to go to-day, for I believe that an unexpected change has taken place, and that Mother is much better."—"But what do you know about it?" he answered. After a moment of confusion I answered: "I don't know, but just as I learned that that letter would arrive this morning, containing what it does contain, I *feel* that Mother is now out of danger."

"What sort of old woman's tale are you telling me? Take care, sir," he added in severe tones: "when one yields to such idle

fancies one loses faith quickly." He reprimanded me severely, made me promise never to speak of this incident to the other pupils, and to forget it completely.<sup>1</sup>

The next day I actually received a letter from my brother, informing me that during the night an un hoped for improvement had taken place in our Mother's condition, and that she was now quite out of danger.

I kept my word: I spoke of this to no one, and I should, perhaps, have forgotten it, if I had not later had other experiences of the same sort. I must also add, with regret, that at this time I attached so little importance to these proofs that I destroyed, with many others, the two letters mentioned above. *But these facts are yours.*

ERNEST DE SASSEVILLE.

My readers are now fairly well advanced in the knowledge of these phenomena of vision at a distance, and the preceding chapters have put enough examples before their eyes for them not to be surprised by these new observations. I am giving them here, not for the sake of demonstrating vision at a distance—for it would teach them nothing new as to this—but for the phenomenon of an *inner sensation of the soul*: we are going farther and farther into the psychic world.

The story of this occurrence was sent me from Canada. Here is another of quite the same sort, sent me from the United States.

We are here concerned with a transference of thought over a distance, at the moment of a mother's death, from her daughter in Mexico to her daughter in New York. I received the following letter after the publication of "L'Inconnu":

My mother died on November 18, 1889, eight months ago. She had fallen ill with pneumonia, on the first of the month. We

<sup>1</sup> We understand all these reflections of the principal, expressed to his pupil.

were living in Mexico. My sister, who is the wife of the president of the International Bank, in New York, and who is living in that city, could not come, she herself being unwell. As her father-in-law was president of the Union Cables Company, I had been allowed to send as many messages a day as I thought necessary to keep my poor sister informed as to our mother's illness. I sent two cables a day from November first to the seventeenth. That day I sent one which read, "Mother very low, but doctor has not lost hope." There was no reason to think her worse. On the eighteenth, at ten o'clock, my dear mother breathed her last, and my grief was so poignant that I did not think of letting my sister know. I did not do so until the next day. She then wrote me, asking me to state the exact day and hour of the death; she told me that, not having got any news on the eighteenth, she had believed Mother better. She told me, however, that she had suddenly been seized with a nervous trembling and had begun to weep, and when the servants had asked her what was the matter, she had answered, "My mother is dead; I hear my sister's cries." Raising her eyes to the clock, she had seen that it was ten o'clock. At that hour I was on my knees, weeping, my head upon a chair, listening to my mother's last breaths, and realizing that all was over. I uttered a cry, so terrible that they thought I had gone mad.

Allow me to tell you, dear Master, that your book soothes my very soul, for I now know that when I felt my mother's hand caress me, some months after her death, it was not a dream! she was really there, near me, who loved her so.

Forgive this letter, Monsieur Flammarion, but I feel comforted since I have told you my thoughts, and I dare to hope for some lines from you, giving me more enlightenment as to my experience.

Last week, I was in bed, with a great restlessness at my heart. The physician had found me with your book in hand, and had forbidden me to read it, saying that my nerves were already too highly strung, too much on edge; but I was able to convince him that the book acted, on the contrary, as a sedative and not as an excitant. For my part, I thank you with all my heart for having written it, and I beg you to believe that in this distant

country, exiled afar from lovely France, which I adore, you have a most humble but fervent admirer.

GEORGINA BERNSTEIN.

Mexico, July 31, 1900.

(Letter 932.)

In this account, so honest and so sincere, we feel with certainty that there was telepathic transmission between Mrs. Bernstein and her sister, from Mexico to New York, at the moment of their mother's death, and that the mother's affection for her daughters was connected with this transmission.

These mental impressions, at a distance, of the deaths or illnesses of loved ones, have been told of in every country. The two preceding communications were sent me from Canada and the United States. Here is another received from Asiatic Turkey:

Knowing that you gather, as precious, everything relating to telepathy, I take the liberty of telling you the story of two cases which took place in our city; I ask you, if you publish my letter, to give only the initials of the names I entrust to you.

Monsieur and Madame T—— had a cousin, Madame D——, who lived in France. One night they both awakened suddenly, and Monsieur T—— said to his wife: "A strange sensation just waked me; I have a very ominous presentiment regarding your cousin D——."

"I am sure she is dead!" Madame T—— exclaimed at once, "for I have just seen her house, empty, in a dream, and her daughter in mourning, crying."

The clock stood at half-past two. The next day they received news of the death, which had occurred *at half-past two*. They verified the time.

This was a communication between a dying woman and living persons, but the following story has to do with two living persons in good health.

Dr. N—— had ordered some medicines from his druggist; the

latter neglected, for a week, to prepare them. One evening the doctor, who was much annoyed by this delay, went to bed with the intention of going to reprimand the druggist. During the night he awakened, hearing, most distinctly, a voice saying, "*At half-past seven in the morning.*" The doctor looked at his watch, it was half-past three.

The next day he went to the druggist, who gave him his bottles, saying: "Ah, Doctor, you must be angry with me; I understand why, and last night when my alarm-clock woke me up at half-past three, to go hunting, I said to my wife, 'I'll be back *at half-past seven* to prepare the doctor's medicine.'"

So was it the druggist's voice which the doctor had heard? How?

It is not for me to draw conclusions, but for the learned. . . . [The customary compliments follow.]

MARIE MAVROGORDATO.

Smyrna, January 28, 1902.

(Letter 1025.)

Yes, we are investigating everything, without preconceived ideas, without prejudices, and caring only to learn. As for conclusions, it follows with certainty from all these occurrences that there are invisible psychic currents between human beings; ideas travel. They are in the air, as the saying goes.

In the first of these two cases, the thought of their dying cousin reached the minds of Monsieur and Madame T—, passing over the distance which separates France from Turkey; they received it at the same time, through two distinct impressions. In the second the mental telephone came into play between the druggist and the physician.

These psychic phenomena, on which so many learned men still cast doubt, have been observed, we say, in all latitudes and under all conditions. After Montreal, Mexico, and Smyrna, come these observations made in Saint Petersburg.

They have to do with *two impressions of death at a dis-*

tance. I take the following accounts from a letter sent me from Russia, in March, 1909:

An eager reader of your works, which are a veritable cult to me, I have no reason for deceiving you, and what I write you is absolute truth.

In 1902 I was living in Saint Petersburg with my husband, who was a professor and a director in a college for young girls. Being, both of us, natives of Moscow, we had left numerous friends there, among others a family named Massaloff, the members of which were two brothers and three sisters, unmarried and already of advanced age.

In my first youth I had had an almost passionate fondness for one of the Demoiselles Massaloff, and I was still deeply attached to her. She was a high-minded person, very learned, and her benevolence was really Christian in spirit; she never thought of herself, always of others. During a severe illness which came upon me shortly after my marriage, she had come to take care of me; her vocation was devotion to her fellow-beings.

Since I had been in Saint Petersburg I had not corresponded with her, but I loved her sincerely; I had heard it said that she had sorrows, and that her health left something to be desired, but I did not know she was seriously ill.

In the month of February, 1902, I had a dream which made a painful impression on me; I saw, very distinctly, a funeral procession, and I heard a voice telling me, "*It is Sophie Massaloff's burial.*" In the morning, I spoke of this dream to my husband, who, wishing to take my mind off it, answered, "It's a portent of long life." Three days afterward my son, aged eighteen, came back from his college, bringing some books wrapped up in a newspaper. It was the "*Novoié Vrémiá*," which neither my husband nor I ever read, because of our political opinions. Nevertheless, I had read in it, one day, by chance, one of the articles on astronomy bearing your name (of which you speak in "*Stella*," page 353).

My son having thrown the newspaper to the ground, I picked it up. At once my eyes fell on the announcement of the death of Mademoiselle S. Masaloff, and of her burial at Moscow, which had taken place the day following my dream.

You may easily imagine that the impression made on me was very painful, and even a little terrifying. I wrote to the sisters of the deceased, telling them how I had learned of my friend's death. The dream preceded the burial.

*Second Occurrence:* I had the terrible misfortune to lose my adored husband, on December 25, 1907. Neither my son nor I expected such an early death. As my husband was continuing his work as a professor and director of the girls' college in Moscow, and did not wish to undergo treatment, we did not think him seriously ill.

On December 24th my son, having eaten supper with his wife and two friends, wished to take a little walk. There was fine moonlight. His thoughts were gay and pleasant. Suddenly—it was at ten o'clock in the evening—a terrible conviction came into his mind which made him stop short. It was like a flash of lightning: "*Father is going to die.*" A shock went through his being. At home once more, he spoke of it to his wife, who tried to comfort him.

Now, precisely on that day, December 24th, at ten o'clock in the evening, my husband fell into a swoon in which he passed away twenty-four hours later.

Here are, dear Master, two absolutely authentic accounts which I submit to you, that you may use them as you please for the general enlightenment.

EUGENIE DE BERKOUT.

Louga, March 7, 1909.  
(Letter 1925.)

Yes, observations made in all countries and under all conditions. We may add, at all ages, even by children. A letter dated July, 1920, recounts the following experience:

My husband has just told me, once more, that he lost his grandfather when *about eight years old*, and that the old man had been found one morning, on the floor of his room, lifeless. For three days previously he had lain in bed. One night, when my father-in-law was staying with the patient, my mother-in-law was taking a little rest in her room, with her two children, who were asleep. Suddenly my future husband sat up in bed and cried out to his mother:

"Mamma, Mamma, what are you doing? Are you asleep? But grandfather is dead!" My mother-in-law, rather affected, told her little boy to be quiet; he lay down again and was quiet at once; he had not even awakened. At four o'clock in the morning my father-in-law went back to his room and said to his wife: "My poor dear, it is all over. Your father is dead!"—"At what time?"—"At midnight." That was the precise hour at which the child had warned his mother. He had, moreover, no memory of it on awakening in the morning.

My husband, who is now forty-nine, is ready to attest the facts, as well as my mother-in-law, who is still living and who gave them to me again a month ago; if you wish to verify them, it will be easy.

JEANNE LUMET,

Paris.

(Letter 4207.)

Telepathic transmission does not seem to be absolutely certain here, since the child had heard those around him speak of his grandfather's desperate condition. It may be set down, nevertheless, among the facts to be compared.

I possess accounts of several similar incidents in my collection of documents, which enhance the value of those just given; for example, the following, which could not be explained by the hypothesis of telepathy.

Here is an extraordinary impression on the part of a child:

My mother was four or five years old when, one night, waking up with a start, she sat up and greatly frightened her parents by crying three times, "Dies! dies! dies!"

Nevertheless, since she was a very nervous child, they attached no importance to what they took for a nightmare. But in the course of the day they received a telegram announcing the death of my mother's grandfather,—a death that occurred at precisely the time when she had uttered the cry.

I must add that she and her parents did not know that the old man was ill.

Such is the occurrence, as it was told me by my mother herself, who has retained *an unforgettable memory* of it.

One of your readers of the Department du Gard, who greatly wishes to tell you of this inexplicable happening, but prefers not to be mentioned by name,

N. S.

(Letter 73.)

In this case we cannot conceive of any autosuggestion on the child's part.

There are not only physical ties between the members of the same family, between grandfathers and grandchildren, between mothers and their sons. We do not know the laws of incarnation. There are mental ties. The following communication was sent me in April, 1899:

My mother is very affectionate. All mothers are, but with her, affection is so great that it is almost a disease! When a member of the family dies, she cannot escape her eight days in bed, and even on the third or fourth anniversaries she spends two days in bed.

With these facts before us, here is the account:

I was a student of medicine, far from my family. Every time a malady laid its hand on me my mother said to the family, "My son is ill." I always got a letter from home, telling me of my mother's fears, and my sister would add, "She will have it that you are tired out; reassure her." She was, however, always right.

Here is something more striking still. I went—three times, indeed—to give her a kiss, without warning her; I had told no one of my intended trip; it took me thirty-six hours to reach home; the train always arrived after supper. Now, the day when I was to arrive, my mother did not wish any one to sit down at the table—"I am waiting for my son"—and she herself prepared certain dishes which I liked. The family joked with her: "You're going to give us a real meal to-night; it's good you aren't going to put the old bottle away which you got out for your son,—a notion you have to-day." I arrived. And this happened three times!

Last year, being in Algeria, I went to France to take my final

examinations; I did not write home. I received, through the department in which I was, a letter from my sister; she told me: "Our mother assures us that you went to take your examinations, and that you were admitted, but surely you would have let us know if you had left Algeria." Her letter had been addressed to Algeria.

This is what I was anxious to let you know. If this document would be helpful to you at any time, use it. But I shall ask you to give only the initial of my name.

Dr. F.

Drôme.

(Letter 596.)

The mental disturbance about to be described is of the same sort as those preceding. It also was told me, as a personal experience, by the celebrated Polish painter Jan Styka, in the following letter, of November 2, 1920:

DEAR MASTER AND FRIEND:

Here is the occurrence of which I spoke to you. It was in 1912. We had left, my son Tadée and I, for Mentone, in order to go to Gorbio to visit the sanatorium. When we got to Mentone we did not find the automobile there which ran to and from Gorbio. We were obliged to go into a confectioner's shop, and to take something to eat there, that we might be privileged to use the telephone to ask to have the automobile sent for us. While we were waiting for it, drinking chocolate, I was suddenly gripped and tortured by most painful forebodings about my grandson Casper, who at that time was seven years old. At that moment I realized just what it meant,—this relationship of parents and grandparents to their grandchildren. I thought of my wife's father, who was also named Casper. And, sad at heart, I began to weep hot tears; my son, astonished, asked me what was the matter. I told him that I was thinking of my grandchild, and that I did not understand why I was so affected. Well, twenty days afterward I learned, through a letter from my daughter, that at this very moment when I was so overwhelmed, on a Sunday and at the same hour, little Casper had undergone, in Krakow, the operation of trepanning, and had been in danger of dying. The mystery of my emotion was thus ex-

plained. Was that not a telepathic phenomenon which confirms the tentative theory which you put forward?

JAN STYKA.

(Letter 4296.)

This mental impression at a distance shows us that these phenomena are observed even when there are no cases of death,—in the event of serious accident or illness not followed by death; mental perturbations transmitted by ether waves.

How are our destinies determined; how governed? What ties, what affinities, shape events, unknown to us?

Mademoiselle Germaine Sens, whose home is in Bordeaux, told me on June 3, 1920, of a most curious physiological phenomenon, asking me not to reveal any names. Here is this phenomenon:

X—, a lady of great learning, in 1918 lost a little nephew fourteen years old, who was extremely intelligent. This child lived in Bordeaux.

He had a little first cousin born the same year, the same day, and the same hour as he. The two children were fond of each other, resembled each other, wrote each other letters in which there was a little more than expressions of friendship; it was like a budding love.

Now, the two children died the same year, the same day, and the same hour, and of the same illness, one (the little girl) in Paris and the other (the little boy) in Bordeaux.

(Letter 4152.)

The touching union in life and death of these two children inspires reflection. The investigation which I made in this case, as well as in those of other psychic phenomena related by the narrator, furnished, as almost always happens, the fullest confirmation. These fundamental sympathies are rare, but incontestable. They are manifested, above all, between members of the same family, between lovers, between friends. I shall select a few of them from my papers.

Here for example, is a telepathic impression in the case of a twin brother and sister:

I had a twin sister, for whom I felt a very great affection, much greater, perhaps, than that generally found between brothers and sisters.

She was in the home of a friend, about 20 kilometers from my house, when I received, one morning, a letter from the person with whom she was staying; it informed me that my sister was slightly indisposed, but in no danger of any kind.

In the evening of the same day, when I was sitting down at the table to have dinner with my young wife, I suddenly dropped my spoon, crying: "Oh God! My poor sister is dead!"

Unfortunately, it was only too true. I received, half an hour after this warning (if I may use the expression), a telegram informing me of her death, which no one had foreseen.

This is a strange occurrence which I have never been able to explain.

I am not signing my name, having a horror of publicity.

P. B.

March 30, 1899.

(Letter 338.)

While regretting the writer's anonymity (he is singularly timid), I think his story true, and am making it public. If people so often have a horror of publicity, it is because our ignorant adversaries ridicule all this, with a lamentable lack of perception, which halts progress. These observations, however, merit our whole attention.

Here is a similar case of transmission, between a brother and a sister:

One day, a Sunday, a most closely united family was having lunch. It was in Scotland. One of the younger daughters, Marian Griffiths, left the table and went into the garden. They looked for her, and found her, seated, her head in her hands, gazing into a hole full of water. She seemed paralyzed by fear. Then she uttered a cry of

anguish: she had a feeling that her brother was dead, drowned.

This brother, aged nineteen, who was greatly loved by his sister Marian (it was a family of eight), was then fourteen miles from Blackhall, where the family lived. He had been drowned at precisely that hour, in the Firth of Forth, where he was bathing. This was on Sunday, August 1, 1869.<sup>1</sup>

It is impossible to doubt that this brother, finding himself drowning, transmitted to his sister the mental perturbation of his distress.

Here is a similar impression, in the case of a son and his mother, given by Lombroso, who related, among others, the following extremely curious example of telepathic communication from some one dying<sup>2</sup>:

Monsieur T. Brusa, aged thirty-seven, who had a very weak constitution, was tubercular and neurotic. He was dining in Superga, near Turin. It was August 3, 1899, at noon. Suddenly he stopped eating and began to weep, asserting that he saw his mother dying in Asti, without his having been informed of her illness in any way. There was no means of calming him.

He left for Asti, where he learned that his mother had really died of apoplexy, on August 3d, at noon.

The woman who had died had, herself, some years before (in July 1899), left her work suddenly because she had perceived her daughter suffering from headache, and had hastened to see her. She had, in fact, found the young girl ill with erysipelas.

Here is a similar case of transmission, between a daughter and her mother. The following telepathic impression was brought to my attention from Russia, on June 12, 1899:

I was ten years old. My mother was living a hundred versts from me. One morning I heard eight o'clock strike; the sound of the bell nauseated me. I began to weep, and had a nervous attack. My tears and restlessness lasted the whole day, without any one

<sup>1</sup> See *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1891, p. 364.

<sup>2</sup> *Archivio di Psichiatria*, 1901. De Vesme, *Revue des Etudes psychiques*, Dec. 1901, p. 372.

being able to explain them. The evening of the next day, they got a letter announcing the death of my mother at exactly eight o'clock, and the very day of my tears and restlessness.

HELENE DANITOVICH,  
Tyraspol, Russia.

(Letter 668.)

These mental transmissions between a mother and her daughter frequently occur. Although telepathic manifestations of the dying exist in numbers more than great enough to warrant our convictions, it seems to me that when we come upon them in the course of our investigations our duty is to continue to take notice of them. They are so many stones for the edifice of the future. Having read, lately, that work of Paul Augeux (Hugues) entitled "*Manifestations des Esprits*" (Paris, 1857), I noted in it the following account:

As my book was being printed, this is what the "*Courrier de Lyon*" published:

"The night of the 27th-28th a singular case of intuitive vision occurred in the Croix-Russe quarter, in the following circumstances:

"About three months ago Madame and Monsieur B——, who are honest weavers, were moved by a feeling of praiseworthy pity, and took into their home as a servant a young girl from the environs of Bourgoin. She was virtually idiotic; they had met her on the Brignais road, where their house is situated.

"Last Sunday, between two and three o'clock in the morning, they were awakened by her piercing screams; she slept in the work-room which adjoined their bedchamber.

"Madame B——, lighting a lamp, hastened to her, and found her in a state of over-excitement difficult to describe; she was twisting her arms in terrible convulsions, calling her mother, whom she said she had just seen die before her eyes.

"After consoling the poor girl as best she could, Madame B—— went back to her room. The incident was almost forgotten, when, yesterday, Tuesday, in the afternoon, the postman brought a letter from the young girl's guardian, informing her that during the night

of Sunday to Monday, between two and three o'clock in the morning, her mother had died of the effects of a fall from a ladder.

"The poor little idiot left just yesterday morning for Bourgoin, accompanied by Monsieur B——, her employer, there to take over that part of the estate which went to her from her mother, whose deplorable death she had seen so distressingly in a dream."

Though there was not, it seems, any regular inquiry made to verify the incident, it is difficult to suppose it a fabrication, and as a great many absolutely similar ones have been thoroughly verified, this one may, perhaps, be added to the goodly number of observations of these "intuitive visions" as they were then called, or, to express it better, psychic communications at a distance. It must be added that in this case there could be no explanation on the theory of chance coincidence, induced from the subject's uneasiness as to her mother, for the latter did not die of old age or illness but from a sudden and unforeseen accident.

The following experience was similar; I was informed of it by my brother Ernest Flammarion. Among the writers whose works he published was a distinguished young woman, Madame Gina Saze-Bey, winner of the prize in the Beauty Contest in Nice. She had attracted much attention at a festival which he had given in 1893 to bring together the principal authors of his important publishing house. My brother said:

I had published three of her novels, and, as she had ceased to write, I had completely forgotten her. Ten years afterward I found myself, on a Friday, at one of the branches of the publishing house in the Avenue de l'Opera, about three o'clock in the afternoon. Suddenly I had an impression, which persisted, of this charming woman's image; my surprise was all the greater since I had not thought of her for a long time.

The next day I received a letter inviting me to her funeral. When I asked details of her unexpected end, I learned that she had breathed her last at three o'clock in the afternoon, on Friday.

Did she think, as she was dying, of her writings, of her publisher, of the publishing house? Did a wave, speeding through space, encounter a receiving-mechanism in my brain? There is plainly, in this case, something other than a chance coincidence.

ERNEST FLAMMARION.

The correspondence between the death and the impression of it thrusts itself upon our attention in all similar observations.

The telepathic impressions presented in this chapter were produced at the moment when the physical and psychic phenomena which gave rise to them took place. At times the impression preceded them, heralded them,—a new mystery.

Thus the following intuitive impression preceded the event. It was told me, on October 20, 1920, by Prince Troubetzkoy. We have already published (page 168) two remarkable observations made by him.

Some years ago the entire family of Ricordi, the celebrated music publisher of Milan, was living at Number 1 Via Omenoni. On the top floor was living his sister, Amelia Brentano, who was seriously ill; she was the wife of a well-known architect and mother of the famous architect who died prematurely, the winner of the world-wide competition for the best design for the new façade of the cathedral.

The floor below was occupied by friends of the family, the name of which escapes me, Signore and Signora X——. On the evening of Saturday, February 18, 1899, there was a great production at the Scala, but Signore X—— could not persuade his wife to accompany him to the theater. She was in great pain. So he went alone. After midnight, when he came back, he found his apartment lighted, the servants up, and his wife in a distressing condition; an inexplicable emotion weighed upon her; something horrible had, in her fancy, *passed before the window!* Her husband, however, succeeded in calming her and getting her to bed. The night passed “relatively” quietly.

Now, the morning of the next day, poor Signora Brentano, under some pretext or other, sent her attendant away, and, driven by a fixed idea, in a sudden paroxysm opened her window and

threw herself into the street, where the fall killed her; in its course she had passed before the window of Signore X——'s room.

PRINCE TROUBETZKOY.

(Letter 4287.)

To seek an explanation of such extraordinary occurrences would merely waste our time, in the present state of psychic and natural sciences.

Space is lacking to continue the exposition of these most curious happenings. Do a hundred cases offer better proof than ten? Yes, but one must know when to stop. The reader has been enlightened: he now knows what to believe.

Here is, however, a particularly remarkable case which I should be sorry to omit.

Love, affection, mutual attachment are not indispensable conditions for the production of these phenomena, as is shown in the following example.

A telepathic impression of death, complicated by singular intuition, was told me in November, 1920, by Madame Suzanne Ollendorff, wife of the famous Parisian publisher. It is worthy of our undivided attention. Here it is:

That which I am about to narrate took place in the month of March, 1909. It was at the time of the postal and telegraph strike, a forerunner of many others.

One morning, while I was combing my hair, seated at my dressing-table, an idea suddenly came to me that perhaps an aunt—who was my only relative remaining on earth—had died at that hour and that on account of this foolish strike I was unaware of it.

But at once I added mentally: "Yes, I'm going to learn of it, for she is really dead, and the parish priest of X—— will come to tell me of it."

X—— is the place where my aunt lived, and is distant some hours from Paris. I must add that she was then seventy-eight, but was still faithfully "on duty" and rarely ill.

I must also state that there was little sympathy between us. She was an extremely devout person, greatly attached to the

Catholic clergy; she objected to certain independent ideas of mine, which she thought subversive. By nature she was most uncompromising and difficult to get on with. We did not always agree. Nevertheless, I felt a kind of attachment for her, arising, above all, from the fact that we two were the last of our family. In short, the thought that she must have departed this world, unknown to me, haunted me ceaselessly that morning. In the course of the day I received a visit from my husband, who was then only a friend. As I was showing him to the door I told him: "Just think, for some hours I've been possessed by an idea that my aunt must be dead, and that I wasn't told of it on account of the strike; but that I shall learn of it because the priest from X—— is coming to tell me." I added, pointing to the stairway door, "Why I should n't be surprised if I were to see him behind that door."

I opened the door. The priest from X—— was not behind it. My visitor smiled. A short time after his departure one of my friends came to take me out with her. Just then I was brought a line sent by Monsieur Ollendorff, then editor of a great morning newspaper. The line contained simply these words: "If you are still at home when this reaches you, just come over to the newspaper office. I have something important to tell you."

"I know," I said to my friend, "what he wishes to say to me: my aunt is dead, and the priest from X—— is waiting at the office to tell me about it."

I read in my friend's frightened eyes her thought that I must have lost my reason. "Why should you think your aunt is dead?" she said to me. "Why to-day more than any other day? Besides, what would the priest from X—— be doing in the office of that newspaper, which he certainly considers wrong in its views?"

I answered: "Let's go. We'll see."

Some minutes later we arrived at the "Gil Blas." The first thing that we saw was the priest's long black silhouette, standing out in profile against the doorway.

"Ah," I cried to him, "I know what brings you!"

"Yes, Madame," he answered. "Monsieur Ollendorff has just repeated your conversation to me. I am bewildered by it."

My aunt, stricken during the night by congestion of the brain

—which nothing gave warning of—had been found, in the morning, lifeless in her bed. In answer to the cries uttered by her maid-servant, neighbors hastened to come, and these told the priest. The latter, who had been given instructions (for I had a surprise in learning that my aunt had disinherited me in favor of the priests), had vainly sought my address. Not being able to find it, he remembered my husband, who often visited at the homes of his flock. He decided to go directly to the newspaper office, to inform me.

Such is, dear Master, the circumstantial account of this story.

SUZANNE OLLENDORFF.

(Letter 4320.)

All who know the signer of this remarkable communication have valued her candid fairness, her well-balanced judgment, as well as her special psychic faculties, which were manifested notably in her presentiment as to the Messina earthquake. Once more we must acknowledge that the veracity of these impressions is indisputable.

Gallie-Marié, creator of the rôle of *Carmen* in Bizet's opera, at first so widely discussed, had an impression of this musician's death, at the moment of that death.<sup>1</sup> "She had made herself," says the "Eclair" of September 24, 1875, "the very incarnation of this incomparable score." And the newspaper added: "Between her and the composer there had grown up a spiritual communion, in some respects psychic."

Madame Galli-Marié was on the stage a certain evening in June. Abruptly she stopped singing. She had felt a shooting pain in her side, like a hammer striking her heart. She began again and finished the act; but when she had gone back to her dressing-room she said to those about her: "A misfortune has happened to our Bizet. When I felt that blow, I saw his face rise up before me, for the duration of a lightning-flash. Oh, God! oh, God! how pale he was!"

<sup>1</sup> See *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1905, p. 638.

They hastened to make inquiries. Bizet had just died. There had occurred one of those phenomena of telepathy which science accepts to-day.

Other newspapers reported this event in very different ways. According to one of these versions, while Galli-Marié was singing *Carmen* on Wednesday June 2, 1875, at the beginning of the third act, when she was seeking good fortune in the cards, she automatically turned up the death-portent. Struck by a presentiment, she shuffled the cards, and the death-portent came up again. She finished the act with difficulty, and when she left the stage she fainted in the wings.

That this telepathic impression was received is not to be doubted, although the stories of it differed.

The singer Emma Calvé—told me that in this act of “*Carmen*” in which she interrogated the cards, she often did so seriously, with conviction, with a definite intention.

How shall we interpret, how define the warnings given by cards? This is not the place. Nevertheless, let us also bear in mind the following experience; an account of it was sent me from Nice on May 12, 1899:

Here is an incident which happened to me personally.

Ten years ago I had gone to Paris to spend some time with my family; my husband had stayed in the country, in the environs of Rouen. One evening I was with a lady, a friend of mine, in Neuilly. After dinner we amused ourselves by getting up a card party. I cut, a card fell upon the table, and this lady gazed at me and said, “Your husband is going to die to-night!” She spoke seriously! Then I left. When I got home I took up a pack of cards and tried what is called an “upshot.” I sought an answer to the preceding warning; the reply was *yes*. That night I had a great deal of trouble in going to sleep. At a certain moment I awakened with a start, with a frightful tearing at my heart; I got up hastily, ran to the window for air, and then I heard three o’clock strike. I could no longer breathe. At last

I drank a glass of water and lay down, without being able to go to sleep again.

The next day I got a telegram which read: "Your husband has just died. Come at once." He had died at three o'clock in the morning. You can imagine the state I was in after having received this message, confirming the prediction. The terrible suffering which I had felt at three o'clock in the morning had corresponded to the hour of the death.

V. DUBOS.

Place Béatrix, Villa Orengo, Nice.

(Letter 659.)

The supposition that this was a case of mere chance can satisfy no thoughtful mind. Neither is it possible to attribute the vision to a pack of cards. It was the narrator herself who perceived this cruel fact, under the influence of an occult force. Cards help to concentrate thought; they are but a means of clarification. Why? A special discussion of these strange contingencies might, doubtless, enlighten us. The new problems which are not to be disdained are innumerable.

This chapter has just placed before our eyes a considerable number of *mental impressions* coinciding with deaths. Doubts as to these psychic transmissions are no longer possible. There will now pass before our eyes in still greater numbers a series of *psychic manifestations*, more difficult to understand and, nevertheless, as undeniable as the preceding ones.

## IX

### DEATHS ANNOUNCED BY NOISES, BY BLOWS STRUCK, BY AN UNEXPLAINED UPROAR, BY PHYSICAL PHENOMENA

Gravitation in the astronomical world,  
electricity in the physical world, the  
life-force in the living world, spirit  
in the psychic world, govern the uni-  
verse,

The universe is a dynamism.

WE have just proved the indisputable reality of impressions of deaths at a distance, deaths unknown to those experiencing the impressions. The knowledge we have of psychic transmissions by ether waves enables us to understand, easily enough, these mental impressions. By contrast we shall here investigate the altogether different cases of revelations of deaths, by noises, by shocks, by mechanical phenomena of various sorts. These physical phenomena are so numerous, so indisputable, that it will be helpful to devote a special chapter to them, establishing their authenticity beyond doubt. I admit at once that it is at present impossible to explain these material manifestations. That is one more reason for investigating them. Let us look at them squarely. They are of no less frequent occurrence than mental telepathic transmissions,—rather the reverse. We have, moreover, already seen, in Chapter V, manifestations of the dying *before* death, notably in the case of the Ernolsheim organ playing by itself, that of the noises in the rue Nobel in Paris, the lifting up of the bed in a city of Spain, the noisy disturbances in the Lunéville house, the blows struck, for eight nights, on the blinds of an inaccessible floor, etc. In these cases there were phe-

nomena produced by the spirits of the living. We shall now have to investigate phenomena observed at the hour of departure for the other world.

Perhaps the most surprising of the manifestations which we are here investigating are the authentic observations, made in all countries, under the most varied circumstances, of deaths announced by inexplicable noises, by the sound of blows, of steps, of the sliding of feet, by objects being moved about (in imagination, for the most part). My readers may, moreover, have long since been struck by such cases, apart from this present work, by reading, among other books, "L'Inconnu" (General Parmentier, page 64; the poet-deputy Clovis Hugues, page 76; the nun, page 105; Monsieur Janvier, page 108; P. Bouchard, page 111; Mariage, page 116; Morisot, page 125; Soulairol, page 143, and so many other authentic cases: pages 108, 111, 116, 125, 142, 146, 147, 153, 154, etc.). Farther on, still others will come under our eyes, in the general chapter on "Manifestations of the Dying." In order to clarify our most complex investigations as much as possible, and that I may spare my readers the necessity of analytical research by analyzing and making distinctions myself, I should like to sort out, for this chapter, the special, well-characterized observations as to *announcements of deaths by noises produced without apparent cause*.

It happens not infrequently that deaths are announced by violent blows, struck no matter where. It is strange enough, but it is so, and the most rudimentary fairness bids us record the facts as they are. We shall next seek to explain them, if we can, and to interpret them in our search for knowledge of the human being. In general, people have not dared to contemplate these facts, because they are perplexing. Such cowardice is unworthy of the obligations of free science.

I shall select from those which people have been gracious

enough to send me, or which I have noted in my research. I shall begin this series with a most singular incident.

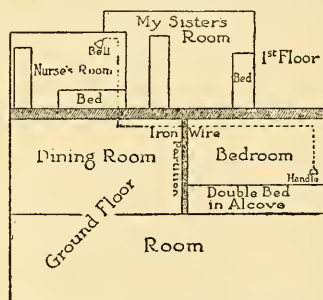
Monsieur A. Blavet, president of the Horticultural Society of the District of Etampes, who had investigated the influence of colored light upon vegetation, by experiments similar to those which I devised in former days at my Juvisy observatory, brought to my notice, in April, 1900, the highly curious experience which follows. It was vouched for by four witnesses, who both saw and heard. When Monsieur Blavet told of it, the story, as usual, made his hearers laugh in his face.

I was in the college of Sens, in the Department of Yonne, and was sixteen years old, when I received a letter from my sister who was living in Etampes, with my father and mother and a nurse.

My mother was at that time very unwell.

One night the bell—the cord from which (as shown in the sketch below) went from the alcove where my parents slept to the nurse's room on the first floor—this bell, as I was saying, began to ring loudly.

In all haste my sister, whose room was next that of the nurse,



went to look for the latter, and both went down to learn if Mother were ill, and why the bell had rung.

My father and mother told them that they had been dreaming, and that no one had rung.

At that very moment they heard the bell ring again.

My father sprang from his bed.

The bell-cord and the clapper were still in motion. The nurse affected bravery, crying, "Strike away, strike away, *poteau* [post]!" She meant *marteau* [clapper]. "You aren't scaring me!"

There were, thus, four witnesses, fully awake, and nothing could set the bell in motion save some one in the alcove. Then things resumed their natural course. Before going back to bed my father looked at the clock: it was half-past two. The night following the next, he got a letter from Paris, telling him of the death of a relative.

Wishing to ascertain if the occurrence during the night had coincided with the demise, he wrote, and received a prompt reply, informing him that it had happened the very night and at the very hour at which his relative had died; this made him exclaim, "So it's not all over with us!"

Without being religious, my father had spiritualistic convictions. My mother was religious, without bigotry.

I submit these facts to you, which are most circumstantial; they are certainly very remarkable and are worthy of being related to you. I am tempted, like you, humbly to bow before these inexplicable coincidences, and I should be happy if this experience might help to lead you to a solution.

A. BLAVET.

Étampes.

(Letter 895.)

It is not to be doubted that a bell made itself heard, was shaken, without any known reason, and that this motion was heard and seen. Nor is it doubtful, either, that this oscillation corresponded to a death. These manifestations fall into two principal categories, each very distinct. The first is objective, the other subjective; the first is external, physical, mechanical, material; the other includes inner sensations. In the example just related the bell was seen in motion; it belongs, therefore, in the first category. It follows that a psychic force may act, at a distance, upon mat-

ter. This, moreover, we know, from a long and most varied experience.<sup>1</sup> The example confirms that of which we are already aware.

Now, does the active cause proceed from some one dead or living? There is nothing to prove that this relative was dead when the bell was heard; he might still have been on this side. Our comparative study aims to give us an answer to this question.

I possess a certain number of accounts of similar observations; among others, of this one made in Niort, which was told me in February, 1899. (Letter 197.) This concerns the unexplained ringing of a bell, coinciding with the death of a neighbor opposite, who had always manifested a desire to be dressed for the grave by the person to whom this call was sent; the bell rang at the very moment of death.

This sort of death-notice by the ringing of bells is not infrequent. It is found in all countries and all eras. But ignorance as to psychic matters is as wide-spread, with humanity, as ignorance of astronomy, which is saying a great deal.

At the death of Saint François de Sales, the following incident was observed. It was related by Nicolas de Hauteville in his "Histoire de la très ancienne et illustre maison de saint François de Sales" (1669), page 319.<sup>2</sup>

On the twenty-eighth day of the month of December, of this same year, 1622, Louis de Sales had met his wife and his whole family at the Château of Thuille. About ten o'clock at night the bell hanging in one of the windows of the château tower, and attached to a cord which went to the bottom of the stairs, began, of itself, to ring loudly, several times. They believed at first that some one had arrived in great haste; a retainer was ordered to go down with all speed and open the outside door, but he was surprised to find no living soul there. After about seven minutes the bell again began its noise, ringing still more loudly;

<sup>1</sup> See *Les Forces naturelles inconnues*.

<sup>2</sup> See *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, Sept., 1911, p. 281.

the second time the valet ran down more quickly than the first, but, nevertheless, found no one. When this had occurred several times in the same way, Louys understood perfectly that something altogether extraordinary was about to happen; he gave orders that the cord be detached from the bell, but this was the marvel of it: the bell rang with no cord attached, and the sound lasted so long that the whole family, in great terror, began to pray. Louys shut himself up in his study, and while in ardent prayer he learned through a faculty which may be called prophetic that his sainted brother, the Bishop of Geneva, had died that very night.

François de Sales, Bishop of Geneva and of Annecy, had indeed, just died in Lyons, at eight o'clock in the evening. It must be added that the two brothers were much attached to each other, and were dubbed "the inseparables."

These occurrences, accounts of which I, for my part, possess a goodly number, were *first* called miracles, produced by God's will, when they were connected with the lives of the saints. *Secondly*, they were called diabolical pranks when they occurred outside the Church, and *thirdly*, they were generally denied, called meaningless. These three interpretations were three errors. We must, to-day, investigate the occurrences in full liberty of thought and make use of them in the study of Man.

How, in just what way, were they produced at the moment of death?

Why these noises, and how were they made—these movements, these material manifestations—by a spirit!

I take the following incident from the notes which were handed on to me by my mother; her absolute sincerity on the one hand and her perfect mental poise on the other, were appreciated by all who knew her:

One night, in Saint-Thiébault, in our bedroom, we were awakened by a great noise; we had heard a mirror on the mantelpiece fall down, as well as your father's watch-stand. I got up, and found that the mirror had fallen upon the hearth; the watch had been

thrown upon the floor on one side and the watch-stand on the other. I thought that everything was broken, and, most annoyed, I must say, I went back to bed without further investigation.

In the morning, when we got up, we found that nothing had been broken.

That same morning the postman brought us a letter, telling us of the death of your Aunt Boyet, your father's sister, who had died that very night, in Montigny. What did this manifestation mean? The coincidence is, at least, strange. You know that we had much to complain of in my sister-in-law's conduct as regards us.

Nothing broken! These things are truly strange. It all seems as though it were merely a question of attracting attention. These manifestations, however, do not appear to be voluntary, conscious: this hypothesis would not seem to apply here. The distance from Montigny to Saint-Thiérbault is twenty-three kilometers as the crow flies. It appears to me from the hundreds of accounts which were sent me that these transmissions are by their nature electric.

Here is an incident not unlike the preceding one. Dr. Martin wrote me from Penne (Lot-et-Garonne), in March, 1899, as follows:

My father was living ten kilometers from Cahors. One of his brothers, aged about forty, was living in Figeac, at least eighty kilometers away, and was recovering from an illness,—pneumonia, I believe. The news of him which I had received that morning was very good. That evening, just as my father was putting the candlestick on the night-table, to go to bed, this candlestick, as it touched the marble, emitted a sound that was altogether unnatural, and, without knowing why, my father, very much frightened, told himself, "My brother has died!"

His conviction was such that he left for Cahors in the middle of the night to look for his other brother (an aged canon, who could hardly be called credulous), and he told him the sad news. At once they had horses hitched to a rented carriage, which car-

ried them to Figeac that very night. Their brother had been dead for some hours when they reached their journey's end.

(Letter 148.)

In our desire to explain facts by the simplest natural causes, we first think that there was in this case an auditory illusion connected with a presentiment. But this departure in the middle of the night, on a journey of eighty kilometers, and this coincidence that was verified, make us feel, here, the reality of a transmission that was telepathic—magnetic—electric—nameless (the name is yet to be found).

Let us proceed.

I received from a well-known minister plenipotentiary, who asked me not to make his name public, the following story of a manifestation on the part of some one dying; it, too, would lead us to connect electricity with these psychic transmissions:

I had the account of this most curious case from a chaplain, Father F. R——. Not merely his ecclesiastical calling, but, above all, his personal qualities, do not allow me to doubt in the slightest degree the truth of the facts in every detail. I am furnishing (for you alone) the exact names and addresses, but if you publish this narration, I ask you to give only the initials. The observations were made in the presence of the above-mentioned priest, and of an entire class of the Seminary of O——, including Professor X——, who is now an archbishop. It is therefore a case in which the manifestation was observed by a considerable number of witnesses, not of a haphazard sort.

In 1889 F——, a seminarist aged about twenty-three, was seriously ill; for several months this kept him from attending the courses with his class. Along the wall was a coat-rack, on which there were nails reserved for each pupil's garments. In view of the prolonged absence of F——, one of his comrades had taken possession of his nail, and was hanging his hat upon it.

Now, one day, between eleven o'clock and noon, while the entire class was attentively following the professor's course, the hat on the absent pupil's nail suddenly began to turn, without the

least plausible reason being discoverable. This motion was so energetic, and lasted for so long (almost a minute) that it drew the pupils' attention, and even the professor's, and made such an impression that they talked of it for the whole day. Every one had the feeling that there was something strange connected with it.

As a matter of fact, in the afternoon of the same day a telegram brought the news of the pupil F——'s death; it had occurred at precisely the time when the hat on his nail had attracted his fellow-students' attention.

BARON DE M.

(Letter 964.)

Does not all that seem to us absurd, ridiculous, unbelievable?

That is what Ptolemy thought of the hypothesis of the earth's movement,—“*πανν γελοιοτατον*” (supremely laughable”).

This, too, is the effect that the moving feet of Galvani's frogs produced.

We shall see many other cases of this sort.

The following manifestation of a death, by a violent gust of wind, is similar to that which General Parmentier brought to my notice,—Number I, Chapter III in my work “*L'Inconnu*.” It was sent me from Budapest in 1900, and is given literally:

DEAR BROTHER:

If I take the liberty of addressing you by this name, it is because I feel that I am your brother in the ideas we have in common as to the faculties, still occult, of the human soul. I believe it my duty to inform you as to a phenomenon belonging in the category of those which you are analyzing.

My father had been ill for several weeks with severe neuralgia; this weakened him so that, at his age, seventy-five, his death was to be feared. My wife and I were in a state of continuous apprehension, when on the night of April 4th-5th we were awakened with a start by a *tremendous gust of wind, which opened, with a great noise, the window of the next room; we had heard it being*

closed the evening before by the maid-servant. We felt the current of air come in through the crack under the closed door which separates the two rooms.

At once I had the feeling that my father *might be dead*. I struck a light, and found that *it was a few minutes past three o'clock*.

I said nothing to my wife, in order not to disturb her repose; but when, the next day, we received by telegram the fateful news of my father's death, my wife acknowledged to me that the moment we awakened she too, had a feeling like mine but *more definite*; that is to say, while I felt the possibility of the end, she was *sure* of it.

I must add that the gust of wind was exceptionally violent.

When we reached the place where my father was living (Francisco, in Hungary, 175 kilometers from here as the crow flies) one of the first things I asked was the time of his death; the answer was that *my father died a few minutes after three o'clock*.

I was not the victim of an illusion, being by nature calm and given to reflection, and accustomed, on account of my profession of electrical engineering, to observe minutely, and not to draw conclusions too promptly.

I give you my word of honor that I have added or omitted nothing in telling of the circumstances which seem to me essential, in judging the occurrence, and I authorize you to publish my name and my calling.

You may gain information about me from Monsieur Désiré Korda, manager of the Electrical Department of the Fives-Lilles Company (Paris, rue Caumartin), and from Monsieur Maurice Loewy, head of the Paris Observatory.

Please, dear brother, allow me sincerely to express my great esteem.

LEOPOLD STARK,  
Budapest, II Coivohaz, 34 rue Hongroie.

(Letter 988.)

After reading this account, which I give in its entirety, there can remain no doubt in our minds as to the incident,

though it be still absolutely inexplicable to present-day science. We are gathering data, as Tycho-Brahé did for Kepler. If we had but one case of this sort, we might, strictly speaking, content ourselves with the supposition that a gust of wind came just at the right moment, by a chance coincidence; but there are too many cases, established with precision.

The following experience, equally unquestionable, is of the same sort.

In a letter which I received in 1899 from Monsieur Mariage, there were two occurrences to be remembered. I have given only one of them ("L'Inconnu," page 116). The second belongs here:

My late lamented grandfather, who has since died, a man of solid mentality, of sound judgment, and not in the least inclined to hallucinations, told us of it often. Sure of himself, and that he had really heard it, personally, he never yielded in the least when people wished to insinuate, when he told the thing the hundredth time without changing a syllable, that perhaps unconsciously he had been the victim of a dream or the dupe of drowsiness. I shall let him speak for himself:

"My sister-in-law, a young girl of nineteen, fell ill shortly after my marriage with her sister. The illness was long, and at the close of the autumn, the sad season which was to carry her off, we looked each day for a fatal outcome; the whole family spent every night near her. I must tell you that this dear friend had always felt the greatest tenderness for me, and demanded, ceaselessly, my presence at her bedside. I was then living at the other end of the village. I was taking a little rest, given over to sad thoughts, for I foresaw clearly that her life could not last much longer, when suddenly, and three times repeated, *furious blows shook the shutters and the window*; both of these were closed with fastenings; the window gave on a little court, surrounded with houses; there was no opening from our side. I got up, opened the window and the shutters, and found that nothing had been damaged; but I had the presentiment that my sister-in-law had

just given up the ghost. I went down, and had taken scarcely twenty steps in the street when a neighbor, a woman, said to me, weeping, "She's dead!"— "I knew it," I answered.

(Letter 104.)

Certainly it is strange, fantastic, incomprehensible: a charming young girl, who expired at the tenderest age; and her death was manifested by furious blows shaking the windows! These crude physical phenomena remind us of the pranks of lightning and electricity. Perhaps a comparison of all these strange occurrences will lead to a solution. We shall speak of this later.

My writing-table is crowded, this very moment, with a host of observations of this sort.

A reader wrote me the following at the beginning of my investigation:

That I might carry out your wish, I put your questions to fifteen young men in my course for adults. Thirteen answered that they had never heard facts of this sort spoken of; but two declared that they knew of them. Here is the chief example. A young man of twenty-three told me of it. His mother heard, one night, in the attic above her room, a *great noise* comparable to that of a pile of wood falling down; it startled her into wakefulness, and continued for some seconds. Three days afterwards a letter informed her that, probably at the same instant (she had not noted the time), one of her near relatives had died in Montbéliard.

It was only on learning of this death that she concluded that there was a connection between it and the noise which she had heard; her whole family had vainly sought a reason for this noise the morning of the next day. If you are interested in this case, I am ready to ask supplementary information from these two young men, and to give you their names, if they authorize it; I do not doubt that they will.

MÉLINE,

Teacher in Thiéfosse, Vosges.

(Letter 178.)

Here is another case of a material manifestation coinciding with death. I am taking it from a letter received in March, 1899.

My father and I are living in Isère. One of our friends was seriously ill, and each day we expected to see him die.

One evening, after having paid him a visit, we had gone to bed, fairly tired (for he lived three or four kilometers from our home). Scarcely were we in bed when *a violent blow was struck on the head of the bed, and the curtains were set in motion by an inexplicable puff of air*. My father leaped out of bed, saying, "He is dead!" He looked at the time, and dressed himself hastily, that he might go back to his friend.

The latter had died at the moment when we had heard the blow and felt the puff of air.

I can vouch for the exactitude of the facts given. People may say that there was in this a strange coincidence, that the piece of furniture cracked, by chance; that some one moved the curtains. People may say what they wish. But these are the facts.

TEXIER,

Dockyard clerk, Ruelle Foundry, Charente.

(Letter 101.)

Curtains set in motion by an inexplicable puff of air. I have perceived this many times in my experiments with Eusapia Paladino and other mediums; the readers of "Les Forces naturelles inconnues" ("Unknown Natural Forces") have come across it. This name will long remain applicable to these accounts. We think, perhaps, of electricity. But what is electricity? An *unknown force*. Let us proceed in our search. The letter given below was sent me from Les Abrets (Isère) on April 13, 1899:

My great-grandfather on my mother's side, Joseph Bardin, who died forty-three years ago at the age of eighty, was a man who preserved the patriarchal and devout traditions of bygone times. He kept a tobacco shop in Les Abrets, and at the same time performed the duties of secretary at the town hall.

Every evening, in the midst of his numerous family, prayers were read aloud, all joining in, in a room adjoining the tobacco shop. One evening, at about nine o'clock, while the whole family was at prayers, an *extraordinary noise* made itself heard in the office, as though the heavy counter had been violently shaken, *making the scales and everything upon it resound noisily*. All rushed into the room, to learn the reason for this unusual noise; to their great stupefaction, they found everything in place and nothing unnatural could be discovered. When the interrupted prayer had been resumed, there was another noise, absolutely like the first: in the face of the general restlessness my great-grandfather told them not to move, and added that this noise must have been made by the soul of a member of the family who had just died; he went on to say that it was probably his mother, who lived at Charavines, and he said a *de Profundis*. Now, that same night a special messenger from Charavines, seventeen kilometers away, confirmed my great-grandfather's prevision by announcing that his mother had just died: the hour of her death coincided exactly with the hour at which the noise of the evening had made itself heard.

E. DESCHAUX.

Landowner in les Abrets, Isère.

(Letter 595.)

This gives rise to the same reflections as the preceding accounts. These observations are innumerable and unexceptionable. They are sometimes more complicated than the preceding ones.

The following communication is particularly interesting, as showing us (1) a telepathic transmission from some one dying (or dead) at the hour of the demise, with steps heard and considerable noise; (2) converse with the person dead, which might have been due, however, to the narrator's subconscious mind. I do not classify this experience with the phenomena of Volume III, since the fact that the deceased person exercised an influence has not been

proved, though it is possible. Let us read the following detailed letter:

In 1870 I had a brother sixteen years old, whom I loved like a son. He had caught a cold which affected his entire system; this had developed into galloping consumption, and he had come to spend some time with me. I was then living on the seashore, where the air was very sharp. After some weeks I perceived that my brother was wasting away. I sent for my physician, who advised me to take him speedily to Brittany, to my mother's home, where, since the air was softer, he might, they assured me, live some months longer; otherwise he could not survive for more than fifteen days. I followed this advice, and took him to Nantes. At the moment of parting he asked me for a ring I wore, by which I set great store; yielding to his wish, I took it from my finger and placed it on his, making him promise me that it should not leave his hand, and that if, one day, it ceased to please him, he would send it back to me, and would give it to no one else. He gave me his promise. Pardon me, dear Master, if I enlarge upon these details, but it is necessary in view of the facts which I am to tell you. This took place in June, 1870.

On August fourteenth, in the same year, at midnight, I was busy with urgent work; my maid was with me. Two persons lived in the house, the owner and I. Suddenly we heard the street door, which the owner had bolted at eleven o'clock, *open and close noisily*. My maid and I looked at each other, asking ourselves who could be coming in at this hour. "It's doubtless some one going up to the owner's rooms," I said to my maid. "Let's listen as he comes up." The door of the owner's apartment was at the head of the stairs, while to reach mine it was necessary to turn to the right and follow the hallway. We heard a man's step, very heavy and dragging, exactly like those of one ill, who could scarcely walk. The steps, instead of stopping at the door at the head of the stairs, turned, on the contrary, to the right, and came toward my apartment. Terror-stricken, I leaped up and turned the key in the lock, saying aloud, "No one shall come into my room." I

went back and threw myself on my sofa, pressing my hands over my wildly beating heart. As for my maid, she had turned green.

I had been seated for barely two or three minutes, when a *terrible noise*, like a piece of furniture being overturned, made us both start. We rose and sought vainly the cause of this uproar. There was no trace of any piece of furniture or anything that had fallen down. At once, we both thought of my brother. Both of us, without caring to admit it, for fear of frightening each other, had recognized his heavy, dragging step.

The next day, on August fifteenth, I got a telegram telling me that he had just died. At once I wrote to my mother, as I could not make the trip, to take the ring from my brother's finger, and to send it to me, since it was a precious keepsake. The next day but one, I got an answer telling me that this was impossible, since my brother, before he died, had taken the ring from his hand and put it on my younger sister's finger. As I had no reason to doubt my mother's words, I insisted no further, but I was not satisfied, and doubtless I reproached my absent brother mentally for breaking his promise.

For more than two months I thought of this in spite of myself. One night I dreamed that I saw my brother lying in his coffin; drawing near him, I knelt down, lifted his head, kissed him, and said: "It was n't nice to break your promise; you knew I thought a great deal of the ring, and that it was only because of my great affection for you that I deprived myself of it, to give it to you. Then, why didn't you have it sent back to me, instead of giving it to our younger sister?" At these words I saw my brother gazing at me with an expression of distress and annoyance. He answered: "My poor sister, I didn't give your ring away; it was torn from my hand, rather than drawn off, when I was breathing my last; they have lied to you; our sister took it from me."

Struck by these words, I awakened with a start, and it was impossible for me to go to sleep again. I had but one fixed idea,—to obtain exact information and to learn if I had really been deceived, and thus to gain the certainty that the dead may visit us during sleep. Some time afterward, when my mother came to see

me, I informed her of my dream, and to my great astonishment I saw her turn pale. She cried: "It's true! What your brother told you is the absolute truth; but I didn't wish to tell you."

(Letter 584.)

MADAME BOVOLIN,  
Saint-Armand, Cher.

The signer's name is not unfamiliar to my readers. (See "L'Inconnu," page 546.)

What conclusion shall we draw from this account?

It would not, perhaps, be difficult for some people to accuse the narrator of having made up the story. As for me, it *would* be difficult, and I should regard this accusation as fundamentally unacceptable.

In the second place, one might seek to apply here the old hypothesis, dear to physiologists, of an hallucination. But to do this we should have to extend the hypothesis to cover two persons, both of whom (1) heard the steps on the stairs; (2) recognized them; (3) heard the noise of a piece of furniture being overturned. Let us admit that this involves complications. We must, then, find a connection between this so-called hallucination and the coinciding of the death; between them there would appear to be a relation of cause and effect. Thirdly, the revelation as to the gift of the ring must be explained.

Assuredly, the narrator's brother produced the manifestation *at the moment of death* (steps heard, and an uproar in the room); he may have acted in this way though still alive; the incident does not furnish absolute proof that the actions of some one dead were involved in it.

Does the apparition in a dream prove this? Not absolutely, either, for the idea that possibly the ring was torn from the dying or dead boy's finger by his sister may have had its origin in Madame Bovolin's mind. Prepossessions, ideas, take on a precise form in dreams. This particular one may have connected itself with the dead boy's image.

It is not rare that we think we see and hear, in dreams, imaginary persons and the dead.

The reader of these pages is a reasonable being, well-balanced, free from all preconceived ideas. I am giving him the documents in the case; he is as able to form his own conclusions as I. He will admit, it seems to me, that the most probable explanation is that the narrator may have thought, without the dead boy as an intermediary, that their sister took the ring from the brother's finger, and that the dream was the consequence of this supposition. For that reason, I am classifying this document not among manifestations of the dead (though it is not certain that it does not belong there) but among manifestations of the living at the moment of death. Our method must remain exacting! It is by the free discussion of phenomena that our enlightenment will progress.

We have just been shown examples of noise and uproar, —all equally incomprehensible, and yet impossible to deny. I have received accounts of a considerable number of observations, which it would require too much space to give. Nevertheless, each has its own interest. Here is a letter from one of the men who founded the Astronomical Society of France (in 1887), my studious colleague A. Schmoll, who combines the observation of the strange things in the heavens with musical composition which has brought him so many splendid pupils from all Europe:

Paris, November 30, 1899.

DEAR MASTER:

Yesterday we had my nephew to luncheon,—the Reverend Father Palmace, attorney for the Sacré-Cœur, 33 rue de Picpus. Since I told him that I had met you the day before, and what the subject of our conversation had been, he began to recount the two occurrences given here. The first of these I had known of vaguely since youth; it must have happened about 1855. As for the second, my nephew had already related it to me in the same words about ten years before; but he did not remember this and believed yesterday that he was telling me of it for the first time (a detail

which it is, perhaps, helpful to note). It was upon my request that he wrote for you the following account.

I have told you, orally, of this other occurrence of the same nature which took place in my father's home, in my childhood, about 1844 or 1845. Two leagues from our home lived an old great-aunt of ours, who was ill. One night, at two o'clock in the morning, a *terrible noise* suddenly made itself heard on the stairs (of our home) which led from the first floor to the second. It was as if the heavy chest at the head of the stairs had been *thrown from the top to the bottom of this stairway!* My sisters, who slept in different rooms, on the first and second floors, awakened, very much frightened. Trembling, they turned on the lights, and went to the head of the stairs to see what had happened. They saw nothing unnatural. Everything was in its place; no piece of furniture had been disturbed. The next day, at seven o'clock, they came to tell us that *our aunt had died at two o'clock in the morning.*

With deep and sincere affection,

A. SCHOLL.

(Letter 815.)

Here is the reverend father's letter:

*First Occurrence:* I remember perfectly (I was, perhaps, between twelve and fifteen years old) that my revered father had an intimate friend to whom he was deeply devoted. This friend lived two kilometers from our home. When he fell seriously ill my father went to visit him. He came back and told us: "My old friend Adams will not live through the night, it seems to me." We went to bed a little after nine o'clock, so far as I can remember. Toward ten o'clock we were awakened by a blow on the outer door (which was never locked); heavy, dragging steps halted at our bedroom door. At once we all recognized the very characteristic walk, weighed down by age, of Adams, our great friend; we knew, however, that he was dying at his home. A half-hour afterward we were brought the news that he had died at the time we had expected.

*Second Occurrence:* Twenty-five years ago I was a professor at our College of S——, a large city in South America.

Among our pupils' distinguished families there was one of which

I was particularly fond. The great-grandmother of the mother of one of my pupils, the Marchioness of X—, Spanish by birth, and more than a hundred years old, had a great affection for me: she called me her "big grandson." My priestly calling necessitated my making her frequent visits. The evening before her death I went to see her, to give her the last consolations of our Holy Church. She thanked me effusively for my "filial love" for her. I left her very late at night. When I got back home I went to bed, but scarcely had I gone to sleep when I was awakened by a terrible cry which seemed to pass through my room very slowly. Frightened, I leaped from my bed, lighted a candle, and recognized perfectly, in the cry of distress I had heard, the voice of my venerable friend the marchioness. So that I should not believe it an illusion on my part, I immediately wrote on a slip of paper: "It is half-past two in the morning, and I hear perfectly 'great-grandmother's voice. Can she have died at this very hour?'"

(She lived a walking-distance of twenty minutes away.)

Early in the morning I was called into the drawing-room. The visitor was a grandson of the marchioness. Before he had said a word to me I showed him my slip of paper. "It was at exactly that time," he told me, "that our little mother, whom we loved so dearly, died, *with a great cry.*" We were astounded. . . .

(Letter 815.)

Let us, then, take note of these three episodes: (1) A terrible uproar; (2) heavy steps heard; (3) a great cry.

In the case of the second experience, *the sound of steps* was heard; and also in one before that (Madame Bovolin). The phenomenon is not unusual. It is found here and there, —even in the life of the learned botanist Linné.

This celebrated Swedish naturalist left to his son, when he died (in 1778), a manuscript of about two hundred pages. This manuscript was found in 1823, among Dr. Acrel's papers; it was given to the University of Upsal and published. In it we come across the account of a manifestation, through the hearing of steps, of some one dying.

During a large part of his life Linné had noted, most conscientiously, occurrences which seemed to him strange and inexplicable. There are a great number of accounts of dreams, of intuitions, of apparitions, of incidents interesting from a psychological point of view. Here is the one which comes within the scope of this chapter. He writes:

In the night of July 12-13, 1765, toward midnight, my wife heard some one walking, for a long time, with heavy steps, in my museum. She woke me up. I, too, heard it, though I was certain that no one could be there, since the doors were locked and the key in my pocket. Some days later I learned that my dearest friend, Karl Clerk, a commissary, *had died at precisely the same hour*. It was his step, undoubtedly; I used to recognize Clerk, in Stockholm, merely by hearing him walk.<sup>1</sup>

These manifestations occur in such large numbers that instead of a chapter they might make a volume; our only perplexity is the investigation and selection of them. We shall find the following one particularly striking.

An example of sounds, heard by two people, announcing a death, was related to Dr. Richet by Monsieur Théophile Lemonnier, a druggist in Rennes. The phenomenon was all the more worthy of attention because it was noticed independently by two different people.

One night in September, 1891, at a quarter to six, Monsieur Lemonnier was awakened by an unusual, violent noise from the shutters which barred the windows of his pharmacy. This noise lasted for one or two minutes. He dressed himself in all haste and went to open the door: he saw, in the street, only street-sweepers; he questioned them and they told him that they had seen no one. There was, moreover, a night-bell on the door of the pharmacy, and a patron would have used it, instead of knocking in this way.

Astounded by this inexplicable incident, Monsieur Lemonnier went back into his room to finish dressing. At seven o'clock he

<sup>1</sup> See *Revue d'études psychiques*, De Vesme; 1903, p. 153.

saw one of his best friends coming in,—Monsieur Nivot, a surgeon-dentist.

"Well," said the druggist, "what brings you here at this early hour?"

"Upon my word," the other answered, "something quite extraordinary. Just imagine,—at a quarter to six I was suddenly awakened by an unaccustomed noise; some one was striking repeated blows on the door of my room. 'Don't knock so loudly!' I cried. 'I'm not deaf! Who's there?' But the noise continued, and I hurried to open the door. There was no one there; every one in the house was still asleep. I dressed, supposing it some sort of a joke, and quickly went downstairs. The grating at the entrance had been closed all this time, and the porter assured me that no one had come into the house."

"Well, my dear fellow, the same thing happened to me, and that's why you see me up at this hour," I answered.

We gazed at each other for a moment, and then expressed the same thought at the same instant: "Poor Escolan must be dead."<sup>1</sup>

This Escolan was one of their friends; he was an old lawyer, a distinguished cellist. Prostrated by grief, almost blind, and seriously ill, he had in these latter days been sustained only by the devotion of Messieurs Nivot and Lemonnier, who went to see him every day at the town hospital. A powerful tie united the three friends. They went immediately to the hospital. The night-watchman, seeing them arrive, made a gesture which they understood at once.

"He's dead?" they asked.

"Yes."

"At what time?"

"At a quarter of six."

Did this warning by mechanical means, of which we have so many examples, precede death, follow it, or precisely coincide with it? It appears that there was an exact coincidence, as in the case of Gaston Crémieux's execution in Mar-

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1919, p. 22.

seilles, on November 30, 1871, and of his manifestation by the striking of blows, in the cell of his friend Clovis Hugues ("L'Inconnu," page 26); there are a hundred other like examples.

Mademoiselle Gabrielle Renaudot is a member of the Astronomical Society of France, a contributor to the "Revue scientifique," the "Revue générale des Sciences," to "La Nature," to the "Journal de la Jeunesse," etc. She sent me, in 1907, an account of the following occurrence, which I published in the "Annales des Sciences psychiques" of August, 1907:

The following curious phenomena were observed in October, 1906, in the city of Annecy:

A young woman, who had been married for a year, was ill of tuberculosis. One day, feeling more tired than usual, she had not gone out, contrary to her habit, and had even allowed her husband to remain at her bedside. One of her friends, Madame Balemand, aged twenty, had also come to keep her company. The husband, knowing that his poor invalid was near her last hour, feared to see her die without the last sacraments; but, on the other hand, he did not dare to summon a priest, for fear of frightening her. She was not in the least devout; she did not suspect, at all, the gravity of her condition, and had refused all religious consolation.

Nevertheless, a priest had been warned discreetly. The latter went to the dying woman as though by chance, to pay a call. During the conversation he spoke to her of confession. But she answered that, since she did not believe that she would die soon, she would consider what arrangements she might make later on. Nevertheless, she consented to have a mass said for her. The priest blessed her, and went immediately to the church. While he was saying mass the young consumptive died. Her husband and her friend, Madame Balemand, were present at her last moments. Now, some minutes after her death they heard *three loud blows* struck upon the door. The husband went to open it, and asked who had knocked. No answer. No one. He went back to

sit beside the dead woman's bed. A second time *three violent blows* resounded upon the door. It was opened once more. Still no one.

Madame Balemand, from whom I had this story, is a woman most sound in mind, not superstitious, and not devout. She was so profoundly impressed by this occurrence, which she witnessed, that since that day she has never dared enter her deceased friend's dwelling.

GABRIELLE RENAUDOT.

It appears to me that in the face of all this testimony it is impossible for us to doubt the reality of these experiences, however inexplicable they may be.

The learned writer Edouard Noel told me of a case of telepathic transmission the memory of which was preserved by his family. Its authenticity is not debatable; its value is not diminished by the fact that it took place long ago. Here is an extract from his letter, sent in November, 1918:

My book "*Le second voyage de Micromégas sur la planète Terre*" is soon to appear, and I am confident that it will please you. In the meantime I consider it my duty to inform you, for your most sincere and painstaking research, of a telepathic occurrence which took place in my family; you will certainly be struck by it.

I had a great-great aunt who lived not far from Arras, in 1812. Her name was Leblanc. She had a son, an officer in the French Army, then in Russia.

One night, when she was asleep, she was awakened by an unusual noise of hail or grape-shot. She lighted her candle and opened the window of her room, and found that the night was very calm and that there was fine moonlight. After some moments of thought, being able to observe nothing unusual in her home, she went back to bed and fell asleep.

But she had scarcely lost consciousness when the same crackling of grape-shot awakened her once more. Then uneasiness gripped her, and she thought of her son.

"Etienne," she told herself, "will not come back."

She went to her little desk and wrote down her thought in a note-book, while awaiting daybreak.

After that night she received no more news of her son.

When peace had been signed she made inquiries at the War Department, and learned that her son had been killed at the very time when she had experienced the anguish of this phenomenon.

(Letter 4057.)

EDOUARD NOEL.

Let us repeat that until now people have been led to attribute these noises, concurring with deaths, to illusions of hearing, to chance coincidences, just as they have attributed the visions to disordered eyesight. These coincidences are found to be much too numerous, now that we are investigating them seriously, for this superficial judgment to persist:

It was in Madame Leblanc's mind that all took place. There was nothing external; it was a mental impression. How is this form of warning produced? We do not know.

As we remarked at the beginning of this chapter, in speaking of Saint François de Sales, these observations have been made in all epochs.

Walter Scott was a witness to a noisy manifestation of death, according to his biographer Lockhart, who published the following letter, written by the author of "Ivanhoe" to his friend Daniel Terry, on April 30, 1818.

The new wing of Abbotsford was then being built, and Scott was living in an old part of the building. Here is an extract from his letter:

"The present state of my house has brought mysterious troubles. We were awakened night before last by a very loud noise, as though some one were dragging *thick planks along, in the new part*. I believed that something had fallen down, and thought no more of it. That was about two o'clock in the morning. Last night, at the same hour, the same noise made itself heard. Mrs. Scott, as you know, is rather timid; so I got up, Beardie's broad saber under my arm,

"Straight as a spear  
Ready for combat"

"But everything was as it should be, and I cannot discover the cause of all this noise!"

Mr. Lockhart added:

The day on which Mr. Terry received the above letter, in London, he was lunching with Mr. William Erskine, and they were earnestly discussing the sudden death of George Bullock. This took place on the very night, it would appear, on which Scott was awakened by the "mysterious noise" of which he speaks here. The furnishing of the new rooms in Abbotsford had been put into Bullock's hands; he had made himself loved by all, young and old. A week afterward Scott again wrote to Terry:

"Were you not struck by the fantastic coincidence of our nocturnal troubles at Abbotsford with the sad event which happened? I swear to you that the noise was that of half a dozen men busily employed, *laying down planks and putting furniture in place*; and there was, nevertheless, no one on this spot at that moment: nothing is more certain. With a few more details, the story might take its place in Granville's collection, or Aubrey's. In the meantime you may put it down, together with poor Dubisson's warnings, as a remarkable coincidence.<sup>1</sup>

WALTER SCOTT.

With these noises, this shifting of objects, this more or less violent movement, these tumults of various degrees of loudness, those which are real must be distinguished from those which are imaginary or fictitious. Even with these last there is a cause exterior to the percipients; they are objective, and nevertheless real from a certain point of view. Thus, for example, if we begin with the first which I related ("L'Inconnu," page 64), that of General Parmentier,—a window closing with a loud noise and opening at once,—we may suppose an illusion of sight and hearing on the part of the witnesses, caused by a mental disturbance emanating from the hunter who had been killed a short time before his friends sat down at table to await him, in his home. We must interpret in the same way the case next given,—a bed shaken, hubbub and clatter in the next room, without anything really

<sup>1</sup> Madame Crowe. *Les cotés obscurs de la Nature*, p. 183.

having happened, a psychic disturbance coinciding with the death of a friend six hundred and fifty kilometers away. In these and other similar cases the phenomenon is subjective, due to psychic transmission to a distance.

The case of Monsieur Blavet's bells was different, as were those of Saint François de Sales's bell; my father's watch-stand; the seminarist's hat, and so many other incidents. In these examples the phenomenon is objective, external to the observers.

With subjective phenomena we need seek no other explanation than that of the psychic transmissions of which we know; but for the real shifting of objects, movements that have been proved, it is altogether natural to think of *electricity*. We must take care to acknowledge that we know absolutely nothing of the nature of this force.

How many examples might we not cite to support us in connecting the two!

I published, rather a long time ago (1904) a little book, "Les Caprices de la Foudre" ("The Pranks of Lightning"), which is full of these curious phenomena. In it one may read of:

Objects moved without any one touching them (page 287).

Pictures torn from the wall (page 219).

A cupboard door hurled to a distance (page 221).

A chest of drawers broken to pieces (page 29).

Keys pulled out of locks (page 222). Keys taken out of a door and hidden in a wooden shoe (page 218).

Bells rung (pages 203 and 281).

A clock stopped, its pendulum unfastened (page 209).

Watches, which had stopped, started again (page 196).

Watches magnetized (page 209).

Candles, gas-jets, electric lights lighted or put out (pages 219 and 226).

A mirror unfastened and placed lightly on the floor (page 24).

Stones lifted from a hearth and placed on both sides of a sleeping child (page 137).

Three children, in bed, thrown, safe and sound, out of a house, while the bed was broken into a thousand pieces (page 216).

A pillow thrown to a distance, without harm to the child sleeping upon it (page 214).

Stones, weighing hundreds of kilograms, hurled afar (page 210).

A hat turned hind side before (page 217).

Ball lightning which pushed open a door and entered, an unusual visitor (page 86).

Ball-lightning which played round a young girl without harming her (page 19).

A woman, disguised as a man, stripped entirely naked by lightning (page 25). A woman, struck by lightning, stripped and her clothing hung on a tree (page 26).

(The number of those struck by lightning and stripped entirely naked is really rather large. Garments are rent to ribbons, shoes violently torn off, and the man who was struck gets up safe and sound!<sup>1</sup>)

Two women were knitting; lightning suddenly took their needles from them (page 27).

A stroke of lightning killed a priest at the altar, bore away the host, and hid it under rubbish (page 28).

A miller's boy was split in two from head to foot (page 28).

The butt-end of a gun was torn away and borne into an adjoining room (page 219).

Shot was *melted*, in a gun, without the powder catching fire (page 224).

<sup>1</sup> On Dec. 9, 1907, in Rio de Janeiro, an army lieutenant, M. A. de Vasconcellos, together with eighteen men, was thrown to the ground by a stroke of lightning. The men got up suddenly as though moved by a spring. The officer remained on the ground, unconscious. His uniform had been torn, all the buttons had disappeared, as well as three thousand *reis* which were in one of his pockets. His shoes were torn and thrown to a distance. The man was not killed. When shown these convincing proofs, he was the most astonished of all. "Send them to France, to Flammarion!" he cried. They are preserved in the museum of my observatory, in Juvisy.

A young man crossing a public square was caught up by lightning and carried a distance of fifty meters. He sent me an account of it (page 120).

A hat was thrown ten paces away, without there being the least breath of wind (page 130).

In the midst of a brilliant dance in the evening lightning entered through the fireplace, and, covering the dancers with soot, made negroes of them (page 137).

Bodies were reduced to ashes, their clothing remaining intact (page 123).

Conversely, the clothing was burned, and the bodies left intact (page 123).

Golden necklaces were volatilized without leaving any trace (page 195).

The gilding was removed from picture-frames (page 205).

Nails were torn from a satin sofa and left beneath a tile on the roof (page 199).

Windows were split, and the panes of glass vaporized (page 215).

Coins were stolen by lightning (page 209).

A pile of plates was split in two (page 222).

Et cetera, et cetera. How many other examples of freakishness might we not add to these?

In July, 1911, lightning struck the office of the station-master of Figanières (Var), and *emptied all the ink-stands, without leaving anywhere the least spot of ink!*

That same month, in Vinon, near Toulon, it emptied a pool in which there was three meters of water.

And photographs of lightning! Some time ago I gave the name *ceraunic rays* (from *χεραινος*, lightning) to these flashing rays. Here are some examples:

On June 17, 1896, a day-laborer, named Elisson, was struck by lightning, in a hut near Pertuis (Vaucluse) and the rays photographed upon his chest, through his clothing, the design of a poplar-tree and of a pine-tree one hundred meters away. I received drawings and an account of this curious

phenomenon from the Mayor of Pertuis, Dr. Tournatoire, who had carefully examined the victim. The man who was struck got up safe and sound. (Page 250.)

On June 27, 1866, in Bergheim (Upper Rhine) a stroke of lightning photographed the leaves of a linden-tree upon the backs of two men, bowling them over without killing them. The learned physicist Hirn, of the Institute, wrote me that the cleverest draftsman could not have done better. (Page 258.)

In the summer of 1865, Dr. Derendinger had his pocket-book stolen on a railway train. Some time afterward he was summoned to examine a man struck by lightning; he saw on the thigh of the stricken man (who had not been killed) a photograph of his monogram (two Ds, crossed), which was inlaid in steel on his tortoise-shell pocket-book. The man struck by lightning was the thief. (Page 266.)

One day lightning struck the Church of the Holy Saviour in Lagny; knocked over fifty of the congregation praying there; smashed the altar, leaving suspended, fastened no one knew how, the picture representing Jesus Christ; carried away the curtain covering this picture, pulling it from the iron rod without having moved this rod or broken the copper rings; tore into four pieces the card on which was printed the list of prayers for mass; traced upon the altar-cloth the sacred words of the Consecration, omitting the supreme ones, *Hoc est corpus meum et Hic est sanguis meus*. (Page 273.)

These phenomena, and a thousand others, are established by evidence, proved, unquestionable. One of the most singular, and the most humorous, is, perhaps, this one, published in Volume IX of the "Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Sciences." The occurrence took place in the environs of Nîmes. "Some young girls were talking together, when a flash of lightning knocked them over. They got up, without being wounded. But one of them complained of pricklings, which became very sharp and painful. Her friends wished to find out what had happened, and they saw, to quote the

Latin account: "*non sine miratione, pudendum perustum, ruberrimum, labia tumefecta, pilos deficientes usque ad bulbum, punctosque nigros pro pilis, unde cutim rugosissimam; ejus referunt amica, primum barbatissimam et hoc facto semper imberbem esse.*" (Page 117.)

Let us stop with this prank of lightning. The manifestations related in this book, attributed at times to "spirits," are really no more extraordinary than those of lightning.

Let us also take note, in this connection, of the error of physicists who suppose that in order that a phenomenon be "real" it must be reproducible, at will, in a laboratory. Just reproduce these feats of lightning!

However it be, we may suppose that electricity plays an important part in the phenomena studied here.

These occurrences demonstrate again and again, to our own satisfaction, that Man's physical and psychic functioning is not confined within the boundaries of his body, and may exert an influence at a distance.

Moreover, gravitation has long since led us to investigate energy acting at a distance.

We shall again encounter these noises and these blows in the general chapter on "Manifestations of the Dying at the Moment of Death"; but it was helpful to take note of them in this chapter in order to reflect upon them and to realize their interest. Before investigating the manifestations as a whole, let us halt at certain occurrences that are particularly remarkable, intermediate between life and death; certain phases of them might be attributed to the living. The first of the observations revealed in the following chapter is, despite its dramatic quality extremely difficult to explain. In these instances we find ourselves between human life and death. Let us consider them carefully.

## X

### BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH—INTERMEDIATE OCCURRENCES IN WHICH THE INFLUENCE OF THE LIVING MAY STILL EXIST

Time, that shifting semblance of a  
fixed eternity.

J. B. ROUSSEAU.

THE documents which we are bringing together here are so numerous, even with a very restricted selection, that they call for (I cannot repeat it too often) as orderly a classification as possible, that we may distinguish with certainty what belongs to Life and what to Death. We have read of manifestations and apparitions emanating without doubt from living beings; we shall examine those lying between the two states, those which may be interpreted from the point of view of life as well as that of death. We shall in this way gradually approach occurrences the origin of which lies, indubitably, on the other side of the mysterious portal.

I shall begin this chapter with one of the most impressive cases which I know of; it is also patently authentic,—one which I have already recounted in “L’Inconnu,” in the chapter on telepathy in dreams. I shall ask those anxious to arrive at a definitive conviction for their permission to reproduce it here, for our present research. The narrator writes:

In the course of the first days of November, 1869, I left Perpignan, my native city, to go and continue my study of pharmacy at Montpellier. My family consisted of my mother and my four sisters. I left them very happy and in perfect health.

On the twenty-second of the same month my sister Hélène, a

superb girl of eighteen, the youngest and my favorite, had asked several of her young friends to her home. About three o'clock in the afternoon they went, accompanied by my mother, toward the Plane-tree Walk. The weather was very fine. After a half-hour my sister experienced a sudden uneasiness. "Mother," she said, "I feel a strange shiver running over my whole body; I'm cold, and my throat hurts badly. Let's go in."

Twelve hours afterward my adored sister expired in my mother's arms, asphyxiated, laid low by croup; two doctors had been powerless to conquer it.

My family—I was the only man who could represent it at the funeral—sent me telegram after telegram, to Montpellier. By a terrible mischance, which I still deplore to-day, not one of them was put into my hands.

Now, during the night of the twenty-third to the twenty-fourth, eighteen hours after the poor child's death, I was the victim of a frightful hallucination.

I had got back to where I lived at two o'clock in the morning; there was nothing on my mind; it was still full of the happiness I had had on the twenty-second and twenty-third, days devoted to a pleasure-party. In very high spirits, I went to bed. Five minutes afterward I was asleep.

At four o'clock in the morning I saw my sister's face before me, *pale, bloody, lifeless*, and a cry—piercing, repeated, plaintive—reached my ears: "*Louis, what are you doing? Why don't you come? Why don't you come?*"

In my agitated, nerve-racked dream I took a carriage; but in spite of superhuman efforts I could not make it move forward. And still I saw my sister, pale, bloody, and the same cry—piercing, repeated, plaintive—reached my ears: "*Louis, what are you doing? Why don't you come? Why don't you come?*"

I awakened abruptly, my face flushed, my head on fire, my throat dry, my breathing short and jerky, while my body was streaming perspiration.

At eleven in the morning I reached the school, the victim of an unconquerable melancholy. Questioned by my comrades, I told them of the cruel experience, just as I had suffered it. It called

forth a few jests at my expense. At two o'clock I went to a class, hoping to find some rest in work.

As I was coming out of the class room, at four o'clock, I saw a woman in deep mourning approaching me. When she was two paces away she lifted her veil. I recognized my elder sister, who, uneasy on my account, had come, in spite of her deep grief, to ask what had become of me.

She told me of the fatal happening, which nothing could have made me foresee, since I had received very good news of my family the morning of the twenty-second.

Such is the account I submit to you; it is, on my honor, absolutely true. I express no opinion; I have held myself to the mere recital of it.

Twenty years have passed since then; the impression is still as deep as ever—above all, at this time—and even if my Hélène's features do not rise before me with the same distinctness, I still hear that same appeal—plaintive, repeated, despairing—"Louis, what are you doing? Why don't you come? Why don't you come?"

LOUIS NOELL.

Druggist in Cette.

This account, published in 1891 by my friend Dr. Dariex, in the "*Annales des Sciences psychiques*," of which he was editor, was accompanied by documents calculated to establish its authenticity. Let us note the following letter from the observer's sister:

My brother has asked me, at your request, to send you an account of the meeting I had with him, in Montpellier, after the death of our sister Hélène. In spite of the bitterness of such painful memories, I shall submit my testimony to you.

Seeing my brother on the street—he recognized me first, despite my garb of mourning—I realized that he was still in ignorance of Hélène's death. "What further misfortune has come to us?" he cried. When he learned from my lips of Hélène's death he gripped my arms with such violence that I almost fell backward. When we got

back to where he lived, I had to bear a terrible scene. Mad with anger, my brother, who was very nervous, very intense, but also very good-hearted, almost maltreated me. "What a calamity!" he cried. "What a misfortune! Oh, why did n't I get the telegrams?" And he struck the table violently with his hands. One after another, he drank three large decanters of water. There was a moment when I believed him mad, so bewildered was his gaze.

When he had come to his senses, some hours afterward, he said, "Oh, I was sure that a great misfortune was going to overwhelm me." He then told me of the hallucination he had experienced the night of the twenty-third to the twenty-fourth.

THÉRÈSE NOELL.

This experience has the greatest value; it concerns a phenomenon of considerable significance, which deserves the most painstaking attention. Dream, nightmare, vision, mental disturbance, hallucination, telepathy—the name, the word, is no explanation. That there was a chance coincidence is not admissible; there was, without any doubt, communication between the dead sister and the living brother. Was it before death or after? This impression was made the night of November 23–24th, toward four o'clock in the morning, and Hélène Noell had died eighteen hours before, on the twenty-third, about ten o'clock in the morning, after twelve hours of suffering. We think at first that the sister's mind exerted a direct influence on the mind of the brother by telepathic action, as in so many cases cited in his work. One might believe that Hélène's wish was carried into effect when she was still alive, toward the moment of her most sudden, tragic death. But in this case why should the telepathic communication have taken eighteen hours to be received? The distance from Perpignan to Montpellier is non-existent for telepathy, as for electricity; a thousand kilometers would be passed over as a hundred, or as ten.

According to his own account, Louis Noell was, at the time

of his beloved sister's death, on a pleasure-party; he did not suspect his sister's condition; his mind seems to have been entirely taken up with personal sensations that were very intense. There would, therefore, be nothing surprising in the fact that the thought-transference was not felt. We know, indeed, that the receiving brain must be in a proper state of harmonious vibration. This ether-vibration, however, may have reached him, may have remained latent, and have revealed itself to his calm intelligence only during sleep, eighteen hours later.

This is a hypothesis not to be rejected; but it is only a hypothesis.

Another hypothesis is that his sister, who had been dead for eighteen hours, really addressed him at the hour when he heard her, really renewed her appeal,—that in spirit she sped to her absent brother. This, too, is only an hypothesis, one less probable than the first, but we must not reject it absolutely. The first hours after death may pass in a sort of dream.

In this case we should have a real manifestation on the part of some one dead.

These are hypotheses, methods of investigation. We must not forget that we are here entering a new world, entirely unexplored.

It is not to be doubted that there was a psychic current, of unknown nature, between the dead sister in Perpignan and her living brother in Montpellier.

We have examples of vision at a distance, in dreams, as though the spirit of the sleeper were borne afar. We might also assume, with our present knowledge of all these facts, that the brother was carried in spirit toward his sister. But in this case one sees what is going on, whether it be in a normal dream or in a trance, and the brother would have perceived his sister stretched out dead upon her bed. But

on the contrary, it is she who spoke to him, called him. Could she have been carried to him in her astral body? That is another hypothesis.

We cannot conclude that there is in this case any certain evidence of a manifestation of the dead. It reveals itself to us as lying between the two states. Our scientific and honest-minded duty is to note it as a document for use in studying the problem. It has a very great value as a rigorous and precise bit of observation.

The generally accepted psychology of the human mind has until now remained aloof from truth which is still uncomprehended, still mysterious. All must be studied, all evolved. *Impressions may remain in a dormant state in our minds and reveal themselves only after a long period of time.*

Here is a comparison which is not, perhaps, as forced as it may appear: One day in April, 1916, I took some photographs on the Cape of Antibes. A rush of work kept me from developing them until September 26, 1920. I thought that nothing would remain of the impressions taken four years and a half previously. Well—

(1) When the plates were developed in the usual way, there was nothing visible.

(2) A plate remained in the revealing fluid all night; the image showed itself, the morning of the next day, very distinctly.

This image had remained latent for four years and a half, invisible, its presence suspected by no one save myself. Twenty eyes, a hundred eyes might have examined this transparent plate, with the red lantern of the photographic laboratory, without discovering on it the slightest trace of an impression. It took the special revealing fluid to make the image appear after fifty-three months.

It is noteworthy that of this country-side recorded photographically in April, 1916, there remained in September,

1920, nothing in nature exactly as it was; certain trees had grown, others had died; several springs, several winters had fashioned the scene anew, and there was not the same water in the waves which beat upon the shore. A summer-house had even been built; all was changed. A photograph of this same site which we might take now would show a complete difference. Nevertheless, if to-day there remained nothing, absolutely nothing, of this country-side; if an earthquake, a geological cataclysm, a flood had caused all to disappear, the landscape of April, 1916, would none the less have been preserved, in a latent state, upon the photographic plate. A suitable chemical combination sufficed to make it emerge from invisibility, from the unknown. The same reasoning would apply to the photograph of a human being.

The case of Monsieur Noell leads us to think that the brain may retain latent images in the same way. This we knew, however. In the further progress of our psychic investigation we must take into account this retention of images in estimating the mental make-up of a human being.

Might not these images reappear long afterward? Frederic Myers has, as my readers know, put forth this explanation.

It is even probable that invisible forms remain, here and there, in a house, just as in an empty casket there linger traces of a perfume long since removed. Is not the origin of the word *manes* the verb *manere*, to remain?

Other similar cases will, perhaps, enable us to find a definitive explanation.

Here is a rather curious example of an apparition which, too, seems to have emanated from some one still alive, who was dying. The person who appeared did not say, as in so many cases, "I 'm dead," but "I 'm going away."

This case is vouched for by Victor Hugo, who related it in his notes, collected under the name "Choses vues"

(“Things Seen”). It was given under the date of December 5, 1846. Let us listen to the story of it:

On the twenty-seventh of last November an aged woman named Madame Guérin, sixty-six years old, and living on the fourth floor, 34 rue des Fossés-du-Temple, had an illness which did not seem serious, and which the physician had diagnosed as indigestion. It was five o'clock in the morning. Her daughter, a widow named Madame Guérard, who was living with her, had got up early, had lighted her lamp, and was working, seated in the chimney-corner, near her mother's bed. “Well,” she said, “Madame Lanne must have come back from the country.” (This Madame Lanne was the retired chandler at the corner of the rue Saint-Louis and the rue Saint-Claude.) “I must go to see her to-day,” Madame Guérard added.— “That would be useless,” said her mother.— “But why?”— “Because she died an hour ago!”— “Why, Mother! What are you saying? Are you dreaming?”— “No, I'm wide awake; I haven't slept the whole night; as it was striking four I saw Madame Lanne pass by, and she said to me, *‘I'm going; are you coming?’*”

The daughter believed that her mother had dreamed this.

Daylight came; she went to see Madame Lanne. That woman had died in the night, at four o'clock in the morning. That same evening Madame Guérin began to vomit blood. The physician who was called in said, “She won't live longer than twenty-four hours.” And, in fact, on the next day, at noon, she had a second attack of vomiting, and died.

I knew Madame Guérin, and had the facts from Madame Guérard, a pious, honest woman, who never lied in her life.

VICTOR HUGO.

As every one knows, the poet was then living near by, in the Place des Vosges.

We have in this case a most curious double psychic phenomenon,—(1) The apparition of the dying woman to her friend; (2) an invitation to die, too, quite calmly, as though it were a question of a short trip, or even of a walk.

In all probability this woman was not quite dead when she showed herself to her friend, and said to her, *‘I'm going;*

*are you coming?"* The death of the latter, which took place the next day, may have been the result of the shock caused by this apparition. We have here, as in the episode of H  l  ne Noell, a case lying between apparitions of the living and apparitions of the dead.

The following incident resembles the two preceding ones in the matter of hearing. I am taking it from a letter dated March 27, 1899.

I can affirm, on my honor, that my grandfather, dead to-day, told us that one morning he had heard a knocking on the window of his room, and had seen one of his relatives, who said to him, "*Come quickly!*" This apparition had coincided exactly with the death of the said relative, which was not known until the next day.

PAUL FAIVRE,

Saint-Cieir-du-Taillo, Lower Charente.

(Letter 69.)

Unlike Madame Gu  rin, the hearer made no haste to accept the invitation.

In the following example it was, again, a voice which made itself heard. A correspondent, whom I have already quoted above, wrote me on April 13, 1899:

Rosalie Deschaux, my aunt and godmother, who died in my home in 1884, aged seventy-two, told me that when she was from sixteen to seventeen years old, and was living in Bilieu, she had a very close friend, a young girl of her own age, Emilie Trouillaud, living in the same district but in another hamlet. The latter being, one day, slightly indisposed, she went to call on her; she found her unwell, but did not remark any serious symptoms in her condition. Some hours later, at nightfall, she felt, to her great terror, a strange sensation, as though she had been brushed by the wings of an invisible bird, and heard these words distinctly: "Farewell, Rosalie!" She then recognized, very clearly, her friend's voice. My aunt went back home, sobbing, and cried, "Emilie is dead: she just said good-by to me!" Her mother scolded her, seeking to make her understand that it was caused by imagination, etc. But while they were talking, some one arrived,

running, to announce Emilie's death. It had come suddenly, with nothing to indicate that it was to be expected.

E. DESCHAUX,  
Landowner in Abrets.

(Letter 595.)

Plainly, we have here a manifestation, at the moment of death, of some one dying. The girl was dying; she was not yet dead.

I have received accounts of a certain number of observations as to the dead, who, themselves, told of their demise immediately after it had taken place, and even before it had been formally announced. These examples have a connection with the three preceding ones. The question for us, here, is whether or not those who manifested themselves were *living*. The following letter, sent me on September 13, 1900, was taken from my collection:

I consider it my duty to add to your telepathic observations a phenomenon with which I myself was concerned.

I was sixteen years old and was in Ancone, Italy, with my father and mother. My grandmother, who had brought me up and who loved me dearly, was then living with one of her sons, in Saint-Etienne.

One night, when I was sleeping alone in my room, I was suddenly awakened by feeling a hand placed on my face, and was terribly frightened to perceive my grandmother, dressed in black and in a white cap; very sadly she told me, "I am dead," and disappeared.

Terrified, I leaped out of bed and took refuge in my parents' room. They made fun of me, calling me out of my senses, a visionary. But, because I was terrified, they allowed me to stay with them. It was then three o'clock in the morning.

That evening we were to go to a ball at the magistrate's residence, to which we had been invited. Now, that same day, at four o'clock in the afternoon, my father received a telegram telling him of his mother's death. (She was seventy-six.)

He left for France immediately, and upon his return he informed us that she had drowned herself in a large pool belonging to the

villa in which she was living; that her body had been found, at five o'clock in the morning, by the family gardener, but that the suicide must have taken place at the very hour at which my poor grandmother had appeared to me.

He added that, on the day before, she had told my uncle, her son, of the great regret she felt at being separated from me. She had thrown herself into the pool dressed just as I had seen her, in a black silk dress and wearing a white cap.

ALEXANDRINE MIWLON,

Former hospital interne; head of the medical clinic.

18 rue d'Espagne, Tunis.

(Letter 942.)

This grandmother, who drowned herself in France, appeared to her granddaughter in Italy, telling her, "*I am dead.*" Attack it as you wish, the occurrence is there before us; it is exactly like an astronomical observation, an observation in meteorology, physics, or chemistry; it is as worthy of acceptance as the phenomenon of a rainbow, a ring about the sun or the moon, a meteorite,—any heavenly or terrestrial phenomenon whatsoever.

It is quite time to embody these realities in a new chapter of positive, experimental science.

Let us examine this account more closely; let us analyze it rigorously. Let us discuss it, whether it be "psychic physiology," as Littreé thought, or something quite different.

The sensation experienced by the narrator was double,—(1) A hand placed on her face; (2) the sight of her grandmother. These two impressions were not objective. It was not her grandmother who came to touch her face and to show herself; it was her brain which was acted upon, and which gave her these two sensations. But there is no effect without a cause, and the cause, in this case, could only have been the woman who committed suicide.

A mental illusion, a chance coincidence, mere hazard,—such is the contention of those who are ignorant of the number

of these phenomena. This childish solution can no longer be taken seriously.

No, there is here an indubitable instance of cause and effect. This young girl's grandmother did in fact exert an influence. She acted upon the mind of her granddaughter.

The question is whether she exerted this influence before or after her death. She did, indeed, say, "*I am dead.*" But may one not have such a thought, at the moment at which one feels oneself to be dying, and before dissolution?

Now, there is in my possession, among the numerous narrations which I have received, more than one analogous account. (See, in particular, "*L'Inconnu*," page 70,—Madame Bloch's story, in which her nephew, dying in Paris, while she herself was in Rome, appeared to her and told her, as in the preceding case "*I am dead.*")

If some one appears and says to you, "*I am dead*," this may be interpreted in a sense—in the common, hackneyed sense—as meaning: *My body is dead.*

But there can be, obviously, two interpretations.

It happens often enough that at the time when this announcement is made by the person concerned, he is not yet dead, but is only in his death-agony, in a coma, in catalepsy: the organism halts, the soul goes on.

Still another question arises:

According to the explanation by telepathy, it is admitted that a kind of radiation emanates from the dying person's brain, from his spirit, still in his body, and is dispersed into space in ether waves,—successive, spherical waves, like those of sound in the atmosphere. When this wave, this emanation, this effluvium, comes into contact with a brain attuned to receive it, as in the case of a wireless-telegraph apparatus, the brain comprehends it,—feels, hears, sees. Such a thing is possible. It has not been proved.

It would seem even more simple to suppose a direct trans-

mission, in a straight line, from the agent to the percipient. The grandmother, when she was committing suicide, thought of her granddaughter, and her psychic force was transmitted directly to the granddaughter, from France to Italy. This interpretation of the phenomenon would seem more plausible than that of a spherical wave spreading out everywhere, uselessly, and without an aim.

The fact that the apparitions manifest themselves in the garments in which the dead were clothed at the moment of death would indicate a kind of photographic transmission, such as we found in Chapter III.

It was, doubtless, at the very moment of drowning that the grandmother touched her granddaughter, touched her physically. When a person is drowning (according to the accounts of those who have been brought back to consciousness) it sometimes happens that he sees all the years of his life pass before him, during the few seconds that the immersion lasts; time would appear to be annihilated (fifty years = three seconds). This is still another problem to be elucidated.

We must classify this phenomenon among the intermediate occurrences between life and death.

The following experience belongs in the same category,—death announced by the person concerned. Was it some one dying or dead who manifested himself in this way?

Here is a letter (522) from Madame Poncet in Marseilles:

In 1884, the year of the cholera in Marseilles, I left for Bag-nères, with my husband and children. I had been there scarcely eight days, when one night I was awakened abruptly, without apparent reason. My room, in which I slept alone, was absolutely dark; I saw standing on the rug beside my bed a person surrounded by a *luminous aureole*; I gazed, rather agitated, as you may imagine, and recognized my husband's brother-in-law, a doctor. He said to me, "Notify Adolphe; *tell him I am dead.*" At once I called my husband, who was in bed in the next room, and told him,

"I've just seen your brother-in-law; he announced his death to me."

The next day a telegram confirmed this news: an attack of cholera (when he was taking care of destitute patients) had carried him off in a very few hours.

Is a person who declares that he is dead really dead? One might think that this is the case. Nevertheless, there are instances in which the person is not yet dead, as we have seen. The strangest thing about it is, perhaps, that manifestations of this sort are not as rare as one might believe.

(Let us note, besides, the luminous aureole; we shall encounter it again.)

Why do they announce that they are dead, when they are not yet dead to those about them? Does one see oneself dead before being dead? At what moment is one really dead? Never, in reality.

It is the comparison of all similar occurrences that may best enlighten us. Let us call to mind the following experience ("L'Inconnu," Chapter CLIII):

I was a lieutenant in Saint-Louis, in Senegal. One evening, after spending several hours in the company of gallant, gay comrades, I went to bed at eleven o'clock. I dozed off, after some moments. Suddenly, I felt as though something were pressing upon my chest; abruptly roused, I lifted myself upon one elbow, rubbing my eyes, for my grandmother was there, before me. The good woman was gazing at me with eyes that were almost dead, and I heard—yes, I heard—her weak voice telling me, "*I've come to say good-by to you, my dear child: you will never see me again.*" I was astounded, and, to make certain that I was not dreaming, I got up.

The apparition had lasted a few seconds.

As a matter of fact, my grandmother, aged seventy-six, had died in Rochefort. Her last words had been about me: "I shall never see him again," she had repeated ceaselessly. Death had come during the night in which I had seen her, and, if the difference

in longitude is taken into account, at the exact hour at which she appeared to me.

These are the facts. I can vouch for their scrupulous exactitude.

JULIEN LAGARRUE,

Captain of Marines, in Hanoi.

These occurrences are met with everywhere. One may read in the Paris newspaper "Le Petit Bleu" of January 4, 1903, the account of an apparition of a daughter in Melbourne (Mademoiselle Angèle Frapperit, afterward Madame André Malbec) to her mother in Paris. The daughter had spoken these words: "Mother, I am dead." This happened at half-past ten in the evening. The next day a telegram informed the mother of the death.

Monsieur L. Bouthors, head tax-collector in Chartres, told me ("L'Inconnu," page 412) that during the war of 1870 a lady whom he knew (the wife of an officer), who was shut up in Metz, saw his father, Dr. Bouthors, in a dream. He was her physician; he appeared at the foot of her bed, and she heard these words: "*See! I have just died.*"

He had died, as a matter of fact, on that very day, September 18, 1870, at five o'clock in the morning, without having been ill. The logical course would have been for this telepathic transmission to take place after death.

I repeat that these enigmatical manifestations, which may be classified as coming between life and death, are innumerable.

My worthy colleague Mademoiselle A. Vaillant wrote me from Fronquevillers, on March 25, 1899:

Madame Dassonville, the mother of one of your readers, had a godson named Constant Touzet. This godson had lived with Madame Dassonville from the time of the expiration of his military service until his marriage. He then established himself in Arras, in the street in which his godmother lived. Some years after his marriage he fell dangerously ill, and Madame Dassonville

went every day to ask about his health. One morning she said to her husband, as she was getting up, "Constant Touzet is dead."—"Why do you say that? You can't know it," her husband answered.—"I do know it," she replied, "*for he came to say good-by to me last night*, and I'm going at once to see how things are with him."

He had, in fact, died in the course of the night.

Madame Dassonville's daughter was then aged nine, and was sleeping in an alcove in her parents' room. She heard what they said as to Constant Touzet's apparition and his death, and remembered it as on the first day; she vouches for this by adding her signature to mine.

A. VALLANT,  
S. DASSONVILLE.

(Letter 307.)

This was still another case of a dying man's good-by. The theosophist Leadbeater had from a witness a personal account which belongs here:

One evening his correspondent, then in the midst of his studies, had gone to bed rather early; at half-past ten, he perceived by the light of a large fire burning on the hearth, his father's form, well lighted up. The form lifted a hand and made a sign to him to approach. At once he sprang from his bed and rushed toward the apparition, but it vanished.

Completely overwhelmed, he began to search through his whole room, but soon convinced himself that he was absolutely alone. The outer door was still locked. Moreover, the form of which he had caught a glimpse was certainly that of his father, though his expression was more tender than usual. Had he been the victim of an illusion? He went back to bed and tried to go to sleep.

Shortly afterward he was thoroughly awakened by a second apparition in the recess of the door: its face wore the same expression, and the same summoning gesture was insistently repeated. Thoroughly determined, this time, not to

let it escape him, he made but one bound from his bed to the apparition, but was again disappointed; his extended hands closed on empty air; once more the most painstaking search convinced him that it was absolutely impossible for any living being either to escape from the apartment or to hide there.

He succeeded, nevertheless, in going to sleep again, but was not long in awakening, greatly agitated.

His father was before him once more. But this time his expression and gestures were not the same: an air of profound but resigned regret had replaced his former deeply tender look; his lifted hand no longer beckoned the young man to approach, but motioned him away, slowly and sadly. And, instead of vanishing instantly, as before, his outline disappeared little by little, and his form seemed to fade.

It was ten minutes to two. The young man would have liked to hasten to his family, but how could he, at that hour? His father was the pastor of a rather distant parish; he had left him in perfect health some weeks before. But, profoundly impressed by this vision thrice renewed, and convinced at last that there was something extraordinary in these occurrences, he felt that it would be impossible to stay there any longer without making sure, personally, that his father was alive and well. Early in the morning he left for home.

A day of rapid travel effaced to some extent the impression that the event of the night had made upon him. In the evening, when he reached the avenue on which the parsonage was, his uneasiness had almost vanished. He even felt happy at the prospect of surprising the family, gathered round the fireside. But when he neared the house his heart began to beat violently: all the shutters were closed. A nervous apprehension gripped him, to such an extent that he stood, for some moments, unable to knock at the door. It was opened at length, when he had plucked up courage,

by the serving-man, whom he had known since childhood:

"Oh, sir," said the man, "you 've got here too late! If you 'd only come last night! Yes," he added, in reply to the young man's anxious inquiries, "yes, the master has left us, and with the only words he was able to utter, after his attack, he begged for you. He fell sick at ten o'clock last night, and half an hour afterward, when he could speak again, his first words were about you: 'Send for my son,' he said. 'I must see him once more.' We told him that a messenger would be sent at dawn, but he no longer heard us, and seemed to fall into a deep trance again. Then at quarter to twelve he was awake for a few minutes, but all he could say was, 'How much I should like to see my son!' At last, just as he was going to die, he opened his eyes and seemed to recognize all of us, though he was too weak to speak much; but he was able to murmur: 'I'm going away: I should so like to have spoken one last time with my dear son, but I sha'n't live until then.' And he passed away so peacefully that you might have thought he had gone to sleep."<sup>1</sup>

The dying man's visit was therefore, in this case, the realization of an intense desire. His longing was unquestionable, and was manifested before death.

The thought-transference was instantaneous; it produced before the son's eyes the image, plainly recognizable, of his father. Was a kind of double of the father transmitted to the son? This is possible, in view of what Chapter II of this volume has shown us; but it is not a necessary assumption, in view of what the succeeding chapter taught.

I published in "*L'Inconnu*," several accounts of tactile manifestations at a distance (among others, those on pages 97 and 184). They seem still more extraordinary than those of sight and hearing, and are also rarer. Here is one

<sup>1</sup> Leadbeater, *L'autre côté de la Mort*, p. 185.

related to me by an absolutely honest-minded person: there can be no doubt as to her sincerity; my readers have already made her acquaintance (Volume I, page 388).

Cherbourg, January, 1914.

DEARLY LOVED MASTER:

I shall begin this letter by telling you of a manifestation of the dying which cannot fail to interest you.

At the end of March, 1902, I received, in this town, from Marseilles, a telegram announcing the death of my husband's mother, which had occurred the evening of the previous day.

My husband had been busy in the hospital for the previous twenty-four hours. I went to tell him of the grief which had come to him. He said to me, "She must have died about ten o'clock yesterday evening." (We verified this time afterward: it was exact.) "Yesterday, when I was in bed, half awake, it seemed to me that some one was kissing and caressing me. I even asked aloud, 'Is that you, Suzanne?' The gas was lighted in the room. I am convinced that my mother made a last effort to reach me and kiss me, before dying."

I admit that I thought my husband had had an hallucination; but I must say that, since that time, he has never ceased to believe that his mother came to bid him good-by before dying. What strikes me most in this experience is that my dear husband is *an absolute materialist*, and that he is always striving to undermine, even to the point of causing me sorrow which he does not suspect, all my spiritualistic ideas and my hopes of a Beyond.

SUZANNE BONNEFOY.

(Letter 2575.)

In September, 1914, I entered into personal relations with Monsieur and Madame Bonnefoy; several times since then I have spoken with the sympathetic head physician of the Cherbourg naval hospital, of this manifestation, which he remembers with the greatest clearness: it did not lead him to believe in survival after death. He thought that this telepathic transmission had taken place *before* his mother's

death (this is also my opinion), but that it was of a purely physiological order. His mother was living in Marseilles, and he in Cherbourg.

These physical impressions of deaths or accidents at a distance reveal themselves in every imaginable form. Count A. de Gramont, of the Academy of Sciences, received an account of a particularly curious case of tactile telepathy. It concerned a wound received in war, and was vouched for (and thoroughly attested) as having occurred during the night of March 7th-8th, 1916. Monsieur Bachelot, head accountant of the Angers Electrical Company, was suddenly awakened by a most intense pain in his little finger, on which there was a ring given him by a friend, Monsieur Morin, an artist who had been called to the colors as an infantry sergeant. It seemed to Monsieur Bachelot that the ring was gripping him like a vise, and, half asleep, he drew it from his finger. Now, that very night, toward four o'clock, *Sergeant Morin had been wounded*; this is attested by the medical records of the army.

My readers may remember having read in "L'Inconnu" (page 361) of a similar tactile impression,—Madame Severn waking up with a start, under the impression of having received a violent blow on the mouth—one which cut her lip—at the instant (seven o'clock in the morning), at which her husband, in a boat, was wounded on the lip by a blow from the tiller.

The numerous communications which I have received would lead to a belief that the feelings of affection between parents or between friends must manifest themselves through material acts; nevertheless, is it not more probable that they come into play still oftener through intangible psychic sensations? I have received more than one bit of testimony in support of this.

These varied manifestations *between life and death* are intermediate with respect to the preceding accounts, and those

which are to follow. They have to do with those still living. We now reach manifestations of the dying at the moment of death, and we shall have the impression that in certain cases these dying persons may already be dead. This transition between the two states remains most mysterious; but have we not a personal interest in studying it? Inevitably, each one of us will pass that way. Though Berkeley contended that we are sure of nothing, we are absolutely sure that our bodies will perish. They say that Massillon, beginning a sermon in Lent, before Louis XIV, with the words, "*We are all mortal*," perceived obvious annoyance upon the great king's noble visage, and added, "Or, at least, almost all." The "Sun King" has vanished, and with him superfluous and diplomatic oratorical precautions. He left Saint-Germain, whence the spires of Saint Denis, his future tomb, could be seen, that he might build Versailles,—after having looked for a site even as far away as Juvisy,—and succeeded in losing the royal abbey to view. Let us not be cowardly. Let us face the problem squarely. For thirty years one of my friends has even had his tomb on his property, two paces from his study; his health is none the worse for it.

## XI

### MANIFESTATIONS OF THE DYING AT THE MOMENT OF DEATH (EXCLUSIVE OF APPARITIONS)

Nothing is so brutally conclusive as  
a fact.

BROUSSAIS.

**T**HE purpose of all the preceding investigations was to bring us to this point. But manifestations of the dying have already been presented, under various classifications, all through this second volume,—warnings, mental impressions, physical phenomena, etc. We shall in this way have reviewed these most numerous and varied occurrences connected with death, that we may then reach those which follow dissolution. We shall still confine ourselves, with the greatest precision possible, to manifestations which take place at the moment of death. We shall do well to continue our explanatory method, to subdivide our work, and to distinguish apparitions in the strict sense from diverse manifestations. We are prepared to elucidate what follows, through the investigations presented up to this point. Let us begin with general manifestations, and reserve “apparitions” for the last chapter of this volume.

It is probable that most of the cases about to be investigated have to do with beings still alive,—concern the hours, the minutes, preceding death,—but it is possible that a certain number of these manifestations were produced by persons already dead. The intelligent, careful reader is the best judge. We are making our investigation together. The subject is extremely complex.

We are endeavoring, as may be seen, to select from the various occurrences those which may make clear to us, so far

as possible, these twilight glimmerings. The facts are undeniable. It is a question of judging them with precision. It must be our aim, before all, to bring together what has been proved experimentally, leaving no doubt as to the reality of these proofs.

There is a tendency to believe that science must explain all, and that a well-balanced process of reasoning cannot admit the authenticity of that which is inexplicable. Let us repeat that this is a grave error. Every case deserves to be examined; observations are the very groundwork of science. Explanations, theories, are only hypotheses. Our inability to explain a fact does not diminish its value in the least.

Telepathy, the communication of thought at a distance, has not yet found an explanation that is plausible, certain, definitive; and men who are not devoid of intelligence continue to deny it absolutely, simply because it is unexplained. But it is enlightening to know these facts, despite their mystery.

There are various degrees of probability. Our scientific method is rigorous. Let us take an example.

Any one might have read, in the Italian newspapers, of the following occurrence,—notably in “*La Tribuna*” of Rome, of December 26, 1911:

The morning of December 24th, in Parma, a child of eight—the son of Captain Marcucci, who recently left for Tripoli—awakened with a start, wailing and sobbing. In answer to his mother’s question the child said: “I just saw Papa, marching against the Turks, at the head of his soldiers. One of the Turks, hidden behind a tree, fired at him and killed him.” Now a telegram arrived from Tobrouk, announcing Captain Marcucci’s death; he had been killed, as the child had seen, by a man hidden behind a tree.

Must we affirm in this case that there was telepathic transmission from the father to his child?

The chief objection to this story, as to other similar ones, is that there may have been only a chance coincidence; we

have, very often, dreams and varied painful presentiments, without any apparent reason; for one that is coincidental, ten have no validity. The child, one might suppose, heard stories of battles, of various skirmishes, and knew that his father was in danger. There is nothing surprising in his having had this dream. We do not, therefore, see in this any *certain* telepathic manifestation. Our duty is to reason coolly.

But—let us repeat it once more—if blind credulity is deplorable, systematic incredulity and skepticism are no less opposed to the onward march of progress. *In medio stat virtus*. Let us analyze these further examples:

The head of a hospital in Algeria, who has asked me not to give his name, but whose letter I have, told me of two occurrences of this nature, which he himself observed.

He was nineteen years old and was living, with his mother, in the city of Constantine. One night his mother was awakened by a blow struck upon the door of her room. She went to ask who was there, when *the voice of a cousin*, living in France, told her: "Don't be frightened. I am dead. Keep everything you have. Have prayers said for me, and pray for me yourself."

Some days afterward they received a letter telling them of this relative's death. A lawsuit concerning the payment of interest came near being fought out between them and the cousin's son. But all was arranged amicably.

All of us feel that there was in this case greater probability of a telepathic manifestation than in the preceding one.

Can this coincidence be considered as fortuitous and meaningless? The lady did not know that her relative was ill. It was the telepathic transmission that told her of the fact.

Here is the second occurrence related by this correspondent:

One of her aunts underwent, in Algiers on April 13th, a serious operation which, considered merely as an operation, was successful. On the twelfth, the day before, this lady

had expressed a desire to be buried in Bône if she should succumb. Her parents lived there, and could therefore go to visit her tomb now and again.

On the twenty-fourth a cure seemed certain. Nevertheless, on that day, she said to the wife of my correspondent: "I have just seen my burial. They took me down into a room, then they carried me to the railroad station, and the train bore me to Bône, where the whole town followed my funeral procession."

This prevision, which called forth jests, was realized exactly. The poor woman died *on the next day*, the twenty-fifth, killed by an obstruction of the arteries. One hour after her death she was taken down into a special room, made ready to receive her; then the coffin was carried to the station, and the train bore it to the city indicated, where the funeral took place.

Yes, we feel that there are degrees in the scale of probability. Strictly speaking, however, we might suppose that the patient had an exact presentiment of her condition, and foresaw the fulfilment of her wish. Let us investigate and discuss everything; light will appear. We must not hide any objection.

Another correspondent wrote me from La Vendée:

During the night of January 30th-31st I dreamed that I arrived at the home of my parents, in Moutiers; I believed them absolutely well. But in the drawing-room I saw a throng bent over an improvised bed; I pushed my way past the people about the bed, and saw my father, dead, stretched out on a mattress placed upon boards.

I sobbed, and this awoke my wife. She asked me what was the matter. "It's nothing," I answered. "It was an absurd dream: I thought Father was dead."

The next day I learned that my father had felt unwell the previous night, at eleven o'clock, and that his condition had grown worse so rapidly that he had died at half-past five o'clock in the morning, at exactly the moment when I had had this sinister nightmare:

they had laid him out on a bed like the one I had seen in my dream, and in the same drawing-room.

Plainly, in this case we can discover no possible chance coincidence. Probability approaches certainty.

Our conclusion is that people have been wrong to neglect all these observed phenomena. It is time to discuss them.

They are not of the present.

Recently, that I might vary my pleasures, I found entertainment in opening a volume of the Letters of Madame de Sévigné to her daughter, and I came upon the following passage, written on October 28, 1671:

I always await Thursdays with impatience. Those are the days of your letters [from her daughter, Madame de Grignan]. In earlier days Saint-Pavin made an epigram on the subject of Thursdays, the days on which he saw me at the abbot's home.

One may read the note appended to this letter by Aimé-Martin:

Boileau had judged it impossible for the poet Saint-Pavin ever to become pious. He was converted, it is said, as the result of a vision. The same night on which Théophile, his physician and friend died, *he heard himself called several times*. Since his servant assured him that he *had heard the same voice*, Saint-Pavin renounced his impious opinions and grew devout.

We can no longer ignore what such occurrences teach us. This second volume is full of them; it might be ten times as long. Let us repeat it: there are things which are at once inexplicable and admissible. Let us keep our independence of mind and observe unimpeded by reticence.

We are astonished by these happenings, great and small, and by these inexplicable coincidences.

But could there be astonishment greater than that which would overwhelm a man who, ignorant of the phenomenon,

should see, without preparation, an egg, placed in a warm receptacle, break under the thrusts of the bird which comes out of it?

There are to be found here, under the heading of "Manifestations of the Dying," a certain number of letters which I have received since the beginning of my investigation in 1899. I did not publish them in "*L'Inconnu*," lest I fill that volume too full (it was already rather long) and because I wished, at the very outset, to place before my readers' eyes the documents best substantiated, and to omit those sent by people whose signatures I was asked not to make public.

Since the end of the last century the authenticity of such phenomena has been established, and we can be less exacting—remaining, however, extremely circumspect—and make them known even when observers insist on anonymity.

These psychophysical transmissions occur with great frequency; they have been observed more or less everywhere, but are not yet known,—are doubted, are denied!

I shall begin this chapter on manifestations of the dying with a reminiscence of our kindly and famous contemporary of the nineteenth century, Alexandre Dumas (the father), a worthy and splendid man, with whom I had occasional intercourse from 1865 to 1870, the year of his death. This reminiscence was published in Volume I of his *Memoirs*.

General Dumas, his father, died in Villers-Cotterets, on February 26, 1806, and this date interested me because it coincides with that of my birth (February 26th), thirty-six years later. Our delightful author adored his father, who had held him on his knees and shown him great sabers and pretty gold lace, but he had scarcely known him, since he was born on July 24, 1802, also in Villers-Cotterets. This childhood intimacy had not lasted for long, but had left memories that could never be effaced. Death, in sundering the tie, was characterized by a singular phenomenon, which

deeply impressed the future writer, and stamped itself upon his imagination. Let us read his story:

The night of my father's death I was taken away from the house and left with my cousin Marianne, who lived at her father's home, in the rue de Soissons. Whether, feeling the end was near, they did not wish me, a child, to see a coffin, or whether they feared I might be in the way, this precaution was taken about five o'clock in the afternoon.

I adored my father. Perhaps at that age the sentiment I now call love was but ingenuous astonishment due to the Herculean form and the tremendous strength I had seen him exhibit on several occasions; perhaps, even, it was but a childish and vain admiration for his embroidered coat, his three-colored aigrette, and his great saber, which I was barely able to lift; but, at all events, the memory of my father—every contour of his body, every feature of his countenance—is as vivid as though I had lost him yesterday. I love him to-day with a love as tender, as deep, and as real as if he had watched over my childhood, and I had had the happiness of passing from this childhood to adolescence, leaning on his strong arm. For his part, my father adored me; I cannot repeat this too often, above all if the dead hear what is said of them; and although, during the last part of his life, suffering had soured his disposition to such an extent that he could not bear any sound or movement in his room, he made an exception in my favor.

I had no conception of death. It would have been most difficult for me to foresee that of my father—I, who three days before had seen him mount a horse. I made no objection, therefore, to leaving the house, and once I had left, I do not know if my father spoke of me or asked for me. But the occurrence I am about to relate has remained perfectly fresh in my mind in every detail.

They had, therefore, left me at the home of my cousins' father.

This worthy fellow was a blacksmith named Fortier; he had a brother, the village priest.

I was put in the care of my cousin Marianne.

The house extended from the rue de Soissons to the Place du Château. As a result of this location, the moment the smithy door, giving on the rue de Soissons, and the door of the garden,

giving on the Place du Château, had been closed, the house could not be entered except by scaling the walls. (A plan, drawn by Dumas, completes this description.)

So I had remained with my Cousin Marianne; I loved to go into the smithy; I made fireworks there with filings, and the workmen told me most interesting stories.

I stayed in the smithy until rather late in the evening; at night it was full of fantastic reflections and plays of light and shadow which gave me infinite pleasure. About eight o'clock my cousin Marianne came to look for me there, put me to bed in the little bed next the big one, and I fell into the good slumber that God gives children,—a slumber like spring dew.

At midnight I was awakened—or rather, my cousin and I were awakened—by *a loud blow struck upon the door*. A night-lamp was burning on a table; by its light I saw my cousin sit up in bed, very much frightened, but she said nothing.

No one could knock at this inner door, since the two other doors were closed.

But I, who to-day almost tremble as I write these lines—I, on the contrary, felt no fear: I got down from my bed and went toward the door.

"Where are you going, Alexandre?" my cousin called to me. "Where are you going, anyway?"—"You see very well," I answered calmly, "that I'm going to open the door for Papa, who's come to say good-by to us."

The poor girl sprang from her bed, quite terrified, caught me as I was raising my hand to the lock, and forcibly put me back into bed.

I struggled in her arms, shouting at the top of my lungs: "Good-by, Papa! Good-by, Papa!"

Something resembling the exhalation of a last breath touched my face and calmed me.

Nevertheless, I went back to sleep with my eyes full of tears and sobs in my throat.

The next morning we were awakened when day came.

My father had died at precisely the time at which this loud blow, of which I have spoken, had been struck upon the door!

Then I heard these words, without knowing what lips uttered them: "*My poor child, your papa, who loved you so, is dead!*"

"My papa is dead," I answered. "What does that mean?"

"That means that you will never see him again."

"What? I'll never see Papa again?"

"No."

"And, why shall I never see him again?"

"Because God has taken him from you."

"Forever?"

"Forever."

"And you say I'll never see him again?"

"Never again."

"Never again, ever?"

"Never!"

"And where does God live?"

"He lives in the sky."

I remained thoughtful for a moment. However much a child I was, however lacking in the power to reason, I understood, nevertheless, that something calamitous had occurred in my life. Then, seizing the first instant when people stopped paying attention to me, I escaped from my uncle's home and ran straight to that of my mother.

All the doors were open, all faces frightened; one felt that death was there. I entered, therefore, without any one seeing me. I reached a little room where arms were stored; I took down a single-barreled gun which belonged to my father, and which they had often promised to give me when I should be grown up.

Then, armed with this gun, I went upstairs.

On the landing of the first floor I met my mother. She was coming out of the death-chamber. She was in tears.

"Where are you going?" she asked, astonished to see me there, when she had thought I was with my uncle.

"I'm going to the sky!" I answered.

"What do you mean? You're going to the sky?"

"Yes; let me go on."

"And what are you going to do in the sky, my poor child?"

"I'm going to kill God, who killed Papa."

My mother seized me in her arms, and, squeezing as though she meant to suffocate me, "Oh, don't say such things, my child!" she cried. "We're unfortunate enough already!"

Such is the story of how Alexandre Dumas's father manifested himself to his son, as the son told it. Dumas was a great writer of romances, a clever story-teller, but no man of sensibility can suppose that this account is not authentic; that it was merely a product of the famous writer's imagination: the veneration which he felt for the father whom he adored, leaves no room for doubt in our minds. All those who knew him appreciated the frankness and integrity of his character. The literary form which he gave to the wording of his story does not diminish its reality.

Of what nature was this loud blow struck upon the door? Its actuality cannot be doubted; our readers have been familiarized with this strange variety of manifestation through the special chapter previously devoted to it. What connection is there between these blows and the brain or the soul of the dead? As we found above, one thinks of electric transmissions. But we must admit that in the present state of our knowledge an explanation is impossible.

The facts are none the less real and unquestionable.

In the case last given we are concerned with a manifestation coinciding with a death. The difficulty which arises is that of knowing at what moment it was produced, —shortly before or shortly after death. It was an ether-vibration, at once of a psychic and physical nature; it was heard by Marianne, the cousin, and by the child. Everything leads us to believe that it was not intentional, not produced by the will, as with apparitions, voices heard, advice given; that, in consequence, it was neither before nor after death that General Dumas's thought produced it, but that it coincided with *the very moment* of the soul's separation, as though it resulted mechanically.

In Volume V of the same work Alexandre Dumas relates another experience not less disturbing.

It concerned a certain Monsieur Villenave, a very aged bibliophile whom he knew. He had gone to call on him, to

investigate an autograph, in March, 1829, about five o'clock in the afternoon,—that is to say, at nightfall. When he passed the concierge, the latter gave him a letter, to avoid mounting two flights of stairs. This letter announced to Monsieur Villenave the death of an old and very dear friend; he had been mysteriously warned of it by the falling of her portrait, a fine drawing, carefully hung on the wall of his room. The famous writer adds:

This extraordinary incident made me remember my father's apparition, which, the very night of his death, had awakened me, as a child, and again I asked myself, without being able to find an answer, this question, so many times repeated: "By what mysterious ties is death joined to life?"

After that, when I lost my mother, whom I loved more than anything in the world, and who for her part adored me more than words can express, I remembered these two manifestations. Near the bed on which she had just died, kneeling, my lips against her hand, I begged her, if some part of her survived, to appear to me one last time; then, when night had come, I went to bed in an isolated room, awaiting, with palpitating heart, the beloved vision.

Unavailingly, I heard the clock strike almost all the hours of the night, but no noise, no apparition came to comfort me in my funereal vigil. Then I doubted myself and others, for I so loved my mother, and she loved me so, that if she could have risen from her bed one last time to bid me a last farewell, she would most certainly have done this.<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps only children and old people are privileged,—children, because they are nearer the cradle; old people, because they are nearer the tomb.

<sup>1</sup> All have had opportunity to note that these manifestations do not occur when one desires them most; this shows us that they are not cases of autosuggestion. Then, too, a brain expectant of a phenomenon of this sort seems to lose all aptitude in perceiving it. These manifestations are essentially *spontaneous*. We must realize this; let us not forget it.

Let us, for our personal enlightenment, consider all occurrences, even those which are contradictory.

We may note that the falling of a portrait, coinciding with death, is not very rare. I have among my papers a large number of absolutely similar accounts,—the falling of portraits, at the moment of deaths, which could not be attributed to the method of hanging.

One of these examples was brought to my notice, still more recently, by a truthful and sincere correspondent, with whom my readers are already familiar, Mademoiselle Vera Kunzler of Naples (See Volume I, page 245). On October 27, 1920, she sent me the following account:

At the beginning of the year 1917 my aunt, Madame Pauline Riesbeck, had a husband in the army, but, since he was over forty, they thought that he was in the rear line of battle, and, in consequence, she was not anxious about him. The morning of February 12th my aunt went into her room, about half-past ten, to look for something. At the exact moment when she stepped over the threshold of the door the portrait of her husband, a large one which showed him in military costume, detached itself from the wall, fell, and slid over the floor to her feet. When the nail and the cord which had held up the frame were examined, they were found to be intact. My aunt, very much struck, related this singular accident to some friends, adding that she was very much afraid that some misfortune had befallen her husband. Naturally, they said to her what they habitually do in such cases: "Heavens, Madame, are you going to be superstitious? Don't believe in that foolishness!" But my aunt, convinced that a misfortune had occurred, put a cross, in red, against this date on her calendar, and waited three weeks for news of her husband. Toward the beginning of March she learned that my uncle, Monsieur Adolphe Riesbeck, had died on the "field of honor" (as they say) from a bullet that struck him in the head, the morning of February 12th, about half-past ten.

VERA KUNZLER.

(Letter 4291.)

P. S. Although you are familiar with such occurrences, my dear

Master, and trust my word, I have asked my aunt, now in Naples, to confirm my story. Here is her autograph:

*I certify to the absolute exactitude of the above account.*

PAULINE RIESBECK,  
Rue Liotard, Geneva.

Manifestations of the dying take on the strangest forms. Here is an account of a manifestation, which was sent me from Brussels on May 12th, 1900, in the following letter, given verbatim:

I think it my duty to add to your collection of documents the account of an incident which I witnessed. Though it happened long ago, it is still so vivid in my memory that I have often repeated it to my wife and children.

In Liège, on April 11, 1852, my brother, my family, and I were seated around the table one evening, playing cards beneath the gas-jet, when suddenly the flame went out.

All were astonished. Had some one tampered with the meter? No, for the gas continued to burn in the adjoining rooms. The jet was lighted again without difficulty, but we then saw that my father was very pale; we heard him stammer, "I have a presentiment that my mother has just died." We vainly made fun of such a groundless idea; we made no impression on him.

My father's restlessness ended by infecting us all, and a telegram soon arrived from Maestricht, thirty kilometers from Liège, announcing the fatal news.

Being neither superstitious nor skeptical, I submit the facts in all simplicity, and in the interests of truth alone.

E. MICHEL,  
26 rue du Nord, Brussels.

(Letter 916.)

The flame of the gas-jet extinguished at the moment of a death and this unquestionably, before an entire family—is it not childish, ridiculous? Is it unbelievable that a psychic current caused this? Here is the phenomenon of a watch stopped:

I received from Dr. Weil, a rabbi in Strasburg, the follow-

ing account of three occurrences which took place in Bischheim, in a most reputable family—a Protestant family; he guarantees the truthfulness of its members; they are in no way mystical, and “most conservative in their religious ideas.” They prefer that their names should not be made public. This account was written by a student.

My grandmother died in 1913. At the hour of her death the clock which hung in her room stopped, and no one could make it go again. Some years afterward her son died, and the very day of his death the clock again began to go without anyone having touched it.

At the time of this lady's death one of her sons was living in America. He returned at once to Alsace and asked, upon his arrival, if his mother were still alive. When they answered in the negative, he related that on February 9th he had awakened during the night and had seen his mother standing beside his bed. “She beckoned to me. I rose, followed her through three rooms, and ended by calling out to her. At that very moment she disappeared, and the clock struck quarter to two. The next day I left for Alsace, for I was sure she had died.” It was, indeed, on that very day and at that very hour that death had occurred.

(Letter 4201.)

Assuredly, it is strange that the spirit of some one dying or dead should be able to stop a clock or start it again. How can it act on the spring? Nevertheless we have seen above (page 268) that lightning does this. To attribute such coincidences to chance hardly satisfies us, in view of the number of these concordant occurrences. We have here, besides, a case of an apparition announcing death.

A most distinguished woman of the world, who was a close observer, wrote me in April, 1900:

The two incidents which I am about to relate to you are indubitable, but I am bringing them to your attention, dear Master, only on one condition, which you will understand and pardon—that of publishing neither my name nor the names of the others;

people are too stupid, and know only how to make fun of everything.

One day a young girl came to give me news of her married sister, who was living at a distance, and was ill of typhoid fever.

My daughter and I, as we were walking along with her, stopped to talk beneath the bell at the entrance to my apartment. There was no one with us, neither in my entrance-hall, nor anywhere else. Suddenly the bell began to ring as though it were tolling. "Léontine," I said to the young girl, "your sister's dying; that's her good-by." In the course of the day I received a telegram announcing her death.

I must tell you of a sister of charity who related this: She had a friend who had promised to let her know when she died. One day, when the sister was in the linen-room, she heard a cry: "Sister Cécile! Sister Cécile!" She saw no one. The same cry was twice repeated. The third time the voice added, "It's I; I'm going away, and I've come to tell you so."

A month later Sister Cécile learned that her friend had died on the day and at the hour when she had heard herself called.

(Letter 888.)

These two cases are similar to those above: page 246 (Saint François de Sales's clock) and page 280 (Victor Hugo's neighbor in the Place des Vosges).

I received in July, 1919, from my friend Dr. Ostwalt, a physician and oculist in Ivy, the following communication with a request not to reawaken the grief of a sorrowing family by publishing the narrator's name. It concerned the mother of a family and her son H——, killed in the last war. Here is this mother's letter:

You have asked me to tell you of the mysterious occurrence coinciding with the death of my brave, sweet child. Here it is, in its distressing simplicity.

On June 16, 1915, I was awakened by hearing three blows, very sharp and resonant, struck upon my door, and I answered, "Come in!" believing that it was my chamber-maid, who serves me break-

fast, habitually, toward seven o'clock. The astonishment which I felt when I did not see the door open, subsided immediately. Sitting up in bed, I said to my husband (he had heard me say, "Come in," and had entered and looked at his watch, the hands of which stood at five minutes to six): "*It's strange; I've just had an auditory hallucination,—three blows struck on my door,—but they were so quick and vigorous that they remind me of our Henri. It seems to me that it's he saying to me: 'Dearest Mother, I implore you not to be alarmed; I'm changing my sector. I'm happy; everything's all right, but I'm leaving.'*"

It was a strange feeling, and it made a deep impression on me.

My son was with the one hundred and forty-eighth infantry regiment; an attack was imminent in the direction of the tragic plateau of Quennevière (in the Compiègne district); we feared it, and nevertheless I was confident and serene. Alas! On the twenty-third of June, a professor in the college to which my son had gone brought us heartrending news. It had been sent by a college friend of Henri, a lieutenant who was near our poor child when he was struck in the temple by a fragment of a shell which exploded above him. His death was instantaneous; it took place at the moment when the assault was beginning: at five minutes to six.

I am sending you a copy of his friend's saddening letter, telling of the battle and of his death at precisely that time. •

(Letter 4093.)

It seems unlikely that this auditory impression of a mother who believed she heard her son (as well as the blows struck upon the door) was produced by this young soldier before he was killed by the fragment of a shell. The transmission must have corresponded to the very moment of death. We have seen in the preceding pages a great number of them which *antedated* death; we shall have (in Volume III) examples of those following death. The one just given must have corresponded to the very moment of dissolution.

One can see how much our classification helps us to know where we stand.

In the preceding narration a mother learned of her son's death. In that about to be read a girl felt, at a distance, in a strange nightmare, the death of her mother; the death-agony was occurring a hundred kilometers away. A letter sent to me from Lourdes, on June 11, 1920, related the following:

My mother was warned of the death of her own mother. The latter lived with one of her daughters, in Arlos, a little village of Haute-Garonne, not far from the Spanish frontier of the Val d'Aran. The author of "Stella" must, doubtless, be familiar with this delightful country.

My mother was living in Lourdes, at a distance of about a hundred kilometers from Arlos.

One night in October, 1918, my mother was suddenly awakened from her first sleep. Not only did she feel the presence of some one, but she had the very distinct sensation that some hand not her own seized her by the wrist and gripped it very strongly; at the same time a loud cracking sound made itself heard; it seemed to come from the vicinity of the door. My mother awakened my father at once, told him of her nightmare, and confided her uneasiness as to my grandmother, who she knew had been weak for some days. She went back to sleep, but her slumbers were very broken and agitated the whole night long. She had constantly the same dream,—a vision of tapers burning around a coffin.

My grandmother, whose death-agony had commenced at the beginning of the night, doubtless at the moment when my mother felt her wrist grasped, died that same day, at dawn. My mother felt no surprise when she received, about ten o'clock, the distressing telegram. All that day she had the feeling that her wrist was being strongly gripped. Speaking to me of the cracking (allusion is made to this sort of phenomena in several documents which you have published), she told me that she had a very strong impression that it was a warning.

My mother was brought up in the midst of the simple customs of a very religious, very devout family of peasants.

PIERRE PROUBET,

(Letter 4159.)

Lourdes.

This subjective telepathic impression is no more to be doubted than the preceding ones or the two following. They simply confirm the fact that these most diverse manifestations are unquestionable. The accounts were sent me from Montpellier, on August 6, 1900, in this letter:

It is a duty for all honest, fair-minded persons to tell you what they know, that they may help your most courageous investigation. The authenticity of the two following experiences cannot be questioned. The first I had from a person absolutely worthy of trust; the second occurred in my family.

(A) Madame Belot is a woman of eighty; her life has been irreproachable.

For a long time she and her husband lived apart; both were too independent by nature; they had neither the same ideas nor the same tastes. They did not detest each other. Their household was rather informal; the husband, something of an adventurer, decided to go and settle in Algeria. Before leaving his wife, he said this to her: "I'm leaving, but rest assured that I will not forget you, and if I go to the grave before you, my last thought will be of you."

One day, after luncheon, Madame Belot was taking her usual siesta. She was sleeping lightly, when, toward four o'clock in the afternoon, it seemed to her that she saw her husband, who passed before her, saying: "Good-by. I am going away."

This apparition startled her into wakefulness. She was greatly terrified; she had clearly recognized her husband's face, despite his pale, emaciated features. She thought of this constantly, and believed that an accident had happened to him.

The next day she received a telegram announcing that he had died the day before, at four o'clock in the afternoon.

(B) My poor father was very ill; to dull his torturing pain, injections of morphine had been prescribed. Half an hour before he died, not being able to bear his terrible suffering, he himself got up and went over to the mantelpiece on which the bottle of morphine was, to give himself an injection. He then went back to bed, and expired at ten o'clock. (This took place in Foix.)

His sister, who was in Toulouse, was informed by a telegram and arrived the next day. Before my mother had spoken to her, she said: "I dreamed it. Last night I had gone to bed early; I went to sleep at once, and saw him crossing to the mantelpiece. The vision awakened me suddenly; it was about ten o'clock."

I assure you, my dear Master, that the authenticity of these two incidents is unquestionable.

HENRI SILVY,  
Montpellier.

(Letter 933.)

The following is an affecting case of a manifestation on the part of some one dying; an account of it was sent to Monsieur de Vesme, in December, 1919; it was an auditory manifestation. The writer is the physician of the heroine of this telepathic phenomenon.<sup>1</sup>

In February, 1904, Monsieur B——, aged thirty-one, became engaged to Mademoiselle D——. These two young people loved each other. Family differences soon jeopardized their plans, and assumed such importance that the marriage, which was to have taken place in the middle of May, was broken off on the fourth of that month. Heartbroken, the two young people parted and began to travel, that they might try to lessen their sorrow. Mademoiselle D—— thought daily of her fiancé, whom she hoped to be able to marry some day, when family difficulties should have ceased to exist.

In September, 1904, she received a letter from her former fiancé. It was the last which reached her.

In December, 1905, she learned that, yielding to the entreaties of his family, he had married. She herself, for her part, married on July 5, 1906, and went to live with her husband on an estate in the environs of Bordeaux.

Monsieur B——, though married, could not forget his former fiancée.

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1919, p. 107.

In March, 1907, the young woman was alone, her husband being on a trip.

One night (it was the seventeenth) she had gone to bed as usual. She awakened abruptly, about two o'clock in the morning; she had heard her given name called three times,—close to her, it seemed. It appeared to her that this given name had been uttered behind the door which was beside her bed, and gave on a hallway. She rose, opened the door, believing her husband had come back unexpectedly, and was greatly astonished to see no one. Asking herself who could have called her, she went to wake her chamber-maid, who was sleeping in an adjoining room. The maid had heard nothing. Both of them dressed, went over the whole house, and found nothing. They ended by going back to bed.

After some time Madame D—— dozed off. But again she heard her given name twice uttered in a voice full of anguish. Greatly agitated, she leaped from her bed precipitately, called her chamber-maid, and told her: "This time it's impossible that you didn't hear it; someone called out twice, 'Jeanne! Jeanne!' The servant answered that she had heard nothing; that, since she had not been asleep, she would certainly have heard if anyone had called. Both, intensely curious, explored the whole house once more, and found nothing.

Madame D—— went back to bed a second time, sent her maid away, and, not being able to sleep again, remained in a state of mind that may be easily understood.

Half an hour later, she heard herself called for the third time, in a tone still more anguished than on the two preceding occasions. She spent the rest of the night in great agitation.

Some days afterward one of her relatives arrived from Noyon, where her former fiancé lived, and told her that the latter had died of galloping consumption on the night of March 17th–18th. His end had been particularly tragic. He had died the victim of most violent dyspnoea, and in the course of his death-agony had several times called his former fiancée—"Jeanne!"—as he was expiring in his wife's arms.

How can we doubt, when we see these manifestations pile

up before us by the hundred? No physical or historical science is founded on more numerous concordant observations.

The following account might, apparently, be classed with apparitions of the dead occurring after a long period, but we must inquire into it. It was given in Myers's work ("Human Personality," Volume II, page 32), and was a communication from Miss Lucy Dodson.

On Sunday, June 5, 1887, between eleven o'clock and midnight, the narrator, then wide awake, heard her name called three times, and at once saw her mother appear; she had been dead for sixteen years. She was carrying two children in her arms; she held them out, saying, "Take care of them, for they have just lost their mother."

The day following the next, Miss Dodson learned that her sister-in-law had died as a result of confinement, three weeks after having given birth to her second child. It is to be noted that the two children which she had seen in the arms of her mother seemed to her to be of the same age as her sister-in-law's children,—to be noted, also, that she knew nothing of the latter's confinement.

The investigation made demonstrated that this apparition of some one dead was absolutely spontaneous, and that nothing in the narrator's own mind could have given rise to it. Miss Dodson was in England and her sister-in-law in Bruges.

Must we consider this incident as proving an authentic apparition on the part of a mother who had been dead for sixteen years? We cannot be sure of this; it is not even probable, and I dare not hold the case in reserve for our third volume, for it may have been nothing but a thought-transmission of the dying woman, together with an association of ideas. Since this vision coincided with the death of the sick woman, we may imagine that the latter thought of her children's future, of her sister-in-law, and even of the dead woman.

The vision and the hearing of the words occurred between eleven o'clock and midnight; death took place on the same day,—Sunday, June 5th about half-past nine in the evening; that is to say, about two hours previously.

We must not fail to note the association of Miss Dodson's mother with the sister-in-law's suggestion. It reminds us of other similar observations. Did we not see, in Volume I, General Touchskoff's death announced to his wife by his father, who himself was unaware of the phenomenon?

We shall return to these remarkable cases.

We are now within the realm of sentiment. The touching story which follows was recounted to me by a young member of the Astronomical Society of France; he was the percipient, and was most painfully affected. His letter is here given word for word. We find in it three kinds of manifestations: (1) The words "It is ended," heard subjectively; (2) loud noises within a fireplace; (3) a mysterious noise. Three independent witnesses had these impressions.

MY DEAR MASTER:

Your disciples hail you as a psychist as well as an astronomer, and since it appears to be your mission to prove the existence of the soul and its survival after death, I believe it my duty to confide the following:

I The first days of last April I learned to know a young girl of my own age (eighteen); she made an indefinable impression upon me, casting a vague sadness over me, which I tried vainly to dispel. I saw her, now and again, in the evening, never for more than thirty to thirty-five minutes, save on April 15th, from seven to eight o'clock, in Buttes-Chaumont. It was a marvelous spring evening; we strolled along slowly. Suddenly, for no reason, we began to talk of death; I pointed to the stars and spoke of the soul, of its survival after death, of its progressive evolution in "the worlds of the sky," as well as other topics of the far side of the grave. Our walk ended in this way.

The next day she took to her bed, since she showed symptoms of

typhoid fever; her condition necessitated her being taken to the hospital, where I found her unconscious. Each day I had the grief of learning of the malady's progress, and the dreaded catastrophe came on May 6th, at a quarter-past one. The blow stunned me; I am barely beginning to emerge from the torpor into which I fell.

The night of May 5th-6th, I *half* awakened, and I had an *impression* which may be put into the following words: "It is ended." I wished to get up, to note the time, but I went back to sleep suddenly,—a leaden sleep caused by the nervous reaction of the day's anxiety. The period of this *semi-wakefulness* was very short; I might even estimate it as four or five seconds. I am extremely sorry that I did not get up, to look at the time; however that may be, it was black night. At five o'clock I awakened. I rose hastily; I hurried to the hospital, where I learned what had happened. She had remained for several hours in a state of coma.

II My poor Marcelle's father, aged sixty-eight, who knew nothing of things psychic—indeed was quite incredulous on this subject—had, on the fifth, gone to bed as unhappy as on the preceding days, without, however, thinking that his daughter was about to die. He awakened, on the sixth, *at dawn*, about four o'clock, and, scarcely awake, heard five very loud blows struck, in the fireplace; at the same time the metal fender was violently shaken. Indignant that any-one should make such a noise at an hour so early, he spoke this thought aloud, and went that morning, to ask all his neighbors about it. They had heard nothing. It was only in the afternoon that he was told of the death of his daughter.

III My friend's brother, living in Marly-le-Roi, was awakened about midnight, by a prolonged metallic noise; he got up to look for the cause of it, and found nothing.

Not being an authority, I am unable to discuss the question of how these phenomena were produced; I confine myself merely to giving you an account of them, as I perceived them and as they were recounted to me,—an unembellished account, without additions or omissions.

RENÉ JOHANY DELESTRE.

Paris, June 21, 1914, the day of your Sun Festival, this evening, at the Eiffel Tower.

(Letter 2499.)

We have here, before our eyes, a really touching idyl. This young girl of eighteen had a presentiment of her approaching end, without suspecting it. A lovers' stroll, rare in its poetry, had led them to speak of death. She fell ill the next day, and died three weeks afterward. Her death was felt by her young friend, toward the time it occurred, and then by her father. Her brother was startled by an inexplicable noise, shortly before that, while she was in a state of coma. A refusal to acknowledge the validity of these bits of testimony would be inexcusable. They must be added to hundreds of others.

The narrator was a young observer, a well-balanced student of science. (The infamous war of 1914-18 took his life, alas, as it did that of so many others, on September 25, 1915.)

And what of the strange noises heard at the moment of death; blows struck in the fireplace, a fender shaken,—occurrences like the ringing of the bells of Etampes, given above, Alexandre Dumas's doors, etc. There are thousands of similar examples. What opinion must a man familiar with these facts have of the intellectual worth of those blind enough to deny them? <sup>1</sup>

A father, on shipboard, at sea, was kissed by his child, who was dying in France. Monsieur Moureau, the commanding officer of a war-vessel, gave the following account to the "Annales des Sciences psychiques" <sup>2</sup>:

On January 23, 1893, the training-ship *Iphigénie*, then on a cruise of instruction, was off the Antilles, making its way toward France.

Since I had to take the watch from four o'clock until eight

<sup>1</sup> For example, the editors of the *Revue des lectures*, Jan. 15, 1921; the *Revue du clergé français*, of July 15, 1920.

<sup>2</sup> Of 1919, p. 71.

o'clock in the morning, I went to my cabin about eleven o'clock at night and closed the door. Scarcely had I turned out the light and fallen into that state of semi-consciousness which precedes sleep, when I felt on my chest a sensation of weight, and the tactile impression of a little human body. It was as if it had come to rest there suddenly, without any previous effort—apparent to me—of slipping into my bunk, which was raised above the floor. Space is very much economized in a war-ship's cabin, and the little bed was installed on a chest, or linen-cupboard, of considerable height. Together with the sensation of contact and oppression of the lungs, I had a very distinct impression that two little arms were about my neck, and that a mouth was kissing mine.

Amazed, I seized the body with both hands and thrust it away abruptly.

In spite of the many years which have passed since then, there remains with me the memory of a distinct sensation of a weight lifted. I struck a match quickly and held it to the candle, which was placed within my immediate reach. The flame flared out at once, and I discovered that the wax had not yet congealed. I threw myself from my bunk, and hastily explored my little room. I was the only living person in the cabin.

It then occurred to me that I had heard neither the sound of a body falling to the floor, nor the noise which the door would have made in closing.

The next day, at breakfast, I confided my adventure to a comrade who had been promoted when I was, an intimate friend who sat next to me at table in the officers' room. Although he was, in general, very skeptical, this fellow-officer admitted to me that my narration had impressed him by its precision.

In the port of Gibraltar, letters informed me that my little boy, who was barely two years old, had had an attack of croup, and had died, in Paris, on the very day on which I had been given a kiss in my solitary cabin.

After having made a careful reckoning of the time, taking into account the longitude in which I was sailing at the moment, I ascertained that the hour of death coincided exactly with that of the tactile hallucination.

On my arrival in Toulon I found my family in deep mourning.

"If anything," they said to me, "can lessen our cruel sorrow, it is the knowledge that our child, attacked by diphtheria, died from embolia at the very moment when he was kissing your photograph. He stammered, "Papa. . . boat. . . on the water!"

F. M. MOUREAU, COMMANDING OFFICER.

Rouen, November 1, 1916.

You see, dear readers, how our precise data are accumulating.

Dr. Liébault, the eminent Nancy physician, has made known the following manifestation, which occurred at the very hour of death.<sup>1</sup> He had under his charge a certain Mademoiselle B——. He had cured her, by hypnotism, of a nervous cough which she had contracted in Coblenz, where she was a teacher. Let us listen to the doctor:

One day, February 7, 1868, toward eight o'clock in the morning, when she was sitting down to the table for breakfast, she felt an irresistible impulse to write, as a medium. (She had done this for some time.) At once she ran to look for her large note-book, in which she was in the habit of putting down feverishly, in pencil, almost illegible words. She now wrote down words of this sort, and, at length, when her mental excitement had subsided, they were able to read that a person named Marguerite was announcing her death. They surmised at once that a young woman of this name, who was a friend of Mademoiselle B—— and was living, as a teacher, in the school in Coblenz where she had discharged the same duties, had just died there. Mademoiselle B——'s entire family came to my home at once, and we decided to find out, that very day, if this death had really taken place. Mademoiselle B—— wrote to an English girl, a friend of hers, who was also performing the duties of a teacher in the same school. She gave some reason or other as a pretext, taking care not to reveal her real reason. By the next mail we received a reply in English. They made me a copy of passages which were essential. The reply expressed the English girl's astonishment at Mademoiselle B——'s letter, a letter which she had not expected. But she also an-

<sup>1</sup> Darieux, *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1891, p. 26.

nounced to our medium that their mutual friend Marguerite had died on February 7th, toward eight o'clock in the morning. In addition to this a little square of printed paper had been inserted in the letter: it was a circular announcing her death. I need not tell you that I examined the envelop of this letter, and that the latter seemed to me really to have come from Coblenz.

DR. A. LIEBAULT.

Who announced the death in this spontaneous, mediumistic writing? Was it Marguerite herself. So it would appear, despite the hypotheses of the subconscious, or clairvoyance, and of intuition. What is the explanation of this mediumism? A special work on spiritism will, perhaps, give us the explanation.

Let us continue our investigation:

Colonel Jones of London, a man whose mind is free from all superstition and all ingenuous credulity, sent the authors of "Phantasms of the Living," in 1883, a letter from his father, written a short time after the following experience:

In 1845 I was with my regiment in Maulmain, Burma. In those days there was no direct mail; sailing-vessels brought us our letters, and months often went by without our receiving any.

The evening of March 24, 1845, I was dining with some other people at the home of a friend. Seated on the veranda after dinner, with the other guests, I was talking of local matters, when suddenly I saw before me, *distinctly*, a coffin, and, stretched out in this coffin with every appearance of being dead, one of my sisters, especially beloved, who was then at home. It goes without saying that I stopped speaking, and every one looked at me questioningly. They asked me what was the matter. Laughingly I told what I had seen and my story was taken as a jest. In the course of the evening, in the company of an officer much older than I (the late Major General George Briggs, retired, of the Madras artillery, at that time Captain Briggs), I went back to where I lived. He returned to the subject, and asked me if I had received news that my sister was ill. I replied in the negative, adding that my latest

letters from home were those I had received about three months previously. He asked me to make a note of the vision because he had heard of similar experiences. I did this, making a note of it on a calendar opposite the date. On the seventh of the following May I received a letter telling me that *my sister had died on the very day of the vision.*<sup>1</sup>

Here is the observation of a definite experience. In the midst of a quiet evening, talking of nothing of importance, this officer suddenly saw before him a coffin, and lying in it his sister, whom he particularly loved. It seems that this sister, from whom he had received no news for three months, had died that very day in England. He himself was in Burma. Were we to attribute this coincidence merely to chance, we should really be a bit too simple-minded. In all probability his sister, when dying, thought of her brother with great concentration, and her anguish traversed the distance which separated them. May we go still further, since the coffin was seen, and conclude that she was already in it when her thoughts took shape? I dare not propose the admission of this. Nevertheless, occurrences must be recounted just as they happen.

Let us now examine the following astonishing manifestation on the part of a man who committed suicide. It took place at the moment of his act, which was entirely unforeseen. We are taking it, with all its circumstantial details, from that work so full of evidence, "*Phantasms of the Living.*"<sup>2</sup>

Here is the observer's story:

In 1876 I was living in a small agricultural district in the east of England.

A young man, S. B——, was a neighbor of mine. He was living, with his man-servant, at the other end of the village. His house was quite far from my home (about one kilometer), and there were gardens and buildings between. He was not a personal

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1891, p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> I, 222, and *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 299.

friend of mine, but a mere acquaintance. I was interested in him only as one of the great landowners of the district. Out of courtesy I invited him to come to see me, but, so far as I can remember, I never went to see him.

One afternoon in March, in 1876, as I was leaving the railroad station with my wife, he joined us on the way home, and accompanied us as far as the door. He lingered there for some moments, talking with us, but nothing of importance was said in this conversation.

After he had left us my wife remarked to me, "Evidently young B—— wished to be invited in, but I thought you would not care to be disturbed by him." I met him again in the afternoon. To my surprise, he said, "Just come and smoke a cigar at my house this evening." I answered: "I'm afraid that's not possible. I have an engagement." "Do come along," he insisted. I said, "I'll come some other evening." Thereupon we separated. When we were about forty meters apart, he turned toward me, and cried, "Well, since you've decided not to come, good-night!"

I spent the evening writing. After I had gone in it snowed a little, just enough to whiten the earth. At about five minutes to ten I took up a book, and drew near the lamp to read, leaning my shoulder against the inside blinds, a position in which I could perceive the least noise from the outside. Suddenly I heard, distinctly, the large gate in front of the house being opened; it clanged shut again. I then heard quick steps coming along the path. At first these steps were very clear and ringing, but, when they reached the window, the lawn beneath it deadened the sound. At the same moment I had a feeling that something was standing very near me, outside, separated from me only by the thin blinds and the pane of glass. I could hear the short, panting, painful breathing of the messenger, or whoever it was, striving to get his breath before speaking. Had he been drawn by the light which filtered through the shutters? But suddenly, like a cannon going off, there resounded within, without, everywhere, the most terrible cry,—a lamentation, a long-drawn wail of horror which froze the blood in my veins. It was not just one cry, but a prolonged wail, which began on a very high note, then grew lower and broke into moans. These grew weaker and weaker, and at

length sank to sobs and the dreadful sounds of a horrible death-agony.

My wife, in an adjoining room, was seated quietly at her work. She was near a window, on the same side of the house on which I was, and only ten or twelve feet away. *She had heard nothing!* Perceiving my agitation, she asked me the cause—"There's some one outside," I answered.—"Then why don't you go out, to see? You always do when you hear some unusual noise." I answered, "There is something so strange and so terrible in this noise, that I don't dare face it."

Young S. B——, after having left me, had gone back home. He had spent most of the evening upon a sofa, reading a novel by Whyte Melville. He had seen his servant at nine o'clock, and had given him orders for the next day. The man-servant and his wife, who were the only ones in the house with him, went to bed. At the inquest the servant declared that just as he was going to sleep he had been suddenly awakened by a cry. He had run into his master's room, and had found him expiring upon the floor. They ascertained that the young man had undressed upstairs, and that he had gone into his drawing-room dressed only in his night-clothes and his trousers; he had poured himself half a glass of water, into which he had emptied a bottle of prussic acid (he had secured it that morning, under pretext of poisoning a dog; in reality, he had no dog). He had gone up again, and, after having reëntered his room, had emptied the glass, with a cry; he had fallen dead. All this took place, as well as I could gather, at least, at exactly the same moment at which I had been so frightened in my home. It is quite impossible that any noise,—save, perhaps, that of a cannon,—could have reached my ears, considering the distance between the two houses.

Early in the morning of the next day, when I examined the ground below the window, I could find no sign of tracks on the gravel or the lawn; the ground was still covered with the light snowfall of the preceding evening.

The whole incident is a mystery, and will always remain a mystery to me. I learned the details of the tragedy only on the afternoon of the next day. It was said that the motive for the suicide was an unfortunate love-affair.

The narrator's wife added her attestation to that of her husband. A local newspaper published an account of the suicide.

It is quite obvious that this young man who committed suicide manifested himself to his neighbor in the manner told of in this account. Assuredly, we can explain neither this fictitious opening of the gate, nor these steps, not less fictitious, nor the invisible presence of this tragic visitor, nor his apparent breathing, nor this cry and these resounding walls of some one in his death-agony; but the narrator had all these impressions at the moment of the suicide. These were in his brain, *as are, moreover, all our normal impressions, and the dying man caused them.* In this case there was no double, nothing objective.

These observations must from this time on find a place in physiological psychology. To ignore them, to reject them, is to disregard one of the elements of human nature. Here is a further one.

A letter sent from Bessarabia, on July 24, 1900, recounted to me the following:

It was in the month of October; our house was filled with friends; they gave themselves up to amusement, they played roulette during whole nights; it was as though youth were abandoned to a frenzy of pleasure. Among all these people was one of our relatives, Monsieur Michel S——. He was subject to frequent stomach and liver attacks, which endangered his life. Nevertheless, he greatly loved society, and had come to amuse himself like the others, not thinking that he would grow worse, when he had a terrible recurrence of his malady, which obliged him to go to bed that very evening. The young people continued to laugh and to amuse themselves, and gambling absorbed them until dawn. But when laughter and jesting were at their height; *three violent blows*, sounding as though they had come from under the ground, made the whole assembly start; every one stopped short. Some ran to the entrance-door, believing at first that a late visitor was knocking. The serv-

ants, who had also heard the blows, had the same idea, and went as far as the gateway. But they found no one, and every one, silent, asked himself whence this sinister and inexplicable noise might have come. The next day my cousin died, in the midst of this carnival, to the despair of his mother, who was obliged to take him to their home in a coffin. By a strange coincidence, there was in our house a fine new coffin; it had been our intention to transport my father's ashes in it. This made a wit say that my brother pushed hospitality to the point of furnishing coffins to those of his guests who might have the misfortune to die in his home.

This sudden death froze every heart, and it was then understood that the three blows were a warning which announced the misfortune! I am telling you of the incident, without comment, for your investigation.

HÉLÈNE SCHOULGINE,  
Grodno, Russia.

(Letter 930.)

This account brings forward a case assuredly worthy of our attention. A man felt himself to be dying in a house in which people were seeking amusement. We can fancy him—thinking himself abandoned for the moment by the living—shouting, perhaps, for help, at least in thought. His despair took the form of an intense transmission sent toward his indifferent friends, and produced sonorous blows heard by every one, therefore physically real. What physical force came into play here? Now that the phenomena of electricity have been investigated, the idea that it was an electric force occurs to us very naturally.

These noises are comparable to that of the door, closed with violence, told of in letter 525 and given on page 170 of "*L'Inconnu*," as well as to all the noises recounted above. Let us note that these phenomena usually correspond with tragic deaths.

Madame Camille Selden, Heinrich Heine's intimate friend, perceived at the moment of the celebrated writer's death,

a singular manifestation, which was carefully analyzed by Monsieur Marcel Baudouin. Here is Madame Selden's account.<sup>1</sup>

On that Sunday—February 17, 1856,—I had a strange waking. Toward eight o'clock I *heard a noise* in my room,—a sort of fluttering, such as that produced on summer evenings by the wings of nocturnal butterflies which come in through the open windows and search desperately for an exit.

My eyes opened, but I closed them at once; in the first glimmerings of day a *black form* was writhing, like a gigantic insect, and seeking some way of escape.

A case, therefore, of *hearing* and *sight*,—what is called an auditory hallucination and a visual hallucination, both proceeding from the same cause.

That delightful writer Heinrich Heine—more French than German—died in Paris, on February 17, 1856, between five and eight o'clock in the morning. He was born in Düsseldorf, in December, 1799, but gave the date of his birth as January 1, 1801, styling himself "the first man of the century." A cruel malady of the spine confined him to his bed during the last eight years of his life. The manifestation of which we have just read impressed Madame Selden; she hastened to his home, despite the cold, and learned that he had just died. Monsieur Marcel Baudouin adds the following remarks to the account of this experience:

This lady was a *most intimate friend* of Heinrich Heine. She published his reminiscences only in 1884, that is to say, twenty-eight years after the death of her "dear poet," and after Madame Heine's death. She knew him only "at the end of his life" (1855-56). On her first visit, made probably in 1855, she found him already confined to the bed on which he died. There grew up between them "a cordiality, an *intellectual tie* which remained always intact and in which commonplace sentiment never had a part. . ."; "There

<sup>1</sup> See *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1902, p. 70, and *Les Derniers jours de Henri Heine*, Paris 1884.

could be no possible misunderstanding. . . ; we could show ourselves as we were, with no fear of appearing in a false light; this added greatly to the charm of our mutual relations. . . , and inspired respect."

Heine called this young woman "My little Fly," and addressed her as "*tu*" (the familiar: "thou"); he treated her as a *relative*.

Professor Flournoy, who, with Flammarion and many other psychologists, accepts the facts of clairvoyance, believes that it is a question of *impressions at a distance produced by a person still living* (at the moment of his death, most frequently) *upon the brain of another person*, with whom there is *elective affinity*. That is to say, speaking in general terms, it is a question of *mental suggestion at a distance* affecting some particular intellect.

We grant the truth of this theory.

The psychic waves (if they exist) cannot choose their own course. If they reach a given place, they must strike, indiscriminately, all the brains which are there. Only those which are in a particular state—a state still to be determined—are affected.

Granted this, it is evident that everything depends on the brains struck by the waves. Are all struck, without a doubt. But some are not affected in any way, either consciously or unconsciously. The others, on the contrary, are struck, and evince the fact that they have received an impression through a phenomenon of some sort: they are good receiving apparatus.

Therefore, in the case of manifestations of some one dying, if there exists within the sphere of action of the psychic waves a brain that is properly attuned, the psychic telegram is recorded. If not, it passes by the brain which it has merely grazed, without leaving a trace.

I know very well that this theory of psychic waves is in the highest degree debatable; for cases of telepathy are known *over such great distances* that psychic waves cannot be compared to those assumed in the explanation of wireless telegraphy (Hertzian waves). Nevertheless, if the "force of attraction" of the moon on our oceans be admitted, given the known facts, it is not unreasonable to accept the hypothesis of a "psychic force" and psychic waves, whatever be their nature.

When the "psychic force"—which exists beyond a doubt but

the nature of which is entirely unknown to us—is sufficient to pass within range of a given brain, whether it comes from near or far, it registers its transit upon that brain through some phenomenon, a phenomenon psychic or physiological according as it acts upon this or that part of the nervous centers. On the other hand, other brains let it range the world without being affected by a power so mysterious.<sup>1</sup>

All the readers of this work will know how to value these reflections on the part of Monsieur Marcel Baudouin. Since beginning this book they have read of just that sort of thing. But it must be added that the wave theory does not, in physics, eliminate the emission theory. More than one phenomenon would seem to indicate that *luminous and magnetic projections, ions, and electrons are transmitted from the sun to the earth.*

Let us note, in passing, the form taken by Madame Selden's audition and vision, and the singular name by which she was known to her friend.

How strange these manifestations are!

I am nearing the limits assigned this volume, and am afraid of tiring my readers; but it seems to me that before these panoramas we have the same feeling as when we visit the museum of the Louvre: Where shall we stop? Let us not forget, however, that apart from the *manifestations* which we are reviewing, it will, perhaps, be still more interesting to gain information as to "*apparitions.*" Let us slacken our speed.

Nevertheless, the following telepathic vision of Captain Escourrou, killed at the age of twenty-seven at the siege of Puebla—a vision perceived by his mother in Sèvres—is so remarkable that I should be extremely sorry not to add it, as well, to the foregoing. Let us read the following letter from Monsieur Gustave Dubois to Dr. Dariex.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1902, p. 182.

<sup>2</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1891, p. 148.

Ed. Escourrou and I had formed, in college, a friendship which only death could sunder; I came, therefore, into close touch with his family, visiting them often. His father, a captain who had retired from the position of chief recruiting officer of the Seine, was at the time of the war with Mexico an officer whose duty it was to take charge of visitors to the Senate; he was living in Sèvres. At the time his campaign began, Edouard had rejoined the Second Regiment of Zouaves, in which he was serving as lieutenant.

I got several letters from him; I saw his family every week, and always, of course, we spoke of the dear absent boy. One day I found his mother in tears: "Ah, my dear child," she told me, as soon as she saw me, "I have a cruel presentiment; I am to lose my son. This morning, when I went into the room where his portrait is [this portrait had been painted by one of his comrades, Thiénot, on his last leave of absence] to greet it as I do every day, I saw, saw *distinctly*, that one of his eyes had been put out, and that blood was running over his face. They have killed my son."

I tried to console her, to make her understand that what she had believed she had seen, was, perhaps, an effect of the light; nothing could shake her conviction that her son was dead, or at least wounded.

Some time afterward we received the news of Captain Escourrou's death,—killed at the age of twenty-seven, at the siege of Puebla. He had been called "a future general" by Colonel Clere, his colonel of the Second Zouaves, on the occasion of the first assault upon Malakoff, during the siege of Sebastopol.

The sergeant-major of the poor dead boy's company brought back his arms, the last sad souvenir of a dear son. He wept when he told us of his commander's death. The first in the assault upon the penitentiary, he was leading his men on, when a bullet, striking the handle of his saber, broke his right wrist. Seizing his weapon with his left hand, he advanced at the head of his men. Again he was struck by a bullet. It pierced his eye, killing him before he could utter a cry.

There, in all its simplicity, is the story of an occurrence of which I have proof. If certain contributory circumstances escape

me, I can certify that Madame Escourrou before she had news of the death of her son, had seen the dear portrait, with *one eye put out and bleeding*.

Monsieur and Madame Escourrou are still living in the rue Péronnet, in Argenteuil; their son, Albert Escourrou, is a special commissary: superintendent of the Ministry of the Interior, in the Place Beauvau.

GUSTAVE DUBOIS.

Madame Escourrou, her son, and various witnesses were examined by Dr. Dariex. No doubt remains as to this example of clairvoyance, of sight at a distance, of a telepathic phenomenon connected with the death of the captain at the siege of Puebla. It was on Palm Sunday, March 29, 1863, that the occurrence took place in Mexico, and that Madame Escourrou, in Sèvres, had a realization and perception of the death of her son. Did we not see an identical case above,—that of Lieutenant de Boislève (page 155).

It is time to end this chapter, despite the numerous documents I now have spread before me. However, a literary reminiscence should have a place just here.

We may inscribe in this volume, "At the Moment of Death," the names of two great minds, Dante and Petrarch.

A dream which coincided with the death of Beatrice may be found in Dante's youthful poem the "Vita Nuova." He saw Beatrice for the first time when he was nine and she eight,—already an angel of pure and radiant beauty. He saw her again nine years later. She was still more beautiful, and during his entire life she was the lady of his heart. So has he glorified her in the "Divina Commedia." She was born in Florence, in 1266, and died in the same city in 1290, at the age of twenty-four. She was the daughter of Folco di Ricovero Portinari, a distinguished citizen of Florence, founder of the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. The poet tells us that he had a kind of terrible vision of the end of the world, accompanied by an earthquake, and believed that he

saw coming toward him a friend, who told him, "Your excellent lady has departed this world." An angel bore her to the skies. In his grief he thought that he himself was dying.<sup>1</sup>

Dante Alighieri (1265-1321) was a supreme poet, and it is in the highest sense of the word that we may call him a visionary. Petrarch also saw, in a dream, the death of his dear Laura, while he was traveling in Italy and she was dying of the pest in Avignon (1348). He saw, too, the death of the Bishop of Lombès.<sup>2</sup>

The phenomena which we are studying, and which seem new to so many persons, were observed in the fourteenth century, in the thirteenth century, and in the times of the Romans, the Greeks, and the Egyptians, as well as in our times.

In the preceding pages we were gradually approaching manifestations of the dead. Those manifestation of which we have just read, are connected with the dying, and with the living functioning just before the supreme moment, or at the moment itself. It is, at times, difficult to make a classification. In closing this chapter, I shall add still one more manifestation. It throws a bridge between the two worlds, and might be attributed to some one dead. It is very strange and most fantastic, and is told us by an observer with whom my readers are already familiar, Dr. de Sermyn.<sup>3</sup> It is a transmission between France and Greece. Let us read it<sup>4</sup> :

We had in the hospital a young Frenchman named Landry, whose brain was affected by a general paralysis. It was, I believe, in 1873.

<sup>1</sup> Dante: *La Vie nouvelle* (Edition Charpentier, Paris, 1853), p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> See *Le Génie de Pétrarque* (Parma et Avignon, 1778), p. 127.

<sup>3</sup> Excerpt from the work *Contribution a l'étude de certaines facultés cérébrales méconnues*, p. 28

<sup>4</sup> See *Before Death*, p. 280.

He occupied a cell, which he never left, and was in charge of a keeper, for his madness was hardly a pleasant thing. Every morning a sister from the hospital, named Sister Alphonsine, brought him his breakfast.

Next to Landry's room there were two other rooms, each occupied by a harmless lunatic. Sister Alphonsine was in the habit of first serving these, and then going to Landry. She did not leave him until after he had finished his breakfast.

Now, whenever Landry heard the sister coming, he would grow restless, would run about in his cell, and utter cries, stamping his feet on the floor, and kicking the door, and would not stop his noise until the sister reached him.

After a stay of three months in the hospital, Landry was sent back to France, to his own district. The room was cleaned and locked, and remained unoccupied.

Now, one morning Sister Alphonsine took breakfast to the two patients who occupied the rooms next that of Landry. She heard, with stupefaction, in the chamber which was still empty and still locked, cries, and the noise of stamping, exactly like that which the madman had made while waiting for his breakfast. She opened the door of the room. Finding no one there, she knelt down, trembling all over, and, without knowing why, addressed a prayer to God.

Upon my arrival at the hospital, she told me of the occurrence. She was still pale and agitated.

"Landry has just died, Sister," I told her: "similar manifestations have already been observed by thousands of persons; they are not very rare."

"I think he is dead, too," she told me. "I had a presentiment of it. The prayer I said in the middle of his room was a prayer addressed to God for the repose of his soul."

I made a note of the day and the time.

One month afterward we learned, through the French Consulate, that Landry had died in France on the very day of his manifestation. As for the time, I was never able to ascertain it.

DR. W. C. DE SERMYN.

Was the gruesome hero of this story already dead at the time of the uproar? Or was he borne into his former cell as a phantasm, while still alive, in his death-agony? Did this strange incident follow death? The phenomenon had not occurred before, and was observed on the day of his dissolution. We have already asked ourselves if some part of our being does not remain in the habitations in which we have lived (see above, Chapter X, page 279). May not latent emanations persist when the vital rhythm of the heart has stopped forever?

We are entering the domain of manifestations of the human being after death.

We now reach a further stage,—*Apparitions at the moment of death.*

## XII

### APPARITIONS OF THE DYING AT THE MOMENT OF DEATH

Death is but one of the hours upon  
our dial, and the hands of our dial are  
destined to revolve eternally.

SAINT-MARTIN, the unknown  
philosopher.

WE now reach the end of our second expedition into the world of the Beyond. After the general manifestations of the dying, which are so varied, apparitions will be revealed to us. They will close this second volume, leading us directly to the third, and allowing us almost to enter the mysterious realms of Death. The manifestations which have just passed before our eyes took place at the very moment of the soul's departure. As we remarked, these manifestations do not prove survival after death, but they prove the existence of an independent psychic force which has the faculty of functioning at a distance from the body. It is not impossible that a certain number of them occurred not immediately before, but immediately after dissolution. In this chapter are not only manifestations, but apparitions as well, coinciding with death,—preceding it in most instances, but following it, perhaps, in a certain number of cases. These apparitions are even more remarkable than the manifestations just given.

For centuries and centuries these strange phenomena have been noted and related in the literature of all countries. I have at this moment a whole library of them before my eyes, and my readers have already found a certain number of them in my works. My present duty is to give, above

all, accounts of observations which were sent me personally, and vouched for; but the others, from different sources, will not be neglected.

Once again, let us state precisely the nature of our scientific procedure.

Our method must, more than ever, be extremely exacting. Apparitions of those living or dead! Before making affirmations let us be certain.

Examples of very obvious resemblances may be entirely misleading, may be valueless. I shall give a case of this, taken from the work done at my Juvisy observatory. One day—October 10, 1910—among our photographs of clouds we obtained an effect resembling a man reclining, his beautiful white hair, his bold forehead, his eyes, his nose, his beard, his neck, were remarkably modeled. Now, this photograph was an absolute portrait of Monsieur Fallières, then President of the French Republic; it was so exact that when some one, interested in his opinion of it, showed it to him, his first exclamation was: "I've never had a portrait more like me." (It may be seen in "L'Illustration" of that date.) This likeness had lasted for some seconds; it was an effect of the light on the clouds.

Yes, there are fictitious resemblances. But should we be justified in concluding that therefore the photograph does not exist? If we judge cautiously, does that mean that we must be blind?

I shall open this chapter with the following account; it has been made the subject of a special analytical investigation, one with which my readers are already familiar, for it was given, as a foot-note, on page 240 of "L'Inconnu." The coincidence was proved with remarkable precision, and I give it here as typical of the procedure our investigation demands:

Two friends were employed in the same office; there had been a tie of friendship between them for eight years. One

of them, Frédéric, upon his arrival at the office on Monday, March 19, 1883, complained of having had an attack of indigestion. He consulted a druggist, who told him that his liver was in a bad condition, and gave him medicine. On Thursday he was no better. On Saturday he did not go to the office, and his comrade Nicolas learned that he had had himself examined by a physician and that the latter had advised him to rest for two or three days, but did not think it was anything serious.

That same Saturday, March 24th, toward evening, Nicolas was sitting in his room. He perceived his friend standing before him, dressed as usual. He noted the details of his dress,—a hat with a black band around it, an overcoat, unbuttoned, a cane in his hand, etc.

The specter gazed at him, then disappeared. At that instant he thought of the words of Job: "A spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up." He then felt an icy coldness go through him, and his hair rose. He turned to his wife and asked her the time.

"Twelve minutes to nine," she answered.

He then added: "My reason for asking is because Frédéric is dead. I've just seen him."

She tried to persuade him that he had imagined this, but he assured her that his vision had been so clear that no argument could make him change his mind.

The next day, Sunday, about three o'clock in the afternoon, Frédéric's brother came to announce his death; it had occurred the evening before, about nine o'clock.

The narrator's wife attested, formally, the truth of his narration.

Moreover, the brother of the deceased, as well, in a special letter vouched for the authenticity of the occurrence.

This letter was in perfect agreement with the other two accounts; in it he declared that he had been all the more

impressed by reason of the fact that he had previously been absolutely impervious to this sort of ideas.

It is not to be doubted that death took place during the twenty-five minutes which passed between twenty-five minutes to nine and nine o'clock. Now, the vision occurred at twelve minutes to nine. If the synchronism of the two events was not absolute, it is not possible in any case to suppose, even with the least favorable interpretation, that there was an interval of more than twelve minutes.

The probability of death, during a given period of twenty-four hours, is expressed by the figures  $\frac{22}{1000} \times \frac{1}{365}$  for an adult of indeterminate age; but for a man of forty-eight (Frédéric's age) it is  $\frac{13.5}{1000}$ , the official figures given by tables of mortality. This gives us, therefore, as the probability of daily mortality,  $\frac{13.5}{1000} \times \frac{1}{365} = \frac{1}{27,037}$ . During a period of twelve minutes, contained one hundred and twenty times in twenty-four hours, the probability will be one hundred and twenty times less,—that is to say,  $\frac{13.5}{1000} \times \frac{1}{365} \times \frac{1}{120}$ ,—and we have this equation:

$$x = \frac{1}{248} \times \frac{13.5}{1000} \times \frac{1}{365} \times \frac{1}{120} = \frac{1}{804,622,222}.$$

In the present case the probability of *telepathic influence compared with the probability of chance coincidence is in this proportion: eight hundred and four million six hundred and twenty-two thousand two hundred and twenty-two to one.*

This constitutes moral certainty. The apparition of the deceased to his friend is not to be doubted.

The objection that chance, that fortuitous coincidence, came into play is ruled out by calculations similar to those just read,—calculations rationally applied to the innumerable cases in which the time of death has been precisely determined. We possess accounts of hundreds of cases of this sort.

The following examples do not all represent coincidences at the very instant of death, but the correspondence of the death to the apparition has been none the less scrupulously established.

We are now making a scientific investigation; that is to say, we must acknowledge the truth only of occurrences which are authentic and unquestionable.

To seek to explain phenomena of which one was not certain would be a bit ingenuous. A historian of apparitions of phantoms recalls the definition of a traveler: "An ingenuous fellow who faces dangers that he may relate them to people who will not believe them." That is a humorous sally which does not prevent one from traveling and observing for one's own enjoyment,—and of making fun, just a bit, of people who will not believe the stories one might tell them. One does not gather these facts for "the gallery," but for the sake of truth.

It is most certain that in the history of religion and of miraculous happenings, of spiritualistic and magnetic experiments, etc., a great deal of time was spent in discussing occurrences which never happened. This was, to say the least, rather ridiculous. We are forewarned, and our way lies before us.

We found in Volume I (page 73) the case of a woman who, dying suddenly, appeared to her son, telling him: "Good-by, I am dying." The time of the apparition coincided with the very moment of death. We also found, in the same

volume (page 84), the case of a man, who had just killed himself, appearing to his friend, his skull open. This, too, exactly coincided with the moment of death.

While on the subject of apparitions precisely timed, we may recall that of the priest seated before a hearth. It was related by one of his nieces ("Uranie," page 209). The narrator's account is very simple:

I was still quite a young girl, and slept with my elder sister. One evening we had just gone to bed and blown out the candle. The fire on the hearth, which had not altogether gone out, lighted the room faintly. Suddenly, to my great surprise, I perceived near the fireplace a priest, seated before the hearth, warming himself. His figure, his features, were that of our uncle the archpriest,—as well as his corpulence. At once I told my sister what I had seen. She looked toward the fireplace, and saw the same apparition. She, too, recognized our uncle. An unspeakable terror took possession of both of us, and we cried, "Help!" at the top of our lungs. My father, who was sleeping in an adjoining room, was wakened by these distracted cries. He got up in all haste, and came in, a candle in his hand. The phantom had vanished; there was no one in the room. The next day we learned that our uncle, the archpriest, had died the evening before.

This incident occurred in Saint-Gaudens.

Certain shallow minds are at no loss to account for all this. It was only chance, they believe,—that is to say, (1) a causeless hallucination; (2) an accidental coincidence with the death of the man who was seen.

Really, these skeptics are easily satisfied!

That the defunct priest actually came, in his cassock, and seated himself in the chimney-corner, is inadmissible; the same is true of the dying man of whom we read above (Frédéric) with his hat and cane. Then what took place on these occasions?

The worthy priest must have thought of his nieces at the moment of his death, and must have acted mentally upon

their minds. It was an example of thought as a generator of images, dealt with in Chapter III. It was the same thing in the case of Frédéric, appearing to his comrade.

It cannot be doubted that these phenomena took place at the very moment of death.

I do not wish to repeat here what my readers may have seen in "*Uranie*," published in 1889, and "*L'Inconnu*," published in 1899, as to unquestionably authentic apparitions of the dying; but it seems to me opportune to recall, among other typical examples, Monsieur Contamine's experience in Commentry ("*L'Inconnu*," page 120):

Seated, one day, in his room, before his wardrobe, in which there was a mirror, he was occupied in putting on his shoes. He saw in the mirror, very clearly, the door behind him open, and one of his intimate friends come in. His friend was in evening dress, and was very carefully groomed. Monsieur Contamine turned around to shake hands with him. To his stupefaction, he saw no one in the room. He rushed out at once and questioned the servant, who happened at that moment to be on the stairway: "You just met Monsieur X——, coming out of my room; where is he?"—"I saw absolutely no one, I assure you."—"Come, now! He left my room just a moment ago."—"I'm absolutely certain that no one either entered or came out." Monsieur Contamine, intensely curious and quite astounded, made inquiries at once, and learned that his friend had committed homicide by accident. Wishing to escape the legal consequences of this, he had committed suicide at the very moment when the apparition had appeared, and in the very costume in which he had been seen, reflected in the mirror.

This example is definitely characterized by its precision. I have brought together so great a number of similar ones that they might, in themselves, make up an entire volume, including the death-scenes of which our Chapter VI showed so many instances. What concerns us most is the difficulty

of choosing, and it is not without regret that, on account of the limitation of space, I must omit some extremely curious cases. I must confine myself to pointing out the principal ones, with the intention of publishing, some day, a special book on *apparitions*. Really, it is time to declare that those who continue to doubt are either ignorant or insincere.

It will be our concern to decide whether the examples are cases of apparitions of the dying or apparitions of the dead. The distinction is an extremely difficult one to make. The following remarkable case is one in point.

We shall have before our eyes an account of the apparition of a young girl to the friend of her childhood. There is in my mind no question of its authenticity, for I have known the narrator for a great many years, and her deposition has almost a judicial character.

When I was a very young girl I had a girl friend of my own age. Our families were on very intimate terms, and were neighbors, so she came every evening to study her lessons with me.

We were in the drawing-room, seated in rocking-chairs.

Suddenly my companion stopped reading and said to me, "Lita, I've something to ask you." Naturally, I answered, "What is it?"—"I want you to promise me something, and I want you to keep your promise."

I thought the serious air with which she spoke extraordinary.

"If I promise you something, you can be sure I'll keep my promise. What would you like?"

She answered, "If you get married and have a daughter, I want you to name her after me." I laughed and replied, "That's understood; and it must be the same with you: if you have one, you must give her my name."

She then added: "That isn't all. If one of us two dies, and we're not together, we must promise each other that the one who dies first will come and say good-by to the other, and will kiss her one last time."

I answered: "Really, you're foolish to have such ideas! What's come over you?"

"Promise me!" she said.

"Well, all right," I replied.

"I'm contented now," she added. "For some time I've had a sort of obsession to ask you that."

We never spoke of it again, my dear Master; I wish to give you my assurance of this.

Five or six months afterward, on my friend's birthday, I went to spend the day at her home, with several other young girls.

We danced the whole afternoon, and had a very good time. She was well, and there was nothing to make one think that she was soon to die.

When I was taking leave of her, in the evening, her mother said to me: "Don't count on Jeanne for two or three days. I have to make some visits, and I'm taking her with me."

On the third day I lay down and went to sleep as usual.

Toward midnight I awakened, uttering cries of terror. Jeanne was there before me! My grandmother got up, and tried to calm me, but nothing could prevent my seeing Jeanne: she was there, and she said to me: "*Good-by! I'm dying, and I've kept my promise.*"

My grandmother had my good nurse, Anne-Marie, sit down beside my bed. The nurse, humoring me, succeeded in calming me so thoroughly that I ended by going to sleep again. But toward four o'clock in the morning I awakened once more; I felt Jeanne kissing my forehead. She was icy cold, and a second time she told me: "Good-by! I'm dying."

Again I began to shout: "Grandmother! Jeanne's dead!" No one could calm me. I wished to hurry over to her home. My grandmother promised me that at five o'clock she would send some one to find out. Nevertheless I could not help getting up,—I was so impatient. Through obedience, however, I waited until five, though I was thoroughly convinced of my friend's death.

At five o'clock some one was sent. Horrors! My dream was real: my poor friend had died at four o'clock in the morning, the time at which she had kissed me and I had felt her, icy as a block of marble.

Since then I have often thought of her; but no manifestation has ever occurred.

Such is, my dear Master, a simple account of what happened to me, myself; it is a faithful one.

ANGÈLE XIMENEZ,  
Monte-Carlo, April 15, 1918.

(Letter 4112.)

I shall add nothing to this story, except that the account does not, perhaps, correspond to reality with an absolute precision. Inevitably recollections are more or less distorted by time (this incident occurred nearly half a century ago), but the apparition of the young friend to her companion at the moment of death is in itself absolutely indubitable. It happened in Santiago de Cuba, in 1871. The narrator, Mademoiselle Ximenez de Bustamante, born in 1855, was, therefore, sixteen years old at that time.

Was her young friend already dead, or at the point of death? Nothing proves that she was dead: she felt herself dying. I am therefore classifying the occurrence among apparitions of the *dying*, rather than among apparitions of the *dead*.

Let us investigate and compare similar occurrences.

The following account of an apparition, sent me from Russia on June 9, 1899, is a document of the same sort:

I was nine years old. One of my sisters, aged fifteen, whom I loved tenderly, was one day walking with me in the garden; she told me that she had not long to live. I made fun of her, just a little, and asked her to stop talking in this absurd way.

Seven years afterward I was in Moscow, in the Nicolaieff School. On June 16, 1870, I was lying in the dormitory; in it the beds touched, the heads side by side. I was sleeping quietly. Suddenly I had a sensation as though some one had touched my back. I looked up, and recognized my sister, seated on my bed. She said to me, "Good-by, Nadia," and vanished. It was five

o'clock in the morning. My heart sank; I went back to sleep, however, and did not waken again until the bell rang.

That same day my elder sister arrived; she came to tell me that our sister had died at five o'clock in the morning.

N. UBANENKO.

(Letter 818.)

These observations are more numerous than one imagines; let us repeat, for the thousandth time, that to see in them only hallucinations is absurd. Here is another case. Madame Marguerite Perret, a relative of Stéphen Liégeard, wrote me, on August 24, 1920, that the following happening had absolutely convinced her of her sister's survival after death:

We had both been brought up in the Dominican Convent of Chalon-sur-Saône. An epidemic of typhoid fever broke out suddenly in the school, and the terrible malady attacked my sister. The pupils were immediately sent home to their parents, and my father took me to Beaune, to the home of close friends, Monsieur and Madame Bourgeois. (Later, Monsieur Bourgeois became Mayor of Beaune.)

The nuns gave him permission to remain by the bedside of his sick daughter. Since I had been brought up with very religious ideas, I had begun to offer up prayers to the Holy Virgin for nine successive days,—prayers for my sister's recovery. I was absolutely convinced that on the ninth day my sister would be well. I was sleeping alone, in a room the door of which gave on the drawing-room. A hallway separated Monsieur and Madame Bourgeois's room from mine.

Suddenly, in the middle of the night of December 4th (the fifth day of my prayers) I was awakened by a strange noise in the drawing-room. One would have said that some one was dragging a chain. I was then, and still am, an extremely light sleeper. At once I half sat up in bed, listening. What was my astonishment when the noise of chains turned to that of light steps on the floor, approaching my bed! I remember that my heart began to beat most violently. Terrified, I was ready to scream; I asked myself if

it would be wise to do so (for I fancied that some one was coming to kill me). Then suddenly I felt a hand brush lightly against the sheets, and, for the duration of a lightning flash, *I saw my sister*.

It was too much! In the utmost terror I uttered piercing screams.

At once they rushed into my room. "What's the matter? Why, what's the matter?"—"I've just seen my sister: she came near my bed; I heard her steps; she touched the sheets."—"But, my child," Monsieur and Madame Bourgeois answered, "that's impossible; you've been dreaming; your sister is in Chalon, very ill."—"No, no, it was n't a dream! I heard her steps; they made the floor crack. I'm sure of it; I was n't dreaming; she came; *I saw her*."

They calmed me, gave me orange-flower water, and told me: "Go back to sleep. It's only five o'clock in the morning."

At noon we were at table, when the door-bell rang. The maid went to open the door, and my father entered; he was holding a handkerchief up to his eyes. Sobbing, he told us that my poor sister had died that very morning, at five o'clock.

Monsieur and Madame Bourgeois exclaimed simultaneously: "Why, that's extraordinary! It was five o'clock when her sister Marguerite said she had seen her in her room."

My father was then told what had happened in the night. That whole day he did not cease repeating: "What a strange coincidence!"

A mere coincidence? No, a thousand times no! Those dear to us give us, in this way, an unexceptionable proof *that they still exist and survive what we call death*.

(Letter 4254.)

The truth of this experience is beyond cavil; it has for us the greatest interest; but I do not see in it a *proof* of survival after death. This manifestation may have taken place at the very moment of death, and even before. The phantasms which we have thus far investigated are instructive in demonstrating this. The experimental method is more exacting than sentiment.

I am not denying that the manifestation occurred after dissolution; I am saying, only, that this has not been proved.

The narrator herself is convinced that it did so occur,—above all, on account of the following incident, told of in the same letter :

One day a medium, who practised spirit-writing, was holding a pencil in her hand. *She knew nothing of my life*, and was unaware that when very young I had lost my sister. An invisible being signing herself Marie (my sister's given name) caused her to write.

"Oh, my dear little sister," I exclaimed, "if it's really you who are there, then tell me what I must think of what happened to me at the moment of your death!"

"Yes," the medium wrote, "it was really I whom you saw: you weren't wrong in thinking that."

"But then, since it was your Peri I saw, I can't understand why the floor cracked beneath your steps."

"It was to warn you, to attract your attention; I was going to speak to you, but you screamed so! In any case," she added, "I accomplished what I wished to, for you remember it, you see."

"Remember it! It seems as though it were yesterday!"

I should like, particularly, to be able to see in this, as the narrator does, a proof of her dear sister's survival after death, but it appears to me that no *proof* is given here. All that the medium said was in Madame Perret's mind. Mediumistic experiments are often unquestionable cases of thought-transmission. One example, among a thousand, is that related by Aksakof ("Animisme et Spiritisme," page 476), concerning Mademoiselle Pribitkoff, who had given mental dictation, through will power, to a table which spelled out by means of rappings a sentence *originating in her own mind*. The operator did not touch the table, and stood at some distance from it.<sup>1</sup>

Our method does violence at times to our hearts' desires;

<sup>1</sup> This example is typical. The experimenter dictated (the dictation came, supposedly, from Hahnemann himself) in French: "*I grew unwise, as to medicine, from the day I invented homeopathy.*"

but it is necessary for the positive proof which we hope for.

Let us be prudent. Our conclusions will be the more trustworthy.

I have left unpublished the greater part of the goodly number of accounts sent me, though the information furnished by them is not always to be disdained. For example, Letter 352 gives the case of a young girl whose mother was drowned,—a victim of the unforgettable catastrophe of Saint-Gervais, on July 10, 1892. The girl asserted that she was sure of her mother's death because she had seen her phantom pass, again and again, through the apartment. This is possible, but not at all proved. The shade did not appear to her until thirty-six hours after the death; the catastrophe was then known to her, and anything might be feared. Strictly speaking, the imagination of this young girl of sixteen may have been a factor.

These reflections confirm our convictions as to the value of prudence.

But prudence must not blind us, and keep us from seeing reality.

To disdain everything, to laugh at everything, does not lead to much. It is absurd to suppose that every one is deceiving himself, or that every one is lying; certain accounts are too authentic to be despised. My readers have not forgotten, for example, the story published in "L'Inconnu" as to the Moscow student who lost his young wife, whom he adored. She was seen that very day, by her father, who was then living in Poulkovo, near Petrograd; unaware that she had died, he saw her, suddenly, beside him. To suppose that the young student and his father lied, or that the account is farcical, would be the height of absurdity. Was it an illusion? No; this apparition, telling of a death which occurred six hundred and fifty kilometers away, a demise which was unforeseen, thrusts itself upon our attention. It had a cause, and this cause was the dying

woman: a knowledge of phantasms has prepared us to understand it.

The following apparition would seem to show not the psychic influence of one mind upon another, of a brother's mind upon that of his sister, but the real existence of the dying man's phantasm, for the person who witnessed the presence of a brother near his sister at the moment of his death had not known him.

The story was recounted by Mrs. Clerke of London, and was published in "Phantasms of the Living."<sup>1</sup>

In the month of August, 1864, toward three or four o'clock in the afternoon, I was seated on the veranda of our house in Barbados; I was reading. My negro nurse was wheeling about in the garden, in a baby-carriage, my little girl, aged about eighteen months. After some time I rose, to go back into the house, having noticed nothing at all, when the negress said to me, "Madame, who was that gentleman who just spoke to you?"—"No one spoke to me," I said.—"Oh, yes, Madame, a very pale, very tall gentleman; he talked to you a great deal, and you were impolite to him, for you never answered him." I repeated that there had been no one, and felt annoyed with the woman. She begged me to make a note of the date, for she was sure of having seen some one. I did so, and some days later I learned of my brother's death, in Tabago. The strange thing is that I did not see him, and that she, who did not know him, did see him, though he seemed anxious to attract my attention.

MAY CLERKE.

In reply to various questions, Mrs. Clerke wrote:

(1) The day of the death and that of the apparition coincided; I had made a note of the date: it was August 3d.

(2) The description "very pale and very tall" was exact.

(3) She did not know my invalid brother. The negress had never seen him. She had been in my service for about eighteen months. The occurrence was absolutely spontaneous.

<sup>1</sup> II, 61; and *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 261.

Colonel Clerk, Mrs. Clerk's husband, declared that he clearly remembered the incident concerning his brother-in-law, Mr. John Beresford, who died in Tabago; that he remembered very well the nurse's declaration that she had seen at the moment of his death a gentleman who, from her account, was like Mr. Beresford, leaning over Mrs. Clerke's arm-chair on the veranda.

In this case it would seem, certainly, that the dying man came, himself, as a phantom, to see his sister. She herself did not see him, though the servant did! The statements made are precise.

What a panorama of investigations is unrolling, gradually, before our eyes!

Is it not a question, also, of a phantasm of some one dying—or dead—in the following case? The letter about to be quoted was sent me from Russia, in June, 1889.

It was in 1832; I was twelve years old. Every summer we went to the home of my maternal grandmother, who was a very rich and very aged personage; she was living in the country, and had numerous children and grandchildren; all tried, if possible, to go and spend the summer with her.

One evening, toward seven o'clock, there were more than thirty persons gathered together on the terrace of an immense garden; there were about twenty grandchildren (I was one of them) playing about. Well, all of us saw one of our uncles, who had gone off through the fields after dinner, walking rather slowly along the widest pathway. We saw him stop for a moment some distance from us, look at us, and then walk on again. His wife, who was the first to see him, cried: "Look! Papa's come back!" Then grandmother said, addressing us all, "Children, run quickly and catch Uncle; tell him to come and have a cup of tea with us!" Off we went, like a flash of lightning; when we reached the point where the pathways converged, where all of us had seen him stop, we looked about, on every side. No one! We went back, saying that he was no longer there. Then grandmother addressed one of the servants, who was serving tea: "You saw Monsieur go

by?"—"Yes, Madame."—"Go try to find him, and tell him that I'd like him to come here." When the servant reached the point where we had seen Uncle stop, and did not find him, he questioned the gardeners who were watering the flowers in the flower-beds, asking them in what direction he had gone. The gardeners were most astonished, for not one of them had seen him go by.

The evening drew to a close; the children were in bed. My uncle's wife, very uneasy, sent several men on horseback, in different directions, to look for her husband. They came back. They had found that the young master had been *assassinated* near the river where he had been seen bathing, five versts away. At the inquest it was learned that one of the peasants had met him on the bridge; that he told the peasant he had just taken a swim, and that he was going in the direction of the fields by the shortest road,—through the forest beside the river. This same peasant had some minutes afterward met some one whom he afterward supposed was the assassin. It transpired that he actually was.

In its time this extraordinary apparition caused much discussion. (Letter 676.)

What objections can be made to this account? We are always seeking objections, and this is natural. In the first place, I told myself that the person who wrote me these lines in 1899, since she was born in 1820, and was twelve years old in 1832, was seventy-nine when she wrote; this might indicate a weakening of her memory. But I, myself, am writing these pages in 1921; I was born in 1842, and, to tell the truth, do not note any weakness of any sort; I feel the same at seventy-nine as I did at forty or fifty. This objection, therefore, is not valid. Shall we think the story a fabrication? One might say the same of the account each of us gives of what he has seen or done in the course of the day, and we are concerned in this case with a serious occurrence,—with an assassination. A collective hallucination? A most complicated hypothesis! The natural solu-

tion is to admit the projection of a visible phantasm, produced at the moment when this man found himself mortally wounded by the assassin. We have ascertained, above, that these phantasms are not mythical.

Various observations of the same sort are so numerous that they bear one another out by their very similarity. It is impossible to continue to deny them. Here is another:

Monsieur Pouzolz, a planter of Guadeloupe, was living in Anse-Bertrand, a township of the canton of Port-Louise, with his young wife. Every Saturday, about three o'clock, his father-in-law, who was living in Port-Louis, went to see them, riding on horseback through the avenue des Cocotiers, which stretched out before the main gate of the building. He would spend the afternoon and the next day with his children, and on Monday would return to Port-Louis.

Dwellings in the colonies are built, almost all, in the same way: there is a square, one-story main building, without any inner court. Around it is a balcony, provided with Venetian blinds which are opened and closed at will. It is surrounded by an empty space, and before it is an avenue, bordered by cabins and gardens belonging to the negroes.

Monsieur and Madame Pouzolz, their elbows on the balcony railing, were awaiting their father's arrival, for it was a Saturday, and three o'clock had just struck. After some minutes of waiting they discerned in the distance a horseman whom they were not long in recognizing as the beloved parent. He reached the gate, and sprang from his horse. The two young people, going downstairs, went to the front steps to meet him.

They saw no one. Believing it a joke on the part of her father, Madame Pouzolz cried, laughing:

"Oh, Father! We saw you!"

And, laughing, she began to run around the house, followed by her husband.

When they had gone around it, there was still no one to be found.

"This time," the young woman said to her husband, "we'll catch him surely: you go this way, and I'll go that."

When they had made the circuit in opposite directions, they met, without having come upon any one.

Quite overwhelmed by this inexplicable adventure, they were expressing, mutually, their views, and their stupefaction, when a messenger arrived from Port-Louis, bringing them news of their father's death: *he had died, suddenly, at three o'clock.*

The Ponzolz family, one of the most influential in Guadeloupe, was on intimate terms with my family.<sup>1</sup>

E. MOUTON.

This experience reminds us, among others, of the horseman described to me in Letter 142, published in "L'Inconnu" (page 122),—Monsieur Du Quilliou, Mayor of Ille-et-Villaine, whose uncle had an absolutely identical vision. In each of these last two instances the deceased must, in expiring, have thought of his relatives, to whom he manifested his presence under his habitual aspect, or that under which he frequently appeared. Evidently, in this case, neither the phantom nor the horse was objective; they could not have been photographed. All took place in the minds of the persons affected by the psychic disturbance. The phenomenon is none the less real on that account.

Once more, it must be said that to deny all this is simply stupid.

Among the numberless accounts sent me, here is a rather characteristic one, which came from Copenhagen:

MY DEAR PROFESSOR:

I was taking my examinations for the Polytechnic School, and had had the vision of the past which I shall presently ask you to explain, when my grandmother, one of your readers (all your works have been translated into the Scandinavian), was talking to me; she told me what follows. Pardon my importunity in taking a moment of your time, so precious for the progress of humanity, but I have a thirst for knowledge, and no one in Copenhagen can give me information as to these problems.

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1894, p. 4.

The occurrence took place long ago; but my grandmother remembers it as though it were yesterday. There are impressions one does not forget.

It was in 1832. My grandfather and grandmother had a friend, Monsieur Barring, known and esteemed by all the family. This friend had not come to see them for a long time. One evening, when my grandmother was awaiting her husband, knitting by the light of a candle, she saw Monsieur Barring standing before the closed door, smiling at her with the kindly smile characteristic of him.

She rubbed her eyes, thinking that she was dreaming, or the victim of an hallucination, but this did not make her friend disappear: he stood motionless; about him was a very bright light. This phantom was transparent, and behind him could be seen the gilded border of the wall.

Grandmother was seized with fear; she blew out her candle and threw herself into bed, and under the bedclothes.

When my grandfather returned, he found her suffering greatly; learning that she had recognized Barring, he told her that that was a portent of death to their friend. He made a note of the time the apparition occurred, and resolved to go and call on the friend next day. But on the very morning of the following day a letter informed them of this death; it had taken place at half-past ten the evening before,—the moment of the apparition.

How grateful I should be to you, my dear Professor, if you would give me an explanation of this phenomenon, as well as the following one, which concerns myself.

One day, in order to gain a little recreation from my studies with Professor "Royal Doctor" Jerndopp, I went for a walk along the quay. I was thinking of nothing in particular, when everything about me underwent a singular transformation: the houses, the ships appeared to me not as they are to-day, but as they were in the time of Christian IV (1600).

I was familiar with this spectacle through the study of history; but *I saw it with my own eyes*, and it seemed to me to last several minutes. Then, little by little, reality asserted itself. My impression is unforgettable.

Hoping for your indulgence, I am awaiting, with great impatience, an explanation of these two occurrences, that are so strange.

IDON HARSING.

(Letter 2350.)

It is evident that there was in this last instance an optical illusion. But how did it take place? Of what nature was this reminiscence? There is more than one problem to be solved. As to the apparition of the deceased, coinciding with his death, which was unknown at the time, one would, in truth, have to be violently prejudiced to see in this nothing but a superficial hallucination. Incredulity sometimes becomes a rather simple-minded credulity.

However strange and dramatic it be, the following apparition is no more debatable than the preceding one.

Monsieur Gaston Fournier, living in Paris, at 21 rue de Berlin, wrote on October 16, 1885:

On February 21, 1879, I was invited to dine at the home of my friends Monsieur and Madame B——. When I entered the drawing-room I noted the absence of some one who usually dined at that house, Monsieur d'E——; I almost always met him at their table. I remarked upon this, and Madame B—— answered that their friend, who was employed in a large banking establishment, was doubtless very busy at that time, for they had not seen him for two days. From that moment on, no one mentioned him. The meal went off very gaily, without the mistress of the house having given the least visible sign of any preoccupation. At dinner we had hit upon the plan of ending our evening at the theater. While we were having dessert Madame B—— rose to go to her room and dress, leaving us at the table to smoke our cigars. Suddenly we heard a terrible cry. We rushed into the bedroom, and found that the lady had collapsed in an armchair and was almost on the point of fainting.

We went to her side. Little by little, she came to herself, and told us the following story:

"After leaving you, I dressed to go out, and was in front of my mirror, tying the strings of my hat, when suddenly, in this

mirror, I saw d'E—— come in, by the door. He had his hat on; he looked pale and sad. Without turning around, I spoke to him: 'Well, here you are! Do sit down.' When he didn't answer I turned around, and saw nothing. Then I grew frightened; I uttered the scream which you heard."

My friend, that he might reassure his wife, began to joke with her, calling the apparition a nervous hallucination, and telling her that d'E—— would be greatly flattered to learn to what extent he occupied her thoughts; then, as she was still trembling, we suggested that we leave at once, in order to cut her emotion short; we said that we should miss the rising of the curtain.

"I haven't thought of our friend for one moment," this lady said, "since Monsieur Fournier asked me the reason for his absence. I'm not timid, and I've never had an hallucination; I assure you that there's something extraordinary in this, and, as for me, I sha'n't go out without having had news of our friend. Go to where he lives, I beg of you; it's the only way to reassure me."

I was of the same opinion, and both of us left for d'E——'s rooms; he lived a very short distance away. As we were walking along we made many a joke on the subject of Madame B——'s fears.

When we got there we asked the concierge if our friend was at home. "Yes, he has n't come down all day."

He lived in a little bachelor apartment, and had no servant. We went upstairs and rang several times, without getting any response. We rang more loudly, then knocked with all our strength, with no greater success. B——, agitated in spite of himself, said to me: "It's absurd; the concierge must have made a mistake; he's gone out. Let's go down." But the concierge assured us that he had not gone out,—that he was absolutely certain of this.

Really frightened, we went up with him, and again tried to make our friend open the door for us. Then, hearing no movement in the apartment, we sent for a locksmith. The door was forced open, and we found our friend lying on his bed; he had been killed by two revolver shots. His body was still warm.

The physician, whom we sent for at once, ascertained that he had at first tried to commit suicide by swallowing the contents of a small bottle of laudanum, and then—finding, doubtless, that the

poison did not act quickly enough—he had fired two revolver shots, aimed at his heart. According to the physician's statement, death had taken place about an hour before. There was an almost exact coincidence with Madame B——'s so-called hallucination. On the mantelpiece, there was a letter from him, telling Monsieur and Madame B—— of his resolution,—a letter addressing Madame B—— in terms particularly affectionate.

GASTON FOURNIER.<sup>1</sup>

The explanation is the same as in the preceding cases. The desperate man projected his thoughts toward Madame B——, and this projection produced the image of the friend in the act of calling.

Apparitions of this sort are so numerous that this chapter alone might be expanded into a thick volume, simply by giving the occurrences, without comments. Let us record here still another telepathic impression, not less dramatic, an account of which was sent me in August, 1920:

Monsieur de la R—— was at his home, a small residence in Nantes, in 1860, with his wife and his mother-in-law. The latter's son, Monsieur F. C——, was hunting in the environs, near Verton. About four o'clock in the afternoon, to the great surprise of those about her, the mother seemed suddenly overcome, and cried:

"It's you, my child? Why, you're wounded! Just look! François has blood on his neck! It's terrible! What happened?"

She almost fainted away. They gathered about her, telling her that she was the victim of an hallucination; she remained in a state of great agitation. They sent for the family physician: he could give no explanation.

At seven o'clock they brought back the hunter's body; he had been killed by an accident at the exact time of the apparition. While he was climbing over a hedge, his gun had gone off; the bullet had pierced his throat and chin.

R. D. DE MARATRAY.

(Letter 4257.)

These cases, as we were saying, are numerous, and furnish

<sup>1</sup> *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 244; *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, I, 22.

us with a goodly pile of concordant documents; they show us, under various aspects, the psychic element in human beings.

A certain number of my readers have long since had an opportunity to read the following statements in "Uranie": "Our body is but a current of molecules, controlled and organized by the immaterial force which animates us. We may call living beings souls clothed in air. The human body is the visible manifestation of a guiding force. Like the world-system, Man is a dynamism. The principle, that which creates forms, is the dynamic element." Since these lines were written (1889) psychic science has made considerable progress. As part of this progress, we may note the experimental study of materialization, which shows us (I have been a witness of it) that bodily organs may be formed from the substance emanating from a medium's organism.<sup>1</sup>

What new horizons are opened to us by these observations! Apparitions will one day be explained. Let us continue our examination of them.

Monsieur Jattefaux, a well-known printer of the Lahure printing establishment (he was held in high regard by Paris writers on scientific subjects) confided to me the following family reminiscence:

It was in Blois, during the war of 1870. My grandmother, who was ill, was taken by her son to Laval, where he was living. My grandfather remained in Blois, with us, until December 9th. We had been receiving news of the state of my grandmother's health; but at that date the Prussians reached Blois, and the mail service was stopped.

<sup>1</sup> See *Les Phénomènes dits de matérialisation*, by Madame Bisson, with 165 diagrams and 36 plates (Paris, Alcan, 1914). The lecture by Dr. Geley, at the General Psychological Institute, with 23 photographs (Paris, 1918) and also *Materializations-Phænomen*, by Dr. de Schrenck, with 150 photographs and 30 plates (Munich, 1914). The philosophic deductions are presented in Dr. Geley's recent work, *De l'inconscient au conscient* (Paris, Alcan, 1919). Previous to these experiments, there were scarcely any other characteristic ones but those—so memorable, however—of William Crookes, in 1870.

On December 25th, my grandfather told us, at breakfast, a dream he had had in the night. He had seen his wife before him, for several minutes; she had slowly approached him, and *breathed upon his face*. She had then disappeared.

When the German armies left Blois, in the month of March, 1871, and communication was again established, we received a letter from my uncle (from Laval) dated December 25, 1870; it informed us of my grandmother's death, which had occurred during Christmas night.

I can assure you that these facts are perfectly authentic; the family was so struck by this coincidence that its members retained an absolutely exact memory of it.

(Letter 824.)

The dying woman's psychic force acted upon her husband in a manifestation which the dream must have transformed.

Here is another manifestation. I received the following letter from Nice, on June 23, 1899:

It was during the war with Italy that, one day in June, 1859, a friend of mine was breaking his journey at Marseilles. He had stretched himself out on his bed at six o'clock in the evening, to rest from his travels. What was his stupefaction to see his brother, of whom he was extremely fond, pass across the room, —when he knew he was in Italy, with the French expeditionary forces! He sprang from his bed and ran after him; but, alas! it was only a shade, which vanished as it had appeared.

Some weeks before this vision, he had received a letter from this brother, telling him that he was in good health, and that the life in camp was a happy one (he was a volunteer).

When my friend went back to Corsica, his native land, about twenty days after this so-called vision, he found a letter from the Ministry of War awaiting him; it informed him that the young non-commissioned officer had died as a result of wounds received on the battle-field, on the day and at the time when the vision had occurred.

PERETTI,  
3 rue Boyer, Nice.

(Letter 732.)

I find among my papers the little note which follows:

Veulettes, August, 1902.

Mademoiselle Suzanne Rainal, the charming daughter of the well-known orthopedist, has just given us this account:

An extremely pretty young girl, who was soon to be married (this happened five years ago) was having her hair dressed for a dinner given on the occasion of her betrothal. Suddenly, in the mirror which reflected the door of the room in which she was, she saw her fiancé enter; he was very pale. At once she called out to her mother: "There's my fiancé! Why, how pale he is!"

The young girl's mother was surprised to find that there was no one there. An hour afterward the young man's body was brought back: he had been killed by falling from his horse.

It is rather remarkable that these visions are often seen in mirrors. The one which I am about to describe belongs in the same category. An account of it was sent me, supported by attestations, from Versailles, on May 20, 1907:

Your work "*Les Forces naturelles inconnues*" prompts me to tell you that I have long wished to inform you as to an apparition which appeared in my family about 1850. I was at that time on a vacation at my grandfather's home; he lived in Antraine, in Ille-et-Vilaine. My uncle, an infantry captain, had left his wife and children with this grandfather for more than a year; they were in excellent health as a result of their stay in the country, and the advantages of a large garden, which they scarcely ever left. The little girl, aged *four*, and her brother, one year younger, slept in a small room adjoining that of their mother. One night the latter was awakened by her children's cries. Hastening to them, she asked them why they were afraid. The elder answered that she had just seen, at the foot of their bed, a dark-haired man, with large mustaches, who regarded them fixedly. Two days afterward my aunt learned of the sudden death of her husband; he had died at exactly eleven o'clock, the precise moment of the apparition. The little girl had described her father; she had not seen him for fifteen months, and had not at first been able to recognize him.

DUBOIS,

Assistant Commissary of Stores (retired).

(Letter 1740.)

Here is another experience:

Paris, July 12, 1917.

From my earliest childhood until the age of about thirty, I was brought up—and, above all, very much spoiled—by an old aunt who lived to be ninety-six without an infirmity; each day she still walked her eight or ten kilometers, often spending whole nights in caring for the sick, in spite of her advanced age. She was the type of old woman that wears a cap; her cheeks were as ruddy as apples.

One night I was awakened suddenly; I perceived a likeness of her,—not very clearly, but it was she beyond a doubt. It was not a picture; it was like a glow resembling her.

I had an intuition that something must have happened to her, and the next day, in reply to a telegram, I learned that she had died at the time she had appeared to me.

I have lost, before and after that, a goodly number of relatives dear to me, but to whom I had never shown myself such a tyrant: never did a similar impression recur.

You see, my dear Master, that it is a commonplace example of telepathy. Doubtless, when she was dying, my dear aunt thought of me, whom she loved above everything else, and our vibrations, in harmony, brought about wireless telegraphy.

DR. AUG. MANCEAU.

(Letter 3760.)

However “commonplace” it be, as the learned doctor calls it,—that is to say, however frequently such things may occur,—this case deserves to be recorded, for our enlightenment. It was an apparition of some one dying, told of calmly.

I received the following record from La Cocha (Tucuman), Argentina, on June 23, 1920:

A.—On December 23, 1917, when I was in bed, wide awake, the room suddenly lighted up, and I saw a man of large stature appear; he was enveloped in a long brown coat, and his face was almost entirely covered with a hood of the same color. I at first took him for a monk, but, upon reflection, I thought of one of

my friends, an Alsatian hunter. Then my memory began to dwell on two persons of about the same height, and whose faces were almost alike (Baron de Gerstheim and Gerrer, a manufacturer of Lautenbach). I resolved to clear up this point as soon as the war in Europe should be over,—that is, as soon as the mail could be relied on to a greater extent, for we were cut off from Alsace, which was then under the rod of Germany.

Shortly after the armistice I got a letter from a friend in Guebwiller (Upper Rhine), in which I was informed that Monsieur Théophile Gerrer of Lautenbach had died in the course of the war. Immediately I asked the date of his death. It corresponded with that of the apparition. This did not astonish me at all, since it was the second time such a thing had happened to me, though *the first apparition occurred more than twenty years ago.*

B.—You remember, doubtless, my account of the apparition on a Monday (or Whit Sunday, I believe), *at six o'clock in the morning*, after the chimes of bells had rung for mass. In this case my friend, an old non-commissioned officer of cuirassiers, or Reichshoffen, appeared to me exactly *twelve* hours after his death, but *without a mustache*. I went, immediately, to the home of the deceased, to gain information, and found that his mouth was bandaged by a strip of white linen which entirely covered his mustache.

JEAN LAU.

(Letter 4198.)

This letter is doubly instructive, by reason of its sincerity. The apparition of the dying man corresponded to his death. There are not sufficient grounds for attributing it to some one deceased, after death, and it may be classed, here, with all the foregoing cases. The account of the dissolution will be found in Volume III, in its original text, which differs from the one given here, not fundamentally, but in a slight matter of dates. This demonstrates once again the variations of memory. The demise occurred on Saturday, April 9, 1898, on the day before Easter, and the apparition was seen on Easter Sunday, at six o'clock in the morning. The dates differed, in the narrator's memory, but the descriptions, which

I have just compared, are absolutely the same. These differences in dates are of no importance in the present instance.

How can we explain these apparitions at the hour of dissolution? The letter I shall now give, sent me by a correspondent with whom we are already familiar (page 324), tells of another example:

It is our duty to help you in your study of premonitions. I wish to inform you that my brother Platon saw our father at the hour of his death. At that time (1883) he was a young student in Moscow, and had left us after the Christmas vacation. Our father was rather weak, for he was in general ill health during the last years of his life. The very day of my brother's departure Papa caught pneumonia; it carried him off in three days. Platon had arrived in Moscow the evening of January 14th, and the next day had been allowed to sleep as late as he liked. When he awakened, on the fifteenth, a few minutes before noon, he was astounded to see our father *standing before him!* He gazed at him for some moments, then the vision faded away. Thereupon the clock struck twelve, and it was precisely at noon that my father departed this world, on January 15, 1883.

HÉLÈNE SCHOULGINE,  
Grodno, Russia.

July 24, 1900.  
(Letter 930.)

It will be objected, for the thousandth time, that this was the chance coincidence of an hallucination with a death. No, a thousand times no! It is blind to refuse to see, in these instances, an interpretation ceaselessly repeated.

The Abbé Pachén, of Poitiers, related the following experience, according to his colleague the Abbé Lemoigne, to whom he told it:

A certain lad named Malgorn, a native of the Island of Ouessant, was a pupil in the little seminary of Pont-Croix. Consumptive, and quite ill, he could not go back with the others at the beginning of the school year.

One evening, when the students were filing out of the study-hall to go into the dining-room, Malgorn appeared, with a white parcel under his arm, at a door which gave on to a stairway leading to the dormitory. Three or four pupils (the witness could give their names, since they were in his class) waved their hands to Malgorn; because of the superintendent's presence, they did not dare speak to the new-comer. Shortly afterward Malgorn was lost to sight on the stairs, as he went up to the dormitory.

That very evening, one of the pupils told a Monsieur Mazéas, a priest: "Malgorn, your fellow-countryman has just arrived; we saw him." The priest answered: "Good. He'll come to see me to-morrow."

As the afternoon wore on without any one seeing Malgorn again, the professor went to the dormitory. The pupil's bed had not been slept in. The next day news of Malgorn's death reached the school. He had died at the very hour at which he had been seen on the stairs. The pupils had recognized him clearly; they had even noticed a spot on the shoulder of his jacket.

We understand nothing of all this, of course; but there the experience is. A transmission took place. What a number of varied examples!

Admiral Peyron, Treasurer of the Senate, appeared, at the hour of his death, to two different persons in Toulon. Dr. Dariex published the following letter<sup>1</sup>:

On January 9, 1892, I had gone to bed in Toulon. I felt some one awaken me, and I saw Admiral Peyron standing near my bed, his hands in his pockets; he was pressing his body against mine. He said, "Good-by, P——. I've come to say good-by to you."

I got up, then, and lighted the candle. It was eleven o'clock: the apparition was no longer there. After a quarter of an hour I went back to bed. Scarcely had I begun to fall asleep again, when the admiral pressed against me, as before, repeating his good-by; but a cloud quickly spread over his face, and it was not long before his body disappeared like vapor.

Under the spell of this repeated melancholy apparition, I stayed awake, thinking that the man whose aide de camp I had been, five years previously, had probably just died. As a matter

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1894, p. 11.

of fact, the evening of the next day, news of his death appeared in the newspaper. He was then living in the Luxembourg Palace, as treasurer of the Senate. I must add that, the day before, I had learned through the same newspaper that he was seriously ill.

Ten months later I related this occurrence to Monsieur G——, a naval engineer, who, like me, had been a member of the admiral's general staff, when he was in command of the Mediterranean Cruising Squadron. What was my astonishment, when this superior officer told me that, on the same night, Admiral Peyron had appeared to him, as well, and had said to him: "My dear G——, the time of our parting has come. All must go that way. Good-by." It had startled him into wakefulness.

E. P. N.,  
Cruiser Captain.

We may seek an explanation of the first impression in the announcement of the illness; but the apparition to two separate, mutually independent witnesses must be taken into account.

The following apparition, also, was seen by two separate persons, and by a child as well:

Mr. Hunter had had, as a wet-nurse, a woman who loved him more than her own sons; her name was Mrs. Macfarlane. Upon his marriage, she entered the service of his wife, and was her companion when Mr. Hunter made a trip to the Indies. In the month of June, 1857, Mrs. Hunter went to a watering-place, and left a box of valuables in Mrs. Macfarlane's keeping. One evening in August, Mrs. Hunter was at home, together with several of her friends. She was passing the open door of her room, when she saw a large coffin upon the bed. At its foot an old woman was seated, tall and vigorous; she was gazing fixedly at this same coffin. "At once I retraced my steps," she wrote, "and told my guests of the vision I had had; it was received with great shouts of laughter, in which I soon joined.

"In spite of that, what I had seen was real to my eyes, and I could have described the old woman's garments.

"When my guests had left, I paid a visit, as usual, to the

children's room, and I noticed that the governess seemed agitated and confused. She approached me, and said: 'Madame, I'm most upset. At seven o'clock this evening I was on my way to the kitchen for water; turning around, I saw an old woman going upstairs; she was tall and strong-looking. I drew aside to let her go by, but there was something so strange about her that I turned around to see where she was going. The door of the drawing-room was open, and she went in that direction; but before catching up with her I saw her suddenly melt, dissolve: I swear to having seen her, and I can also tell absolutely how she was dressed; she was wearing a large black cap on her head, and had a black-and-white check shawl over her shoulders.'

This description corresponded to what Mrs. Hunter had herself seen.

About half an hour afterward, when Mrs. Hunter had gone to bed, she heard her little five-year-old girl scream, and, immediately afterward, the voice of the governess, who was trying to calm her. The next morning the child related that a bad old woman had sat down on the table and had stared at her so hard that she had ended by screaming. The nurse stated that she had seen the child sitting up in bed, wide awake; she was pointing at the table with her little finger, crying, "Go away, go away, bad, ugly old woman!" The nurse saw nothing; she had already been in bed for a short time, and had locked the door of the room.

Some days later letters came from Mrs. Macfarlane's sons, announcing her death. She had spent the last hours of her life thinking constantly of Mr. Hunter and his family. The nurse, when she learned of this, cried: "Good heavens! It was she whom I saw the other evening, and that was the way she always dressed!"<sup>1</sup>

This apparition is most instructive so far as our research is concerned. It is apparent that,—as in the case of Monsieur Pouzolz, related above, and in similar cases—it was not real, objective, external, could not have been photographed, for the vision began with the perception of a coffin, which was

<sup>1</sup> See *Proceedings Soc. Psychical Research*, p. 129. *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1907, p. 631.

not there, either. Mrs. Macfarlane, when dying, thought of Mr. Hunter, her nursling of days gone by, of his wife, of their little daughter, and her thoughts took shape in their minds as a form representing her, clad as she had been, and as a coffin associated with this form. It was a case of telepathic transmission.

What an immense variety there is in all these manifestations! Nevertheless, as might be expected, many of them resemble one another.

The case of Madame Féret of Juvisy ("L'Inconnu," page 74), recurs, in an almost similar form, in Mrs. Crowe's work: "Obscure Sides of Nature."<sup>1</sup> Here it is:

A Mrs. H——, who lived in Limerick, had, a few years ago, a servant whom she thought a great deal of, Nelly Hanlon. This servant was a most dependable person, who rarely asked for leave; her mistress was, on this account, all the more disposed to grant her a day off when she requested one, in order to go to a fair, some miles distant. But Mr. H—— told his wife that she could not be dispensed with, for he had invited some people to dinner on that day, and only Nelly could be entrusted with the keys of the wine-cellar. He added that his business would not allow him to return in time to go for the wine himself.

Mrs. H——, not wishing to disappoint Nelly, to whom she had given her consent, assured her husband that she would, herself, take charge of the wine on the day in question.

Nelly left in the morning; she was in a happy mood; she promised to return in the evening if it were possible, and at the latest the morning of the next day.

The day passed without incident, and no one gave her any thought. When the time came to go for the wine, Mrs. H—— took the key and went to the cellar stairs, followed by a maid-servant carrying the basket for bottles. Scarcely had she begun to go down the steps, when she uttered a great cry, and fell unconscious. She was carried to her bed, and the girl who had gone with her told the other servants, who were most alarmed, that they had seen

<sup>1</sup> Chapter vi. on Wraiths, p. 179.

Nelly Hanlon at the bottom of the stairs, dripping with water. When Mr. H—— arrived, they told him the story; he reprimanded the maid-servant for her foolishness. Mrs. H——, well ministered to, regained consciousness. As she was opening her eyes, she sighed deeply, and cried, "Oh, Nelly Hanlon!" Then she confirmed what the servant had said: she had seen Nelly at the bottom of the cellar stairs, dripping as though she had got out of the water. Mr. H—— did everything in the world to prove to his wife that it had been only an illusion, but in vain. "Nelly," he said, "will soon come in, and make fun of you." But his wife remained convinced that the servant was dead.

Night came, then morning, but without news. Two or three days went by. They made inquiries, and learned that Nelly had been seen at the fair, and had left for home toward evening. After that time, all traces of her were absolutely lost. A search led at last to the discovery of her body in the river, but it was never known how the catastrophe occurred.

This vision, the reality of which is not to be doubted, must have taken place after the drowning, since the victim was seen, by the two narrators, to be dripping with water. The vision occurred, doubtless, immediately after the accident, which must have happened in the evening.

I shall not seek to explain it, any more than I shall seek to explain Madame Féret's vision. She saw in her cellar the corpse of her cousin, who had died in the Crimea on that same day, during the war of 1855. We cannot solve the problem of these visions, but we are forced to admit their reality. They are the elements of a new science.

To deny the abundantly proved facts as to apparitions at the moment of death is to deny the light of day.

It is time to end this chapter; but it is not without regret that a large number of revelatory observations are omitted. Here is still another, not less authentic than the preceding ones.

The Reverend C. Wambey, of Paragon, Salisbury County,

England, wrote to the Society for Psychological Research, in April, 1884:

I had been on very intimate terms with my friend B—— before he left England, having been appointed Professor of Mathematics at Elizabeth College in Guernsey. About ten years afterward I accepted a temporary position in this island, and resumed relations with my old friend. I spent part of my time with him almost every day.

After my return to England, I corresponded regularly with him. In the last letter I received from him, he spoke of his health and told me that he was unusually well.

One morning I saddened my wife by assuring her that my friend was dead, and that he had appeared to me during the night. She tried to comfort me by suggesting that it was an illusion due to my state of health; I had been unwell for some time. I answered that so far as I was concerned there was no doubt as to the demise.

Some days later I received a letter edged with black, bearing a Guernsey stamp. In this letter Mrs. B—— told me that her husband had died after being unwell for only a few hours, and that he had spoken of me with concern. His death took place the night on which he had appeared to me.

The investigation made by the Psychic Society brought out the fact that Mrs. Wambey retained a precise recollection of what her husband had said, on that morning.

We must end this account, despite the revelatory interest of all these facts. I have so many *positive observations* before my eyes that it might be prolonged indefinitely. Apparitions and manifestations of the dying are as numerous as they are varied, and all of them enlighten us. But the limits first assigned to this volume have already been exceeded.

I owe the success of this work to the sympathetic collaboration of my readers, who for so many years have deemed it a pleasure and a duty to send me accounts of precise observations which have come to their knowledge,—accounts helpful in the study of the soul and its survival after death. I

hereby wish to express my deep gratitude to all those who have collaborated in this work of investigation and enlightenment. I cannot write to them individually, but I desire to express to them my sincere thanks.

I believe myself justified in being more severe in the last pages of this volume than in the first, in describing the state of mind of obdurate deniers. Do you not think, dear readers, that one must be—how shall I put it?—blind, deaf, or something worse, to continue to reject the evidence?

The facts published in this volume are as convincing as they are unquestionable.

It was on the comparison of observations that astronomy, the most positive of sciences, was founded. *It will be the same with psychic science*, and this is the only method by which to attain to a knowledge of truth.

All these observations prove that a human being does not consist only of a body that is visible, tangible, ponderable, known to every one in general, and to physicians in particular; it consists, likewise, of a psychic element that is imponderable, gifted with special, intrinsic faculties, capable of functioning apart from the physical organism and of manifesting itself at a distance with the aid of forces as to the nature of which we are still ignorant. This psychic element is not subject to the every-day restrictions of time and space.

On the other hand, present-day experiments in wireless telegraphy and wireless telephony have established the fact that the atmosphere by which we are surrounded and permeated is constantly traversed by ether-waves which pass through walls. These waves do not become perceptible to our senses until they are caught by special apparatus attuned with their vibrations; we live perpetually, night and day, in the midst of an invisible world.

The psychic occurrences here investigated show us, beyond doubt, that at the moment of death a subtle shock,

unknown in its nature, at times affects those at a distance who are connected with the dying person in some way. This connection is not always that of sympathy. The ether-wave, or electro-magnetic projection, gives rise to physical phenomena and mental impressions. These emissions are automatic, usually involuntary, and are comparable to electric vibrations which may accompany the sundering of earthly bonds. In the matter of inquiring into these observed phenomena, we are at present in a state of ignorance comparable to that of the astronomers who preceded Copernicus and Galileo. For them the earth was at the center of a closed universe: their system was geocentric and anthropocentric. Physiological science has taught, up to the present, that thought is a product of the brain, while in reality it is psychic force which governs life.

In the observations which have just passed before our eyes, incarnate souls manifested themselves,—souls of the living. Nevertheless we have asked ourselves, more than once, if we were not in certain cases dealing with persons already dead, already beyond the boundary line. Our third part will be given over to this special study,—to the investigation of phenomena which have occurred after departure from this earthly halting-place: manifestations and apparitions of the dead, several minutes, several hours after dissolution; or several days, several weeks, several months, or even several years after. Everything will be painstakingly sifted, investigated, verified. Our scientific method will be the same. There will be no mere words, no metaphysical dissertations, but *facts*.

Let us, then, end this second volume, reserving for the third all that does not appear attributable to the living, all that seems to belong to the realm of the dead. In considering the foregoing examples, indeed, we have had doubts as to the origin of certain manifestations, and have had reason to think

that several followed dissolution, instead of accompanying or preceding it; we admitted as much. When a person comes to announce his death to us, appears spontaneously and tells us, "*I am dead*," it would seem that this affirmation might suffice to convince us that he really *is* dead. Nevertheless, we have seen that we should not be justified in drawing this conclusion, since such declarations have at times preceded dissolution.

In the matter of the examples we are now to investigate, there will no longer be any doubt: the dead themselves will speak to us, in a language which we must interpret.

This second part of our trilogy has made us *certain* of the reality of phantasms of the living, of apparitions and manifestations of the dying. The pages just read have already made us feel that these manifestations, these apparitions, stretch beyond the grave. We now reach the door of the temple which has been closed, up to the present, to human exploration. Shall we obtain the same authentic proofs, the same *certainty* as to the real existence of the dead?

Let us enter the arena fearlessly, and look squarely at the most absorbing of spectacles.

We know, henceforth, that spiritual Man exists, that he is relatively independent of material Man. Material Man dies; spiritual Man does not. What are his posthumous manifestations? What is his ultra-terrestrial state? That is what we shall endeavor to determine in our third volume.

# DEATH AND ITS MYSTERY

## AFTER DEATH

*Manifestations and Apparitions of the  
Dead; The Soul after Death*

BY  
CAMILLE FLAMMARION

TRANSLATED BY  
LATROBE CARROLL



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**DEATH AND ITS MYSTERY**  
**AFTER DEATH**

Death is our common lot. Material riches are won and lost. Let thy life be inspired by the purest justice! Be beyond reproach in relation to others and to thyself. Seize every opportunity to learn. In this way thou wilt lead a most pleasurable life.

Ponder these thoughts. When thou art filled by them thou wilt be enabled to conceive of the nature of God, of men, and of things, and to account for the unity of all creation. Thou wilt then know this universal law, that everywhere in the world matter and spirit are in principle identical.

Continue the work of liberating thy soul by making a judicious and well-considered choice in all things, to the end that thou mayest assure the triumph of what is best in thyself—the triumph of the spirit. Then, when thou leavest thy mortal shape, thou wilt rise into the ether and, ceasing to be mortal, wilt thyself assume the form of an immortal god.

PYTHAGORAS.

# DEATH AND ITS MYSTERY

## I

### A GENERAL INVESTIGATION

The truths of mathematics can be passed upon only by mathematicians. I despise the judgment of ignorant mathematicians.

COPERNICUS.

OUR volume "At the Moment of Death," the second of this metaphysical trilogy, left its readers *certain* of the reality of phantasms of the living, of apparitions and manifestations of the dying,—occurring at every variation of distance,—and of telepathic transmissions. It ends with this question: Shall we obtain the same absolute proofs, the same *certainly* as to the real existence of the dead?

"This is a book written in good faith," said Montaigne in his unforgettable "Essays." The same affirmation must be made concerning the present work.

We now reach the door of the closed temple. But in our journeys to the frontier of the two worlds that door has already seemed to open half-way. The purpose of this third volume is to prove survival after death, *by scientifically observed facts*, by the same experimental method, apart from all religious beliefs.

Reason, meditation may aid in the search for truth, but they do not suffice, have not sufficed, up to the present time, to discover truth. Positive observation is indispensable to

insure conviction. Theories mean nothing if they are not based upon realities.

It is remarkable that the supreme question of whether we are ephemeral or lasting, of whether or not we survive death, has remained, so far, outside the sphere of the recognized sciences. The dweller upon this earth is a strange being. He lives upon a planet without knowing where he is, and without having the curiosity to ask himself—without seeking to know his own nature!

It is time to assault the stronghold of time-honored ignorance, without concealing any difficulty, any objection.

Before plunging into our investigation, and in order not to run the risk of wasting our time—for nothing is more absurd than waste of time—it seems to me that my first duty, out of respect to the numberless readers who are doing me the honor of following me, is to take in at one glance of recapitulation the thousands of communications which have been sent me. I must then add to these, mentally, the thousands of observations made in all countries and at all epochs, and see if some few of them offer such a weight of evidence that they give us promise of the desired certainty, free us from the fear of spending our time fruitlessly, and warrant our continued consideration of the subject of inquiry. Later we shall have occasion to classify by categories the phenomena observed. Let us, then, first make a rapid survey which will in itself throw some light upon our field of investigation.

Out of the four thousand eight hundred letters which I have received from correspondents with whom I was—or found myself afterward—in touch, and whose sincerity and moral integrity I have had reason to esteem, I have selected only a few hundreds of manifestations from among those which seemed to me unquestionable. I have proceeded exactly as we do in scientific journals when we make public an astronomical observation, a meteorological or a geological observation. I have been much more exacting, even. Here is

no romance, no phantasy, but rigorous observation. Those readers who might accuse me of a lack of method in this work, or in the preceding work "*L'Inconnu*" ("*The Unknown*"), will show themselves to have been too indolent to go into the subject thoroughly, or prove that they are completely lacking in the power of analysis.

Let us have no preconceived convictions, either religious or anti-religious. In the most irrational beliefs one often discovers a basis of misinterpreted truth. Let us investigate freely and draw our conclusions. There are people with closed minds. Let us not adopt their point of view. "As for me," a certain obdurate denier said one day to a free seeker, "I believe only in what I can understand."—"And every one knows you believe in nothing!" replied the free seeker.

The principles of the scientific method bid us accept only with extreme circumspection stories of phenomena that are outside the natural course of events, holding them, at first, under suspicion, precisely because they are extraordinary and inexplicable. And it is difficult to decide at the outset as to the sincerity and perfect mental balance of narrators. I might mention more than one pseudo-historian troubled in no way with a respect for the truth. The signer's name is not always a guarantee. The simple account of an observation made by an attentive, serious-minded witness without literary pretensions is often of greater worth than that of a professional writer. We may even have reason to think that an author of romance, accustomed to writing fiction, is quite capable of putting forward errors as reality, without the least misgivings of conscience. Consequently, all accounts must first be held under suspicion. But to declare all of them inadmissible is simply stupid. There are real occurrences. Despite the inexactness of historical testimony, I take the liberty of repeating the statement that Louis XVI died on the guillotine on January 21, 1793, in Paris, and that

the body of Napoleon lies in a marble sarcophagus in the Invalides. Let us, therefore, proceed, (1) with prudence; (2) with entire freedom of judgment.

The method which we have adopted in our investigation appears to us the most certain, the most unassailable method.

We have ascertained, in the second part of this work, that the soul, when leaving the body, manifests itself in various ways, often at great distances from the spot where death takes place. But the manifestations might come from a person still living, for the precise moment of death is extremely difficult to determine psychologically.

We have read of varied phenomena of the soul in a state *between life and death*, phenomena which do not seem to be manifestations of the *dead*. We have not wished to hide the objections which surround the problem to be solved; we have looked difficulties in the face, for scientific research is, above all, open and honest. We must with the same honesty, the same sincerity, the same independence of spirit inquire into the facts now to be revealed to us.

We must investigate impartially, discuss and interpret a large number of phenomena which appear to be manifestations of the dead. Certain faculties of the soul exist,—faculties that are unknown or little investigated,—such as psychic transmissions at a distance, the will functioning without the medium of word or sign, telepathy, seeing without eyes, hearing without ears, and the foreseeing of the future. The working of these faculties under different conditions has revealed the existence of an individual soul, a soul which, from this time on, must no longer be considered an *effect* but a *cause*. The subject-matter with which we are here beginning to deal will bring us positive and explicit testimony of survival after death. The phenomena which we shall consider, all equally inexplicable, will oblige us to admit the existence in us of a spiritual element differing from the physiological, physical, mechanical, and chemical attributes of the animal organism

—a veritable psychic substance, which the dissolution of the body leaves intact.

But the value of our conclusions is closely bound up with the rigor of our method. We must consider ourselves the less authorized to attribute to the dead *all* inexplicable occurrences, from the fact that the first volume of "Death and Its Mystery" ("Before Death") led us to suspect the existence of human faculties as yet indeterminate.

We shall have before our eyes manifestations and apparitions observed after death; we shall have frequent examples of spirits carrying out intentions expressed when they were alive. Our duty is, unquestionably, to seek first to explain these manifestations as acts of the living, through mental faculties; but we shall realize that with the best will in the world this is not easy, and that, if we have no prejudice, we are forced to admit the existence of will on the part of those dead.

Intercourse between the dead and the living is communication between spirits at a certain phase of existence and other spirits at a totally different phase; communication taking place through a means distinct from that of the physical organs, since in the other world these organs no longer exist. Let us make a careful investigation, without confining ourselves to any rigid system of thought.

In this investigation we shall continue to follow the principle which has guided us up to the present: no empty phrases, no dissertations, no hypotheses, but *facts*.

At the very outset let us state that the posthumous phenomena which we shall examine are not in contradiction to the biological law of continuity. They show, on the contrary, that life goes on beyond the tomb—goes on quite simply, quite naturally. Apparitions at the moment of death have thrown a bridge between the two worlds; they lead us directly, with no break in continuity, to apparitions after death.

Science must investigate psychic phenomena, as it does physical phenomena, without being halted by improbabilities. Before the discovery of Hertzian waves, could we have brought ourselves to admit that an electric wave could be sent, without wires, a distance of thousands of kilometers? Should we not have laughed if some one had asserted that a metal object contained in a thick wooden box could be photographed? Should we not have called any one mad who told us that we should one day see photographs of our bones, taken through our flesh and our clothing? Were not all things open to investigation? Are they not still open?

It is a mistake to disregard manifestations under the pretext that they are infrequent and exceptional; it is unscientific. The discovery of X-rays was due to an accident; that of argon was due to an anomaly in the habitual behavior of nitrogen; it was the variance between the observed and the calculated position of Uranus which revealed the existence of Neptune; and so on.

Do we understand telepathic transmissions at the moment of death? No. Are they absolutely indubitable? Yes. They are of still more frequent occurrence than I have led readers to believe. While I was writing these pages (July, 1921) I received the following letter from my illustrious friend Camille Saint-Saëns, who died several months afterward (December 16th), to the grief of his admirers:

While I was rereading your last volume for the *nth* time, a recollection awakened in my memory, and I shall not wait until to-morrow to tell you of it.

It was in January, 1871, on the last day of the war. I was at the front lines, at Arcueil-Cachan. We had just dined upon an excellent horse, of which we had made a good meat broth, and had gathered a great many dandelions, the roots of which, at that time of the year, are fully developed; in a word, a dinner that had satisfied us all, and we were on that day as gay as we could be in such circumstances. Suddenly I heard, running through my

head, the musical dirge of melancholy chords which I have since made the beginning of my Requiem. I felt in the depths of my being the presentiment that a misfortune was happening to me. A profound anguish overwhelmed me.

It was at that very moment that Henri Regnault had been killed; I was bound to him by the closest friendship. The news of his death caused me such grief that I fell ill and was obliged to stay in bed for three days.

I experienced, therefore, the reality of telepathy before the word was invented. How right you are in thinking that established science does not know the human being, and that we have everything to learn!

Yours with all my heart,  
C. SAINT-SAËNS.

(Letter 4565.)

The foregoing is still another psychic occurrence to add to all those which my readers have passed judgment on. The name of the man to whom it happened lends it especial value.

Telepathic communication from one soul to another during life is not to be doubted. Nor is it doubtful after death.

Given our present knowledge of radiations, of physical and psychic forces, and of the atomic structure of matter, it seems to me that from this time on we shall be in a position to analyze our subject-matter with greater profit than would have been possible even a short time ago, in the well-founded hope of attaining results of great importance. Let us, then, investigate this serious subject in all its aspects, avoiding preconceived ideas which might prevent our judging freely.

I shall first present, for the impartial consideration of my readers, a series of observations which appear to me absolutely conclusive. Such must be the logical beginning of this third volume, that it may deserve its title, "After Death."

One of the most conclusive manifestations of the dead that I know of was that described by a positivist and sincere mate-

riacist, Dr. Caltagirone of Palermo. He gave it as his own experience. Let us listen to the personal version which he recounts. (The occurrence took place not long ago, in December, 1910.)

I was a friend of Benjamin Sirchia; his physician, in fact. Sirchia, well known in Palermo, was an aged patriot, and very popular. He had splendid civic and moral virtues. He was, like me, a skeptic, in the widest meaning of the term.

One day, in May, 1910, we happened to discuss psychic phenomena. I answered his questions by assuring him that, speaking from my own experience, certain of these phenomena were real, but that the interpretations given them were debatable. In the course of this conversation he said to me jestingly:

"Listen, Doctor. If I die before you, which is probable, since I'm old and you're still young, strong, and healthy, I give you my word that I'll come and give you proof of my survival, if I still exist."

Laughing, and in the same jesting way, I answered:

"Then you'll come and manifest yourself by breaking something in this room—for example that gas-fixture above the table. (We were at that moment in my dining-room.) And, to be polite, I added: "I'll pledge myself, too, if I die before you, to come and give you some sign of the same sort, in your house!"

I wish to repeat that all this was said jestingly rather than seriously. We separated, and some days afterward he left for Licata, in the province of Girgenti, where he went to settle down. From that day I had no news of him, either directly or indirectly. This conversation took place in May, 1910.

The following December, the first or the second, toward six o'clock in the evening, I was seated at table with my sister (the two of us compose the household) when our attention was attracted by several slight blows, some of them struck upon the shade of the gas-fixture which hung from the ceiling of the dining-room and some upon the little movable porcelain bell of the smoke-shield above the glass chimney. At first we attributed the tapping to the action of the heat of the flame, which I tried to lessen. But

the blows increased in force, and continued with a sort of rhythmic noise. I then climbed upon a chair, to examine more carefully what was happening, and I ascertained that the phenomenon could not be attributed to the heat of the flame, which was burning at a very usual rate of pressure. Besides, it was not a question of slight popping noises, like those produced as a result of extreme heat, but of sharp taps of a special tone, suggesting blows struck with the knuckles or with a finger ring with which one might knock purposely upon some porcelain object. I sought to discover the cause of these strange blows. To no purpose. Meanwhile we finished dinner and the phenomenon came to an end.

The following evening the same tapping was repeated, as it was on *four or five consecutive days*; this continued to excite our intense curiosity more and more.

But on the last evening a strong, sharp blow split the little swinging bell in two; it remained in this state, hanging by the hook of the metal counterbalance. I could verify this by standing upon the table to observe closely the effect of the last blow. I remember clearly, as does my sister, that even after we had extinguished the central light around which the phenomenon was taking place and had lighted another branch of the chandelier, the blows still continued with equal force.

I must also declare and affirm upon my honor as an honest man that during the course of these five or six days on which was observed the phenomenon which I could not explain, I never once thought of my friend Benjamin Sirchia, and still less of the conversation of the preceding May, which I had entirely forgotten.

The day following the evening when, as I have said, the little porcelain bell split, I was in my study; my sister had gone out on the balcony to look at something or other in the street; the servant had gone out; when we heard, in the dining-room, a *tremendous bang* as though a violent blow with a club had been struck upon the table.

My sister heard it from the balcony, and I from my study: both of us hurried to see what had happened.

It is strange, but however fantastic this occurrence be, I can answer for its truth: on the table, *and as though it had been placed*

*there by a human hand*, we found half of the little movable bell, while the other half was still hanging in its place.

Evidently the violence of the blow was out of proportion to the result. This was the last phenomenon; it brought to a climax the strange happenings which had been repeated during five or six days. It had taken place in broad daylight and without the action of heat.

The half of the porcelain bell could not have fallen to the table perpendicularly, for, since it would have had to pass through the center of the shade, it would have struck the gas-jet and its glass chimney. These must needs have broken beneath the shock, to allow the half-bell of the smoke-shield to pass through freely. But the two objects were quite intact and the empty space was not wide enough to allow for the passage. If the smoke-shield had fallen obliquely upon the porcelain shade, which was rather large, it would have been broken, or would have broken the shade. Or, granting that it slid without breaking, it must of necessity have rebounded to a point far from the center of the table, and not fallen in line with the axis of the gas-fixture.

It follows that the noise was a warning of the accomplished phenomenon, and that the fragment of the bell was placed in such a way as to point to the conclusion that what had happened was not due to an accident—an accident which would, moreover, have been contrary to the law of falling bodies.

I must acknowledge once more that I had absolutely forgotten Sirchia and the pact which we had made in the preceding month of May.

Two days afterward I met Professor Rusci; he said to me, "Did you know that poor Benjamin Sirchia had died?"—"When?" I asked anxiously.—"On one of the last days of November—the twenty-seventh or the twenty-eighth."—I then thought: "The last days of November? Strange! Could the phenomena which happened at my home have some connection with his death?" (The memory of our last conversation, with its peculiar details, had come back to me.) The phenomena began on the first or second of December and continued for five or six days. An attempt to break something connected with the gas-fixture of the dining-room had been agreed on between us, in the month of May, and this manifesta-

tion did not end until the final carrying out of the agreement. A thing equally strange was that when the compact had been carried out in this way, almost as though to signal its fulfilment, a terrific blow informed us of the fact! The intentional carrying of the little bell to a spot where it could not have fallen of itself, in ordinary circumstances, thus eliminating the element of chance, completed this strange manifestation.

Such was my personal experience.

My sister and I have decided to keep, as a souvenir of this unexplained phenomenon, the two fragments of the little bell, among those things which are precious and dear to us.

VICENZO CALTAGIRONE.

Such is the witness's story.

It seems to me logical to draw from his experience the natural conclusion, as we do in the case of an experiment in chemistry or physics, and to state that it proves the following: (1) This friend still existed four, five, six, seven, eight days after his death; (2) he had retained his consciousness, his individuality; (3) he remembered his promise; (4) he was able to fulfil it.

Assuredly, we do not know in what form one may exist after this life, with what faculties our ultimate psychic atoms may be endowed, and how it is possible for them to function materially, mechanically, as in this characteristic example. But the facts are before us. There can be no evasion. To explain them is impossible in the present state of our knowledge, but the impossibility of explanation does not lessen their value in the least. We are, with regard to the study of the psychic world, at the point where Newton was when he was seeking to explain the plan of the physical world, and we may apply here his own method of reasoning. He wrote:

*Things behave as if* bodies attracted each other in direct proportion to the product of their masses and in inverse proportion to the square of their distance apart. How, I do not know."

Let us say, with him: *Things behave as if* the dead man were acting.

Any criticism of the logic of this argument would seem to me of small validity. The old hypothesis of chance coincidences is really no longer tenable. The most thin-spun reasoning leads to nothing. We must either deny the experience or admit that it is inexplicable.

I repeat with Newton: *Things behaved as if* Dr. Caltagirone's friend had kept his promise. That is the true scientific method—not blind, persistent, and systematic denial.

Once again let me state that we do not know how a soul can strike a chandelier, break the little bell of a smoke-shield, and strike a blow, like that of a club,<sup>1</sup> upon a table. These instances exist by hundreds. Those that we have had before our eyes in the first two volumes of this work induce us to think that electrical force comes into play; but the hypothesis leads nowhere, since no one knows what electricity is. Moreover, there are, in nature, unsuspected forces. They may play a preponderant part in these phenomena. It is these forces that we must discover, instead of following the method of certain contemporary savants, who contend that science has a right to explain observed facts only by forces that have already been investigated, without admitting those that are unknown.

I have received a large number of different accounts, from all countries of the world, in all languages, from people of all social classes and of all ages—from that of the most ingenuous and ignorant childhood to years of full power, enlightened by experience and rigid psychological analysis. So numerous are they that it is absolutely impossible for me to doubt manifestations on the part of the dead, under certain conditions, and their survival after death, at least for a certain time.

<sup>1</sup> Is light a body? It acts materially upon Crookes's radiometer, making it turn. It acts upon a photographic plate, decomposing the salts. It may produce a chemical explosion; and so on.

To keep a promise in order to prove to a friend that one still exists after one's last breath, is, plainly, a definite enough indication. What more could we ask?

. The blows, the mechanical movements, the physical phenomena are manifestations of a force emanating from the spirit. We have seen a very great number of examples of them in Volume II—manifestations of a psychic force.

This term "psychic force," which I had brought into vogue in 1865 through the publication of my first short work, "*Les Forces naturelles inconnues*" ("Unknown Natural Forces"), was discussed, and even made fun of a little, by certain writers who were particularly conventional, methodical in their habit of thought, and ultra-prudent. A philosopher,—justly esteemed, moreover, for certain works on the history of astronomy,—Monsieur Th.-Henri Martin, dean of the Rennes faculty of letters, and a member of the Institute,—wrote, among others:

It does not seem necessary to me to discuss seriously the existence of the unknown natural forces which Monsieur Flammarion calls psychic—forces which are supposed to bring about intelligent movements on the part of tables, and the other prodigies attributed to mediums.<sup>1</sup>

The celebrated Rennes professor does not admit the existence of these unknown forces. After a long dissertation on the experiments of Agénor de Gasparin, Thury, and other observers,—experiments he did not understand in the least,—and only as a last resort siding with R. P. Matignon and the partizans of the intervention of the devil, he writes: "I see strong probabilities which might lead one to attribute these marvels in part to illusion and in part to deception."<sup>2</sup> In

<sup>1</sup> Th.-Henri Martin: *Les sciences et la philosophie* (Paris, 1869), p. 438.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, p. 472.

other words: nothing. Such were our authoritative predecessors in this sort of research.

The occurrence of which we have just read is characteristic. To attribute it to unknown human faculties or to chance would seem to me extremely rash. Assuredly, one would have liked to *see* the cause of these purposeful blows. Does one see phantoms? Yes, sometimes. Here is an example, precise and definite. The letter given below was sent me from Lyons on April 25, 1921.

DEAR MASTER:

Allow me to state, first, that in my youth (long ago) I used to laugh heartily when, by chance, those about me spoke of manifestations from the "beyond": I had the skepticism of—let us say the word—imbecility.

My youth passed, maturity came, and if, among the people with whom I found myself, these questions were brought up, I no longer laughed, but I believed no more than before. There was some progress. Well, this is what happened to me personally:

One autumn night (the temperature was already low) I was seated near the fireplace where some logs were burning. Before me was my wife, in an arm-chair; her back was turned to a window opening on the passageway leading to the rooms on the first floor of my house. I was not dreaming I assure you, for I had just run through a treatise on "Electric Transformers" which hardly lent itself to revery. I was, therefore, far from thinking of phenomena of the other world, when my dog, a Pomeranian, lying before the hearthstone, jumped up and began to howl, looking toward the window, then came to lie down, still growling, near my chair.

I looked toward the window quickly, and behind it I saw, silhouetted, a shade. Its contours were delicate; it might have been drawn in soft pencil by Henner. It went toward the door giving into my room. I could not restrain an exclamation. The shade—the light from a fairly distant gas-jet shone through it feebly—came forward slowly. Its manner of walking showed a slight limp, and in spite of myself I cried, "Why, it's Father!"

There were both the bodily contour and the gait of my wife's father, who had died two years before. It was indeed he. I got up hurriedly, threw myself toward the door, opened it abruptly and—nothing!

This could not have been an hallucination. The book which I had just run through and which I still held in my hand did not lend itself to that. Besides, my wife had turned around sharply at my cry, and like me, had perceived this shade, dear to her memory.

When I had entered my room again, my dog had taken refuge under the bed and continued to growl.

Since then I have seen nothing more.

Please accept, dear Master, my admiring homage.

BALLET-GALLIFET,

12 montée du Greillon, Lyons.

(Letter 4462.)

Not all the letters I have received have the value of this last one. The observer is scientifically inclined. His spontaneous experience was duplicated by that of his wife, and—this is not negligible—by the dog's excitement. All this is hardly commonplace.

According to my rule, I wished to make an independent investigation of the incident. Among the persons in Lyons with whom I am in touch, one seemed to me particularly well fitted, by reason of her work and her ability, to assist me in the research: Madame Rougier, my esteemed colleague of the Astronomical Society of France, and of the Metaphysical Institute. I wrote to her, without giving her any details on the subject, to be so good as to go, on some pretext or other, and pay a visit to the author of the preceding communication. I told her to bring the conversation round to the subject of apparitions, and to listen attentively to the personal account which he might give of his experience.

I select the following passages from the answer Madame Rougier so kindly sent:

The letter you did me the honor of sending me arrived this morning (May 2d). I am beginning this reply at five minutes to six, and take pleasure in informing you that my husband and I have just returned from paying a call on Monsieur Ballet-Gallifet. That gentleman received us graciously, and it was not long before he referred to the astounding apparition which he and Madame Ballet-Gallifet saw—the apparition of that lady's father. This is the story he told us:

“At nine o'clock in the evening my wife and I were at home, when suddenly my dog gave tongue on seeing some one enter. It was a man, coming forward slowly. I was struck with astonishment when I recognized my father-in-law, for not only was this person really he, but he even *limped* as he did. My father-in-law was afflicted with lameness. If I had not noticed at once this detail, which made me recognize him from afar, I should have taken up a weapon, thinking him a thief. My wife was also a witness of the ‘apparition.’”

It was your last two books which made Monsieur B.-G. tell of this occurrence which happened fifteen years ago! He is an intellectual, keenly interested in all that has to do with progress, either in science or in art; he seemed to us worthy of being trusted in every respect. Later we shall go and call on his wife, who was not able to appear, because of the short time my husband had at his disposal, but I caught sight of her, though I did not hear her speak.

T. ROUGIER.

(Letter 4470.)

I am now able to state that on May 20th I made a second call. Madame B.-G. whom I had not been able to see the first time, confirmed all the facts related by her husband, and seemed keenly interested in the investigation for which you are insisting on precision in observation. I must add that Monsieur B.-G. also said to us, “The phantom glided rather than walked.”

T. ROUGIER.

(Letter 4514.)

Another letter from Monsieur Ballet-Gallifet gave me the date of his father-in-law's death: March 19, 1904. The oc-

currence described took place in the course of the autumn of 1906. With the additional letter (Number 4484) was a map, which it seems to me superfluous to reproduce.

Judging from the proofs, the apparition cannot be doubted. As we have remarked, its reality is confirmed by the dog's perception of it. To assume in this instance a triple hallucination would be equivalent to denying the reality of all we see before us at every hour of the day.

I am putting this case before my readers directly after the preceding one because of their dissimilarity. It might be objected that the first was coincidence; this objection would not apply to the latter. It is another sort of attestation. What can we suppose in this instance? An hallucination on the part of the narrator, his wife, and the dog? What do you think?

The variety of these manifestations of the dead would lead us to believe in their reality. Here is a third, altogether different. A manifestation as difficult to question as the two preceding ones will be found in the interesting letter which follows. This communication was addressed to me from Ruelle (Charente) on June 9, 1921. I am selecting the essential passages:

The facts you reveal and discuss are, to me, unquestionably true. You have quoted <sup>1</sup> a letter which I wrote you more than twenty years ago after reading "L'Inconnu." All that I have said is absolutely authentic, but it was not that blow and that movement of a curtain coinciding with a death which convinced me that all is not over after death; it was the experience which I shall relate.

I shall tell you upon what my conviction rests; it is not a thing of to-day, for it is a childhood recollection, but it has remained engraved upon my memory, and I see, in thought, the spot where the occurrence took place as though it were yesterday.

It, too, happened in Isère, in Saint-Gervais, where in former days there was a cannon foundry for the navy. We were living in a

<sup>1</sup> *At the Moment of Death*, p. 254.

dwelling provided by the State. My father was a fervent believer in spiritualism; as for me, I was very young and paid no attention to it—all the more so because my father was exceptional in giving himself up to this investigation.

In Rochefort-sur-Mer he had a friend named Cognet the news of whose death *was given him in a letter*.

One evening, after receiving this letter (I do not remember if it was the same day or later) we were in bed. The two beds were in an alcove, the doors of which were open, but, lying as I was, my back was to the two sections of this folding-door; I could, therefore, see nothing in the room giving on the alcove. I was not asleep. I heard my father speaking in a low tone in his bed, and did not understand the words he was uttering. Suddenly I saw a *glow* which made me utter a cry of terror. My father got up and took me into bed with him. The glow persisted; it was a sort of phosphorescent cloud, without definite outlines.

I remember that very well, for I saw it from my father's bed. It is noteworthy that I had been struck by the glow though my back was turned and no mirror<sup>1</sup> could have reflected anything. My father pronounced these words in a loud voice: "If you are Cognet, strike three blows on the chest of drawers." This piece of furniture, marble-topped (it is still in my possession) was in the room giving on to the alcove. Three loud and measured blows were then struck upon the marble of the chest of drawers. Then, little by little, the glow thinned, melted, and I saw nothing more. I do not remember that my father asked other questions; probably he did, but I have no recollection of them.

Well, this simple happening of which I have thought all my life (I reflected upon it later, when I was able to reason) gave me the conviction, the certainty that death does not end all. People have often said in my presence, "After death there's nothing more."—"Yes," I always answer, "there is something."—"What do you know about it?" they ask. I answer: "I *saw*. I saw without wishing to see; I heard, shuddering with fear."

TEXIER,  
Ruelle Foundry, Charente.

(Letter 4528.)

Though there were only two rather vague witnesses of this manifestation, it seems to me that it may be confidently recorded. The recollection of it was precise. My readers are familiar with other, similar examples; for instance, a glow lighting a room, coinciding with a death (Volume II, page 120); the luminous, phosphorescent spot, synchronizing with a comatose condition preceding a father's demise (*idem*, page 134); the luminous aureole surrounding some one dead (*idem*, page 285); an apparition enveloped in a very bright light (*idem*, page 353); the lighting up of a room (*idem*, page 360). This mysterious glow has been perceived rather often; always it came unsought. We are obliged to see in this, as in other similar happenings, a manifestation of some one dead—some one who, in consequence, still existed, as in the case of the chandelier struck by Benjamin Sirchia, who had died eight days before, and the case of the apparition of Madame Ballet-Gallifet's father.

A man who, all his life, has preserved vividly in memory an unforgettable experience, is a witness we should not neglect. These experiences are very varied. Here is a fourth. It is another sort of manifestation and substantiates our first two cases. Is it possible not to give consideration to the following letter, which was sent me from Nantes on March 31, 1921?—possible to suppose that its author fabricated a fantastic tale or had an hallucination?

**MY DEAR MASTER:**

I am forty-two. I love science too much, I have too much interest in all those questions which you are investigating so impartially and so scientifically, and finally—and this should be enough—I have too much esteem and consideration for the savant that you are, to fabricate or exaggerate anything whatsoever.

I was nineteen, and was living in Nantes, where I am at present. I frequented a café where I spent almost all my evenings; I was on very intimate terms with the proprietor. A charwoman used to

come into this café, to do the heavy work. This woman was not married, and was living in a marital relation with a workman from Marseilles, whose given name was Marius. She was a native of Brittany; Keryado was her family name; but we only called her, familiarly, "Mother Marius." She drank a little. These details have their own importance. She was, on the whole, a good sort, kind-hearted, and she had done for me certain small services.

Every week I used to leave Nantes on Saturday evening and spend Sunday on a farm in the very midst of the country-side. One Saturday I left as usual—took leave of the proprietor, of my friends, and said good-by to this same charwoman, who was in excellent health. So, late on Saturday night, I found myself in the country as usual, but I must explain that this time, through exceptional circumstances, I was to remain there for the whole week. The farm-house had two rooms: a kitchen and another room. On Thursday, at one o'clock in the afternoon, I was talking, in the other room, with the young girl of the house. There was no one in the kitchen. The doors and windows were closed. We were talking, when both of us heard a noise in the kitchen, as though the fire-tongs had fallen on to the hearthstone. Out of precaution, thinking that the cat might be getting into the jars of milk, I went to see what it was. There was nothing; everything was shut up. Scarcely had I come back into the room when there was the same noise. I turned. Nothing. Since I had already taken up spiritualism, I said to the young girl, laughing, "It's a spirit, perhaps,"—attaching no importance to my words, however. I then had the idea of using a little round table, with which we had already experimented, and we waited, both of us sitting at it, our hands upon it. Almost immediately we got a communication through rapping, one that was according to the usual alphabetic code. "Is this a spirit?"—"Yes."—"You lived on earth?"—"Yes."—"You knew me?"—"Yes."—"What was your name?"—"Keryado." At this odd name (I did not remember the charwoman's family name) I was about to leave the table, thinking that the reply was pointless, when the young girl said to me, "That's the family name of the charwoman in the café."—"That's true," I answered, and then I began a series of questions. I was unwilling to believe that she was dead, having left her in perfect health only five days before. I asked her for details and

learned that she had been taken ill at eight o'clock on Tuesday evening, that she had been carried to her home, and that she had died at eleven o'clock, of a hemorrhage. I have already said that she drank. (The young girl knew her, but since going to the country a month before had had no news of her.) This happened on Thursday. On Saturday, when I returned to Nantes, as soon as I got out of the train, I went to the café, and there, to my stupefaction, they gave me confirmation of this woman's death and of all the details she had given me.

Such was the experience I had. I have since told it more than twenty times, when the conversation turned on this general subject. Autosuggestion cannot explain it. I had left this woman in perfect health; I had no reason for thinking of her; the girl who was at the little table had not seen her for a month, and was not in correspondence with her.

NEBERRY,

(Letter 4407.)

Nantes.

The customary investigation which I made, after this communication, allows no doubt of its authenticity. Unquestionably, spiritualistic experiments are at least half the time without intrinsic value and reflect naively the mentality of the experimenters, but in this case the manifestation was spontaneous, unexpected, and singularly precise.

The same correspondent became a spiritualist of unalterable conviction, as every observer is convinced of what he has seen, as a mason is sure that the walls which he has built were constructed of stones, and a planter is sure that his fields have yielded him grain. He told me of another occurrence no less remarkable. It concerns a manifestation on the part of a man who committed suicide—one that took place some days after his death. Here is the experience:

My grandparents kept an inn in Bordeaux; sailors were the chief patrons of its restaurant. The captain of a vessel sailing the high seas was in the habit of stopping at this inn whenever he re-

turned from a voyage; he used to spend some days in Bordeaux before rejoining his family in Rochefort.

One day, when he was stopping at the inn, he made the acquaintance, in the city, of a woman of the streets, who stole his pocket-book. Desperate, heartsick at having to go back to his family after this misadventure, he hanged himself from the window-fastening of his room. The next morning, disturbed at not seeing him come down, they went upstairs and the maid found him hanged! The usual formalities were observed, and his family communicated with. Some days afterward my aunt (she told me this story; she is incapable of lying; she is now living in Nantes)—my aunt and the maid were busy putting the captain's room to rights and were talking of him, when suddenly the bedside table was set violently in motion, and the curtains of the bed shook. The maid, terrified, fled to the stairway, and my aunt, frightened, went to hide.

Some time afterward, this same room was occupied by a simple sailor. He had not been told the story (in hotels they try rather to prevent talk of these happenings). Coming in one night, he lighted the candle; it went out. He lighted it once more; again it went out. Thinking there must be a draft (he himself told this story the next day), he went to the window, but it was tightly shut. He lighted the candle once more. It went out still another time. Fear gripped him; he hesitated as to what he should do. Should he go downstairs and tell people what had happened? But it was late; every one was in bed; they would make fun of him, think he had been drinking. He lighted the candle again, and this time it did not go out. He got into bed, and at once the curtains began to shake. The prey of an agitation that may be easily comprehended, he did not sleep, and went down early in the morning to tell what had happened. Then they told him that in that room a captain had committed suicide.

What conclusion must we draw? In my opinion a spirit, a soul—in a word, the captain—manifested itself. What did he wish? Doubtless, something difficult to guess. What do we know about it? Has it not been remarked that persons who have committed suicide have a tendency to return to the scene of their suicide?

G. NEBERRY.

When I asked for an investigation, the author of this narration was good enough to answer:

Nantes, April 14, 1921.

I have been to see my aunt, who was a witness of the phenomena that occurred after the captain's suicide. It was three or four days after the captain's death when, busy making the bed in the room in which this man had killed himself, she saw, as did the maid in the hotel, the bedside table move of itself and make a rather loud noise.

Here I must remark that, while making the bed, the maid talked about the captain; it was at that moment that the phenomenon took place.

And it was five or six days later that the sailor who slept in that room was terrified by his candle going out three consecutive times, and, once he was lying down, by the curtains of the bed moving of themselves. Here is a detail which I had not given you and which my aunt told me: this sailor, according to her account, said that he perceived in a corner of the room a form, a shade which he could not explain.

I am convinced, dear Master, that if all those persons should write to you who have been personal witnesses of the occurrences which you are seeking to elucidate, the sum total of their accounts would fill libraries.

G. NEBERRY.

(Letter 4435.)

This fourth contribution to our proofs of phenomena observed *post mortem* shows us their variety. The case is complex enough. To judge from the information which I have been able to obtain, it is unquestionable. Here is another, still more singular, and rather startling. However, we cannot question it, either. I defy the most skeptical of those who contradict me to explain the following experience, unless they are ready to admit a manifestation on the part of some one dead. The apparition of which we

shall speak came spontaneously, two days after dissolution.<sup>1</sup>

A friend of Gurney, the author, with Myers and Podmore, of that important work "Phantasms of the Living,"—a certain Mr. D—— (who begged Gurney not to reveal his name), was the owner of two factories, one in Glasgow, the other in London. He had in his employ a weak and delicate young boy named Robert Mackenzie who had left him, ill-advisedly, after three years. Some years after his departure the following occurred:

One day, in the street, Mr. D—— remarked a young man who was devouring avidly a bit of dry bread. He looked like a starving man, on the point of dying of hunger. It was Robert Mackenzie. The manufacturer halted, and listened to the words of his former employee—words of deep regret at having left a place which had assured him his daily bread. Mr. D—— consented to take him back. Mackenzie expressed his gratitude with deepest emotion. From that time on, without ever making a show of his feelings, he seemed to live only for his employer. As soon as he caught sight of him, his large, pensive eyes fixed themselves upon him, following all his movements. His protector was the guiding star of his life.

The manufacturer went to live in London, where he forgot, after a time, his Scotch workmen. On a certain Friday evening the workmen gave their annual ball. Robert Mackenzie, who did not mingle much with the others, asked permission to serve in the refreshment-room. Everything passed off well, and the festivities continued into Saturday.

The following Tuesday, a little before eight o'clock, in his house on Campden Hill, Mr. D—— received a manifestation which he sums up as follows:

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research*, 1885, III, 95. Myers, *Human Personality* (1904), II, 52.

I dreamed that I was seated at a desk, engaged in a business conversation with a gentleman whom I do not know, and that Mackenzie came toward me. Irritated, I asked him rather brusquely if he did not see that I was busy. He withdrew with an air of annoyance, then approached again as though requesting an immediate interview. I reproached him, quite harshly, for his lack of tact. Meanwhile the man with whom I was talking took his leave and Mackenzie came forward.

"What does all this mean, Robert?" I asked, rather annoyed. "Did n't you see I was busy?"

"Yes, sir," he answered, "but I must speak to you at once."

"About what? What is it that's so urgent?"

"I wish to tell you, sir, that I am accused of something I did not do. I want you to know, and to pardon me the thing for which people blame me, for I'm innocent." He then added, "I did n't do what they say I've done."

"What's that?" I asked. He repeated the same words. I then asked him, quite naturally, "But how can I pardon you, if you don't tell me what you're accused of?" I shall never forget the emphatic tone of his answer, in Scotch dialect: "*Ye will ken it soon.*" My question was repeated at least twice; I am sure that his reply was repeated three times, in the most earnest way. I then awakened, with a certain uneasiness as a consequence of this strange dream. I was asking myself if it had a meaning, when my wife rushed into my room, greatly agitated, an open letter in her hand. She cried: "Oh, James! something terrible happened at the workmen's ball: Robert Mackenzie committed suicide." Understanding then the meaning of the vision, I answered calmly and firmly, "No, he did not commit suicide."—"How can you know that?"—"He has just told me."

When he appeared to me I had been struck by the strangeness of his appearance. *His face was a livid blue, and on his brow were to be seen spots like drops of sweat.* I did not know what that meant. But this is what had happened. When he had gone home on Saturday night, Mackenzie had taken a bottle containing nitric acid, thinking that it was his bottle of whiskey; he had poured himself out a little glass of it, which he had drunk at one gulp. He had died on Sunday, in terrible agony. It was thought that he had committed suicide. And this was why he had come to say to me

that he was innocent of the accusation against him. Now, it was a remarkable thing—I had not had the slightest idea of it before—in looking up the symptoms which accompany *poisoning by nitric acid*, I saw that they were practically *those which I had perceived on Robert's face*.

It was soon realized that a mistake had been made in attributing his death to suicide. I was informed of this the next day through a letter from my representative in Scotland.

This apparition was due, in my opinion, to the excessive gratitude of Mackenzie, whom I had snatched from a deplorable condition of want, and to his keen desire to stand well in my estimation.

Such is the Glasgow manufacturer's story. The fact that the workman came, after his so-called suicide, to reveal the truth to him—is this not testimony as to survival after death? It is worthy of note that in England suicide is held to be a crime.

The investigation made by the Psychical Society leaves no doubt as to the exactitude of the account which I have just quoted. Certainly, in this case there was a manifestation of some one dead. This can be neither suggestion that remained latent for a certain time,<sup>1</sup> nor chance, nor anything of the sort.

We have, therefore, four bits of personal testimony as to survival, differing absolutely among themselves. To deny them, four different hypotheses would be necessary.

All those who examine this testimony honestly and fully realize that none of us has the right to consider himself justified in denying it; in regarding the narrators as impostors, or mad, or the victims of hallucinations. We must

<sup>1</sup> The hypothesis of suggestion remaining latent for a certain time cannot explain a delay of forty-eight hours. I agree with Myers, the originator of the theory, who has made a closer study than I of the attendant conditions, that suggestion may remain latent only for a few hours. (See *Human Personality*, II, 13.) We cannot admit, either, that there was thought-transmission on the part of the wife, who had read the letter, since this letter announced the suicide.

acknowledge frankly that there is here a whole order of things as yet unknown to scientific investigation. Let us also read the following account. It was sent me from Paris, on June 14, 1921; I was asked to suppress the names.

My young friend Marguerite —, who is now twenty-two, had the misfortune to lose, in the same year (1918), her father, her mother, and her sister Jeanne, aged sixteen. Jeanne, who had always been in perfect health, began to sink soon after her mother's death; her lungs became infected, and after having languished for five or six months, the poor little thing succumbed in her turn.

Marguerite and Jeanne, who loved each other very dearly and were never separated, slept in the same room. Their grandmother had lived with them since the time they became orphans. About two months after their mother's death, Marguerite woke up one morning about five o'clock, and heard a rustling in the room. She opened her eyes and saw a silhouette, clad in black, glide to the foot of her bed, draw near her sister's bed, bend over Jeanne, who was asleep, and kiss her on the brow. Marguerite sat up, gazed more attentively, and said, "Why, it's Mama!" At the same instant the shade stood erect and vanished as it had come. The young girl, deeply affected, got up noiselessly, that she might not disturb her sister,—already ailing at that time,—and ran to her grandmother's room. Her grandmother was sleeping soundly. She awakened her and asked, "Mémé, was it you who came and kissed Jeanne, in her bed?" And she told her what she had just seen. "No, dear," her grandmother answered; "I did n't stir; you've been dreaming. Go back to bed quickly, and sleep two whole hours longer."

Marguerite went back to her room, trying to persuade herself that she had been dreaming. But as she was getting back into bed her sister awakened and said to her: "Oh, what a pity that you woke me up! I was so happy! While I was asleep Mama came and kissed me. She was dressed in black, as she's always been since Papa died; she brushed against the foot of your bed, then she came toward me. She bent over, and I felt her kiss me on the forehead." Marguerite then told her of her vision.

How shall we explain this vision, if it was not the real presence,

in her children's room, of this mother, dead for two months, who had come back to place a kiss on the brow of her daughter who was soon to join her? Was it a physiological, spiritual, or astral presence? I do not know, but it was an indubitable presence, perceptible to the eyes of the girl who was awake, and to the sensibilities of her who was asleep.

Marguerite still had tears in her eyes when she gave me the details of this scene. She is a healthy, robust young girl, very alert, straightforward, and spontaneous, highly intellectual, and not in the least predisposed to morbid imaginings.

MADAME CORNEILLE.

(Letters 4542 and 4575.)

My correspondence with the narrator showed me that the foregoing account was well founded.

Always to put forward hallucinations as an explanation of these phenomena is no longer in accord with our actual observation. There were in this case two absolutely independent witnesses, since one of the two sisters was awake and the other asleep. Just as, in the preceding case, young Mackenzie manifested himself beyond a doubt, so the actuality of the apparition of the two young girls' mother must be admitted with the same conviction. Let us remember that time and space are not what they seem to us. The mother of these two young girls may have manifested herself without really having been there.

The hypothesis of hallucination is, certainly, no more tenable in the following case: a child of twelve seeing his dead father and dying in his turn.

Tommy Brown was a poor boy, twelve years old, belonging to a numerous and destitute family. His health was shattered; he was stretched on a hospital bed. His father had died, two years before, in a bed near this one.

On a certain night he said to his mother, "Mamma, there's Father."

"No, dear," his mother answered; "there's no one there."

"Yes there is! Why, don't you see him near the bed? Speak to him."

She saw nothing, and the nurse saw nothing.

"What's your papa doing?" the mother asked, at length.

"He's looking at you." And, a moment afterward: "He's looking at me, and beckoning me to follow him, so he can take me away with him."

While speaking to those near her, the mother remarked that the little boy's father had been dead for two years. The child heard this and said:

"No, he's not dead, since he's there and beckoning to me with his hand. He's calling me; he's calling me."

Talking in this way, the child lost consciousness. He died some days later.<sup>1</sup>

MRS. CHAMBERS,  
Volunteer nurse.

A child's ingenuous testimony is as valid as the testimony of a man.

In the following pages rather a large number of analogous occurrences will pass before our eyes. The souls of the dead exist, see, hear, manifest themselves. The chapters about to be read will offer abundant proof of this.

These attested cases do away with a frequent cause for sadness. The methods of present-day science can establish their truth, but cannot as yet explain them. If photography had not been invented, we should not know that light can stamp upon a plate images which remain latent, invisible, until a chemical poured upon the plate causes them to appear. It may be that the influence of the dead upon our brains gives rise to images, to phantoms, only under certain physical and psychic conditions.

Despite their relative infrequency, manifestations of the dead are, as a matter of fact, numerous and varied. There are all sorts of them. Here is an eighth example, a partic-

<sup>1</sup> *Light*, 1915, p. 502; *Luce e Ombra*, 1919; *Annales psychiques*, 1919.

ularly odd apparition described in Myers's work "Human Personality" (Volume II, page 27).<sup>1</sup> It was told, first hand, to Professors Royce and Hodgson.

The narrator stated that his sister, a young woman of eighteen, had died suddenly of cholera, in Saint Louis, in 1867. On a trip to the United States in 1876—that is to say, nine years afterward—he was busy in his room one day, toward noon, writing orders, and was smoking an excellent cigar, when he thought he saw some one sitting at his left, with one arm on the table. At once he turned in that direction and saw his sister. Instantly he had a feeling of happiness, for he had been devoted to her and had infinitely regretted her loss. But she vanished at once. He asked himself if he had been dreaming; but his cigar in his mouth, his pen in his hand, the ink still wet upon the paper proved to him that, undoubtedly, he was wide awake. To him she had appeared absolutely alive; her eyes had gazed at him with great calmness.

This vision had impressed him so intensely that he took the train at once, that he might go and tell his family of it. His father made fun of him, calling him the dupe of an hallucination, and people listened to him only with incredulity and skepticism. But in describing the vision as it had appeared to him, he mentioned a scratch on the right side of the face, which had appeared to him fresh and recent. His mother was so struck with this detail that she fell in a faint. When she regained consciousness, she declared that she herself had made the scratch on her daughter when she was arranging her burial robes; that afterward she had hidden it by covering it with powder, and that no one in the world could know of it. Her son's vision, therefore, proved to her incontestably the authenticity of the apparition, and she saw in it, at the same time, an announcement of her early death, which came, indeed, two weeks later.

The narrator adds that the impression made on him by the sudden apparition of his sister, seemingly so absolutely alive,

<sup>1</sup> See, also, *Proceedings of the S. P. R.*, VI, 17, and *Annales psychiques*, 1909, p. 325.

was stronger than that made by all the other happenings of his life put together. The clear sunshine which lighted up his room, his contentment with life, the fact that his business was doing well, that a cigar was in his hand, that his state of mind was alert—everything proved to him that the hypothesis of an hallucination was inadmissible.

This, too, is my conviction. All would seem to point to its being well founded, despite possible objections. For example, Mr. Podmore, who does not admit the reality of apparitions, and thinks that he can explain them as thought-transmission, elects to believe that precisely at the moment of this manifestation the dead girl's mother thought of her daughter, of the scratch, and that her idea *was transmitted, afar, to her son*. This hypothesis involves, really, too many suppositions for it to be acceptable. Why should she have thought of all this precisely nine years afterward? And why should the idea have reached her son, on a business trip? We think, also, of the possibility of a sudden optical illusion on the part of the dead girl's brother. But (1) he was not thinking of her; (2) he did not know that the scratch existed. Is it not simpler to admit the reality of the apparition?

We have just said that manifestations of the dead are as varied as they are numerous, and that there are all kinds of them. Here is still another one, particularly remarkable.

It is usually difficult to separate the testimony for survival after death from psychological factors in the minds of the living, and to be certain that some one dead is the undeniable cause of manifestations. The case which we shall now examine seems to me to fall into this category. It was revealed through the valued work of the Nancy Society for Psychical Investigation.

Monsieur P. Bossan, accountant of the telegraph company in Grenoble, wrote me on July 28, 1920:

In the pages which I shall put before your eyes, I declare that all is scrupulously veracious. I am the surviving husband of Augustine Chabert, and I authorize you to make what use you wish of these documents, in view of the service you are doing humanity. I am giving you all the proper names, only some of which were published in the "Nancy Bulletin."

Here is, first, an extract from the official report of the first spiritualistic séance, which took place on January 29, 1913. The witnesses speaking are natives of Nancy; their depositions were summed up by the secretary in these words:

"The table made a few movements, after which the name *Albert Revol* was dictated. We asked this 'entity' if it could prove its identity. By spirit rapping we were told that Revol had been dead for two years; that he had died at the age of fifty-four; that he had lived in Pontcharra (Isère) in the Grande-Rue; had followed the trade of tailor; was married and the father of three children. One of them, Eugène, aged twenty, was in the same trade in which he had been.

"These details," the secretary added, "interested us all the more from the fact that none of us was familiar with the Province of Dauphiné. Only one of the participants had crossed the Department of l'Isère by rail at a time long past, but suspected no more than any of the other persons present the existence of Pontcharra, and still less that of the Revol family.

"'I died suddenly,' the mysterious, unknown being continued, 'and I am still uneasy!' We insisted on details. He added: 'I have two daughters, Hélène and Henriette. I was not buried there. My earthly remains lie in Grignon. It was my native place.'

"We knew only one Grignon, in Seine-et-Oise. We remarked to Revol that this place is very far from Pontcharra.

"'No, it's very near. I still have my mother. She is living near us, in Grignon.'

"This seemed to us unlikely. If the mother of the spirit Revol were living near her son, it could not be at Grignon. We asked Revol to whom we could address ourselves in order to verify these assertions. He answered: 'Write to Madame Goudon.' Then: 'No, I'm afraid of falsehood; write to the parish priest instead; he

knows me; you must not tell him why you are writing, or speak of spirits. Speak of the family.'

"I wrote to the town clerk in Pontcharra, asking him for the death certificate of this Revol. I requested him to tell me of what illness he had died; what his profession was; if he had left children; their names and ages. I received the following death certificate:

"COMMUNE OF PONTCHARRA  
*"Registry Office of Births, Marriages and Deaths.  
 "Death Certificate.*

"Upon the register of births, marriages, and deaths of the parish of Pontcharra, canton of Goncelin, Department of the Isère, it is recorded that Revol (François-Antoine-Albin), son of the deceased François and Gaillard (Adèle), a widower by his first marriage with Billaz (Elisa-Joséphine), the husband, by his second marriage, of Goudon (Philomène-Léontine), died in this commune on March sixth, nineteen hundred and eleven, and that his death was recorded that same day in the town hall of the said commune, number 75.

"Pontcharra, February 4, 1918.

*"The Registrar of Births, Marriages and Deaths:  
 "FAUTIER."*

"Thus, Revol had really lived, and had been dead for two years. He had married a Mademoiselle Goudon. The existence of Madame Goudon was confirmed; her name had been mentioned as that of some one able to give information.

"The certificate was accompanied by a letter from which the following has been taken:

"Pontcharra, February 4, 1918.  
 "DEPARTMENT OF THE ISÈRE  
*"District of Grenoble  
 "Pontcharra Town Hall*

"I found no Revol (Albert), but only Revol (François-Antoine-Albin), who died suddenly in Pontcharra on March 6, 1911.

"This Revol was a merchant tailor, and he left three children born of a former marriage. These children are:

"(1) Revol (Eugène Isidore)

"(2) Revol (Marie-Hélène-Lucie-Blanche)

"(3) Revol (Henriette-Marie-Philomène)

"Monsieur Revol died, as I told you, suddenly,—of an embolia of the heart, I believe,—without having had any illness.

"(Signed) FAUTIER."

"It appears from this letter that Revol had really been a merchant tailor, and that he had three children whose sex and Christian names had been given with precision. There is a difference in Revol's Christian name: Albin instead of Albert. I must remark that this given name had been dictated by means of the table, and

all those who have experimented by this method know that people have an annoying habit of wishing to end a word before the dictation has been completed, in order to save time.

"I wrote once more to the town clerk in Pontcharra, asking him to tell me at what age Revol had died and what street he had lived in; I also asked him to clear up a point as to which we were intensely curious: the spot where Revol had been buried. For in spite of my investigation I had been able to discover no parish with the name of Grignon other than the one in Seine-et-Oise.<sup>1</sup> I received the following answer:

"Pontcharra, February 19, 1913.

"MY DEAR SIR:

"In reply to your letter of the sixteenth of this month, I wish to inform you that Monsieur Revol died at the age of fifty-four. While alive, he lived in our city, in the Grande-Rue, and he was buried in the cemetery of Grignon parish, in the commune of Pontcharra.

"While on this subject, I must tell you that our commune is divided into two parishes, each of which has its cemetery.

"(Signed) FAUTIER."

"The mystery of Grignon was thus cleared up. Revol had been absolutely right in telling us that he had been buried in Grignon, the name of one of the parishes of Pontcharra. This letter also confirms the age which he had given us as his own age, at his death, and the fact that he dwelt in the Grande-Rue.

"My investigation established the truth of all information given by 'the spirit Revol' to make known its identity."

Such is the account of the zealous secretary of the Nancy Society.

At another séance, on the fifth of the following March, the communication given below was revealed by a writing medium and not by rapping:

"I am a friend of Revol. I lived two centuries ago. I grew to know him in the Beyond, for I came from the same region. Chabert is my name."

"Have you any descendants?"

"Yes, they live in Grenoble. They are my grandnephews. I watched over my grandniece closely. I protected her, but she died, and I can tell you where her grave is."

<sup>1</sup> I myself know of another one, Grignon near Montbard (Côte-d'Or), where I inaugurated the observatory of Dom Damey, in 1890. C. F.

"What was her name?"

"She was named Marie-Augustine Chabert."

"Was she married? Is her husband still living? If he is, what is his name? What is his profession?"

"Paul Bossan. He is a clerk in the Grenoble post office."

"How long has your niece been dead?"

"For about three years. I haven't yet a precise idea of time. She lived in the Nouveau Jardin School, a boarding-school."

"How old was she when she died?"

"Forty-three, I believe."

"What did she die of?"

"She suffered for a long time; I see, principally, her diseased stomach."

"Had she any brothers and sisters?"

"Yes, but I don't see them; I go, chiefly, to her grave."

"What sort of grave is it?"

"A very simple stone, standing upright. It bears the inscription: Marie-Augustine Chabert, wife of Bossan, died in her forty-third year."

"Was she buried in Grenoble?"

"No, in Chatte."

"This name, as that of a commune, seemed strange to us. We persisted: 'Aren't you making a mistake? Is it possible that there is a district called Chatte?'"

"Yes, her grave is there."

"We asked the spirit to make an effort and to tell us about Augustine Chabert's brothers and sisters. He said that he found difficulty in doing this. At length he added:

"There is Elie. He is in Lans. There is also Isabelle; she is not married; she is a teacher in a district."

"Which one?"

"I can't tell; it's a compound word. There is Monsieur Naud; he is a relative. There is Eugénie-Henri Chabert; there is also a canon; they are people who are very well off. You must all think of Augustine, to hasten her liberation. You must tell the superintendent of the cemetery to put flowers on her grave, for she loved them dearly."

"We asked further questions as to his identity, but the spirit Chabert said to us: 'You don't need all that in order to put flowers on her grave.' And he left us.

"After this unexpected communication, we consulted a gazetteer, that we might find out if the commune of Chatte existed and if there were a Lans in the Isère. All was confirmed. The Grenoble Town Hall sent the following quotation from Madame Bossan's death certificate:

"Upon the register of births, marriages, and deaths of the city of Grenoble, it appears that Marie-Augustine Chabert, married to Joseph-Eugène-Paul Bossan, died in Grenoble on July 7, 1911.

"Grenoble, March 26, 1913.

"We had, therefore, through this document, confirmation of the fact that Augustine Bossan had really existed; that she had been married to Monsieur Paul Bossan and that she died at the address given. The location of the tomb was not revealed, nor how long it had been there."

The judicious, conscientious secretary of the Nancy Society thought that he could easily obtain the additional information by writing to the town hall in Chatte. He wrote, therefore, to the town clerk, asking him to be so good as to send Augustine Bossan's death certificate, details as to her family, her grave, etc. Here is a quotation from the reply he received:

"Chatte, April 15, 1913.

"MONSIEUR THOMAS,

"Secretary of the Nancy Society for Physical Investigation:

"... Enclosed is Madame Bossan's marriage certificate; it takes the place of a birth certificate, since it contains all the information to be found in the latter.

"Madame Bossan's grave: The tombstone is upright upon a vault. It faces the south, and stands beside the path in the middle of the cemetery. The inscription reads: 'Madame Paul Bossan, née Chabert, head-mistress of the boarding school of Jardin-de-Ville, in Grenoble, 1867-1911.'

"Madame Bossan died in Grenoble, in July, 1911, and was buried in Chatte, at that same time.

"She was born in Lans, a commune of the canton of Villard-de-Lans (Isère). She had, in fact, two brothers: one, *Hélie*, who is now a landowner in Lans, and the other *Amédée*, who was a road-surveyor in Voiron.

"She had three sisters: one, *Isabelle*, who was first a lay teacher, then a nun in the convent of the Ursulines, in Tullins (Isère), and is now a lay teacher in La Buisse, near Voiron (Isère).

"Another: *Sophie*, the wife of *Naud*, a landowner in Beaulieu (Isère). And finally, a third, *Eugénie*, married to Henri Chabert, her first cousin.

"The Town Clerk:

"DREVONT."

*"Marriage Certificate"*

"On August 19, 1891, were married in our commune Monsieur Joseph Eugène-Paul Bossan, born in the commune of Chatte on September 23, 1865, son of, etc. . . . and Mademoiselle Marie Augustine Chabert, born in the commune of Lans, on December 10, 1867, daughter of, etc. . . .

"Saint-Marcellin, April 15, 1913.

*"The Mayor: NACRAIRE."*

"These statements confirm the information given by the spirit Chabert, almost in its entirety. His niece, Augustine Chabert, was indeed married to Monsieur Paul Bossan, post-office clerk. She had died when head-mistress of the boarding-school of the Jardin de Ville-de-Grenoble, and was buried in Chatte. The upright stone bears an inscription differing in its wording from that given by the spirit Chabert. This is not surprising, since the spirit had warned us that he could not be exact.

"According to the writing on the tombstone and the marriage certificate, Augustine Chabert died at the age of forty-four, or, to be more exact, at the age of forty-three and a half, since she was born on December 10, 1867, and died on July 7, 1911. The spirit Chabert had said she was forty-three.

"We learn, too, that Augustine really had a brother named Hélié, who was living in Lans; a sister Isabelle, unmarried, and a teacher in La Buisse, a compound word which Chabert had not been able to give; another sister married to a Monsieur Naud, who was, as a matter of fact, a relative, since he had married a sister of Augustine. While giving the names, the spirit Chabert had added: 'There is also *Eugénie-Henri Chabert*.' We find the explanation of this bit of information in the letter from the town clerk, stating that the third sister, Eugénie, had married her cousin, *Henri Chabert*.

"All the details given by the spirit Chabert were thus confirmed.

"We had only to find out, then, what disease Augustine had died of, and if she had a relative who was a canon.

"This information was fully and exactly given."

The upshot of these revelations was to put the Nancy Psychical Society in touch with Monsieur Paul Bossan.

As my readers already know, Augustine Chabert's surviving husband wrote me himself, especially to call my at-

tention to these odd happenings. Since, by the positive method, we must always seek in the minds of the living what might be attributed to those minds, I made the remark that the president of the Nancy Psychical Society, Colonel Collet, was a native of the Province of Dauphiné, and knew the region. I was told that he had not been present at these two séances, which took place at the home of a native of Nancy, with a special group. Nevertheless I wished for more precise information, and I asked Monsieur Bossan, in Grenoble, for further information. His reply, of August 2, 1920, follows:

Colonel Collet did not know my family nor my wife's family *at all*.

During his very short annual visits to Madame Vacher (Grenoble) he never met my poor dead wife at the latter's home.

Monsieur Léon Vacher will, if necessary, corroborate this statement. He is the son of Madame Vacher (who died about fifteen days ago). He lives at number 32, avenue Félix-Viallet, in Grenoble. And it will be corroborated as unreservedly by Madame Collet, who survives her husband (8 rue Sergeant-Bobillot, in Nancy).

As may be readily understood, all this information gave me a feeling of complete certainty.

A letter dated July 28, 1920, ended as follows: "On June 20, 1898, at 10:50, I had the honor of greeting the author of 'Stella' at the little window of the telegraph office in Grenoble, and of shaking hands with him." My correspondent is, therefore, not a total stranger to me. At this date, 1898, already far in the past, the events which have just been related were still dormant in the unknown future.

But what is time?

And this Chabert, dead for two hundred years, Madame Bossan's great-great-uncle, who made the acquaintance, in the other world, of his compatriot of the nineteenth century, Revol, who came to tell experimenters in Nancy that his

grandniece was buried in the Province of Dauphiné in a commune unknown to those who were present, as was the commune first mentioned: Grignon, in the Isère!

Can telepathic transmission from the living to the living explain all that?

Monsieur Bossan concludes, from this long discussion:

(1) That two entities, Revol and Chabert, grew to know each other in the Beyond.

(2) That the entity Chabert was interested in his great-great-niece, while she was alive (my poor dead wife) and that he is still protecting her.

(3) That this entity described exactly the location of the gravestone, and spoke with accuracy of the husband, children, brothers, sisters, and uncle of my dear wife.

The accuracy is, in general, so striking that, on the advice of friends, who are also your readers, I think I should inform you of this disturbing and extraordinary communication from the Beyond, believing that it will command your attention.

PAUL BOSSAN,  
Grenoble.

How can we refuse to ponder with especial care my estimable correspondent's conclusions?

It is altogether natural that we should seek to explain phenomena by means of human faculties, known or unknown. This is, in fact, what a contemporary author, Monsieur Paul Jagot, desirous of solving psychic problems, has had in mind in a recent work of scientific analysis.<sup>1</sup> He even reaches a definite conclusion in the matter, for we may read on page 221: "In these occurrences I see absolutely nothing which could not be explained by the functioning of the medium's own psychic faculties." He gives in this connection remarkable examples of seeing into the past, of instantaneous mathe-

<sup>1</sup> *Méthode scientifique moderne de magnétisme, hypnotisme, suggestion* (Paris, 1920).

matical calculations, of thought-reading. Well, I admit that I do not at all see how the Nancy medium could have divined the existence of those who had died, unless we formulate a random hypothesis bolder than the spiritualistic interpretation. It seems to me, moreover, that theories which exclude all but a given number of facts are applicable but rarely to these transcendental investigations.

On the contrary, occurrences of the sort which we have just given in detail, as well as the eight examples put before the eyes of readers as the brief, initial inquiry of this volume, would lead us to grant the reality of survival after death and to think, also, that the life beyond the grave is a continuation of this life. We may, it is true, suppose that minds other than ours exist, minds which know these things; but this would be a much more complex hypothesis.

In meditating upon the state of the soul after death, we regret at times that, whatever this state be, it is our destiny no longer to possess the organs which allow us to enjoy life: the eyes with which we gaze upon the splendors of nature, glorious sunsets, sublime starry nights, woods, mountains, valleys, brooks, rivers, seas; the sense of smell which allows us to perceive the fragrance of growing things on sweet summer evenings, the cut grass, the mown hay; ears charmed by the twittering birds, by the thousand sounds of living nature. We know that we shall no longer have a retina, nor auditory nor olfactory nerves. We dread the loss of all these organs of perception, and ask ourselves what an immaterial spirit can feel.

When, on a beautiful summer day, we have followed the coffin of a dearly loved friend to the cemetery and seen it lowered into the grave, and when, returning to every-day life, we gaze at the country-side lighted by the glad radiance of a splendid sun, we reflect that this friend is under the earth, in the tomb, that his eyes are closed forever and will no longer see this grateful, tender light. This stretch of

country, these trees, these prairies, these fields, these villages, are bathed in radiant beams which no longer exist for him. But a few days before, his eyes were enchanted. To-day, all is over. As a matter of fact, this impression is erroneous. The soul sees, hears, thinks, remains in touch with this terrestrial world. Psychic phenomena have shown us, in Volumes I and II of this work, that *vision without eyes, by the spirit*, exists even during terrestrial, material life; that will power functions without words; that telepathic transmission of thought is indubitable. Those phenomena which we have presented from the beginning of Volume III show us, besides, that the souls of the dead see and hear without the bodily organs of sight and hearing.

How many times have I not read these sentences, marked by traces of tears, in the letters of heartbroken women: "I cannot live without him. Our two souls were one. My mind is torn. Oh, this separation! I am religious. I believe. I hope. But I do not know! If I only knew that he sees me and that he sees his children!"

I have always replied: "Human beings survive death, and souls which love each other are not separated. Those who are invisible are not absent."

As for the explanation, as for the conditions under which manifestations occur—these I do not know.

It is extremely difficult, on this strange planet of ours, to be frank and honest. From the first page of the first volume of the present work I have been declaring that my sole object is to collect *observed facts* and to draw conclusions only from positive proofs; that there is here a new science to be established: psychic science, established upon the same experimental foundations as the so-called exact sciences. Several critics have reproached me with not having drawn conclusions speedily enough; with indecision as to the interpretation of certain facts. Instead of understanding the necessity for this method, they confuse the most unlike phenomena: sub-

stance-production with thought-transmission, the living with the dead. They declare that one should not grant the existence of that which one is incapable of explaining. Indeed, to a few of these critics, all the cases cited prove nothing; nothing at all. *Margaritas ante porcos!* Why do the blind busy themselves with problems of optics when it is so easy to do nothing? If, for example, I declare that it is now impossible for any savant, whoever he be, to divine how some one dead, or even some one alive who is dying a thousand kilometers away, can strike blows upon your window or your table, I do not see why the absence of an explanation should justify any one in declaring that there is here only illusion. In vain we pile up occurrences scrupulously observed; the work accomplishes nothing. People, with one voice, repeat this piece of stupidity: "It is not possible; therefore, it is not true."

We should be in error, mark you, if we thought that there were neither hallucinations nor chance coincidences at times. As for me, I bear in mind, constantly, the usual objections. The scientific method is to consider all, to weigh all. It is none the less true that manifestations of the dead remain indubitable.

The examples I have just elucidated before the jury of my readers can, it seems to me, leave no doubt in any unfettered mind, desirous of learning the truth. No doubt can remain that, in certain circumstances and under observation, the dead have manifested themselves, and have thus proved that they are not really dead. Thinkers have long known this. But we may repeat, one and a half centuries after him, what the philosopher Immanuel Kant wrote, saying once more virtually what Cicero had already said, approximately two thousand years before him:

Philosophy, which does not fear to compromise itself by investigating all sorts of futile questions, is often most perplexed when

it finds in its path certain facts that it cannot *doubt* with impunity, and that it cannot *believe* without making itself ridiculous. Such is the case with tales of ghosts. There is, indeed, no reproach to which philosophy is more sensitive than that of credulity and of belief in common superstitions. Those who claim cheaply the name and eminence of savants make fun of all that which, inexplicable to the savant as well as to the ignorant man, puts both of them upon the same level. As a result of this, ghost-stories are always listened to in privacy but disavowed publicly. We may be sure that an academy of science will never choose a like theme as a subject of competition; not that each of its members is convinced of the futility and falsity of these accounts, but because laws of prudence put discreet limits upon the investigation of such questions. Ghost-stories will always find *secret* believers and will always be regarded *in public* with well-bred incredulity.

As for me, my ignorance of the manner in which the human spirit enters this world and of that in which it leaves this world forbids me to deny the truth of the various stories that are current.

To-day, we may all think as did the author of the "Critique of Pure Reason" and not reject with unjustifiable disdain ghost-stories such as the example I have just given. It is noteworthy that in France the Academy of Sciences no longer rules out such subjects of inquiry, and that it even offers an annual prize (the Emden prize) for works concerned with these great problems. The "ghost-stories" discussed in this chapter are no longer disdained. They may, however, have amazed more than one reader. We shall have many others before our eyes! I shall give them according to that classification which is most logical and most helpful for our study. It seems to me that it will be interesting to relate first, with especial emphasis, accounts of the dead who have manifested themselves after taking an oath and making a promise.

## II

### THE DEAD WHO HAVE RETURNED ACCORDING TO PREVIOUS AGREEMENTS

I see without fear the grave, with its  
    everlasting shadows;  
For I know that the body finds a prison  
    there,  
But the soul finds wings!

VICTOR HUGO.

WE have already come upon manifestations of this sort, in Volume II of the present work. A case in point is the precise account given by Mademoiselle Ximenez de Bustamante (pages 341-343). We asked ourselves whether the young girl who came so suddenly to announce her death to her friend had already died, or were still on this side of the barrier. We read, too (pages 113-116), of the apparition which showed itself to Countess Kapnist, in St. Petersburg—that of a friend who had promised to come back, and who appeared even before he was dead. We shall devote here a special chapter to manifestations in fulfilment of promises, thus showing the survival, after death, of the soul, and the persistence of memory. The chapter which we have just read offers the first case of posthumous fulfilments of promises—that of the friend of Dr. Caltagirone of Palermo, striking, as he had promised, the chandelier in the dining-room. Such bits of testimony are numerous, and our only difficulty is the selection of those to be investigated.

One of the most remarkable apparitions of the collection which I have long been making is that of Lord Brougham's friend. The story of it was related by this eminent personage himself.

The men of my generation had opportunities to see this fine-looking old man, either in Paris or in Cannes, where he died in 1868. (He was born in Edinburgh in 1778.) Lord Brougham wrote his autobiography and published the following quotation from it on October 16, 1862. No doubt has ever been cast on the exactitude of the recollection.<sup>1</sup> The event took place in December, 1799; the future politician and celebrated English historian was then only twenty-one, and was making a trip through Sweden. He writes:

The weather was cold. Upon arriving in Gottenburg, at an attractive-looking inn, I asked for a hot bath, and while taking it I had such an odd adventure that I wish to tell of it from the beginning.

I had had a school friend, in high school, named G——, whom I particularly loved and esteemed. At times we discussed the great subject of the immortality of the soul. One day we were foolish enough to draw up a contract, written in our blood, stating that whichever of us two should die first, that one should return and manifest himself to the other in order to banish any doubt that he might have had as to the continuation of life after death. G—— left for India, and I virtually forgot his existence.

I was then, as I say, in my bath, in delicious enjoyment of the grateful heat that warmed my numbed limbs, when, preparing to rise, I cast my eyes upon the chair on which I had put my clothing, and what was my stupefaction to see my friend G—— seated there, gazing at me calmly! How I got out of the bath-tub I cannot say, for when I came to myself I found myself stretched out on the floor. This apparition, or whatever the phenomenon was which was a likeness of my friend, was no longer there. So strongly was I impressed that I wished to write down, without delay, all the details together with the date, which was December 19th.

Lord Brougham adds that upon his return to Edinburgh he found a letter from India, telling him of the death of his friend, which occurred on December 19th.

<sup>1</sup> See *Phantasms of the Living* (1886), I, 395; *Life and Times of Lord Brougham* (1871), p. 201.

In his account the learned writer states that he had in this instance a dream which, despite its characteristic exactitude, can have coincided only by chance with his friend's death. But in telling of it Myers remarks, justly, that the description of the bath and of the incident are not in accord with this hypothesis. We might suppose it an illusion produced by the arrangement of the garments thrown over a chair; but the friend's gaze? Was it an hallucination? No, for Lord Brougham declares that during his long life he had never had a single hallucination. We are led to believe, in this case, in the influence of the dead man's soul on his friend's mind, an influence which took the form of an image.

In the present state of our knowledge of psychic phenomena, we must ask ourselves if the apparition appeared at the moment of death or after it. The occurrence took place on December 19th, about two o'clock in the morning (or perhaps on December 20th). The friend died, in India, on December 19th. At what time? We do not know; but we know that the farther east one is, the later is the hour. The probabilities are that there was a more or less long interval after the demise. We can readily understand that Lord Brougham dared not take a definite stand, and took refuge in the hypothesis of a dream—a hypothesis, however, in which there is little probability. We think, naturally, that if we had before our eyes but a single case of this sort, we, too, should doubt. But there are so many! And at every period of time!

We have only to skim through ancient treatises on psychic phenomena to come upon experiences similar to that of Lord Brougham. Let us open, for example, Don Calmet's book, published in 1746: "*Dissertations sur les apparitions des anges des démons et des esprits et sur les revenants*" ("*Dissertations upon Apparitions of Angels, Demons, and Spirits, and upon Ghosts*"). In Chapter XLVI, Part II (page 375),

we find under the heading "Persons who have promised one another to give, after their death, news of the other world," the following lines:

The Marquis of Rambouillet's story, told after the death of the Marquis of Pr  cy, is famous. The two noblemen were discussing the after life, as men who were not entirely convinced of all that is said of it. They promised each other that the first of the two who should die would appear and bring news of the death, to the other. The Marquis of Rambouillet left for Flanders, where war was then being waged, and the Marquis of Pr  cy remained in Paris, kept there by a severe fever. Six weeks afterward, he heard the curtains of his bed being drawn. Turning to see who it was, he perceived the Marquis of Rambouillet in a buff-jacket and boots. He rose from his bed to embrace him, but Rambouillet, stepping back several paces, told him that he had come to fulfil his promise; that all that was said of the other life was true; that he (Pr  cy) should change his way of life; that he would soon die. Pr  cy again made an effort to embrace his friend, but his arms closed on nothing but air. Then Rambouillet, seeing that he did not believe what he had said, showed him the spot where he had received a musket wound in the back, from which the blood still seemed to be flowing.

Pr  cy received soon afterward, by letter, confirmation of the Marquis of Rambouillet's death. When fighting in the civil war, he was, himself, killed in the battle of Faubourg Saint-Antoine.

It is probable that the story was more or less changed and rearranged, especially as regards the phantom's words. But it is probable, also, that it was not made out of whole cloth. One finds it again in a book by Collin de Plancy, written to combat credulity and superstition.<sup>1</sup> After having given it, with even more details, he adds:

While admitting the truth of all the circumstances connected with the happening, one can, however, draw no conclusion in favor

<sup>1</sup> *Dictionnaire infernal* (Paris, 1826), IV, 344.

of ghosts. It is not difficult to understand that the Marquis of Précý's imagination, heated by fever and troubled by the memory of the promise which Rambouillet and he had made each other, should have conjured up the phantom of his friend. He knew this friend was in the army and in danger of being killed at any moment; perhaps he even knew that there was to be a battle with the enemy that day. The circumstances connected with the Marquis of Rambouillet's wound, and the prediction of Précý's death, which was realized, must be taken more seriously. Nevertheless, those who have felt the power of presentiments may easily conceive that the Marquis of Précý's mind, disturbed by the heat of the malady, followed the fortunes of his friend in all the hazards of war; that Précý lived in constant expectation of having his friend's phantom announce what must happen to him; that Précý foresaw that the Marquis of Rambouillet would be killed by a musket shot in the back, and that the battle-ardor which he himself felt would lead to his own death at the first encounter. Before believing in occurrences which are outside the natural course of events, we must have certain proof; and in this case we have neither witnesses nor records nor historians that are worthy of entire confidence.

This reasoning is most sagacious, and it is in accordance with this just estimate of things that we are faithful to-day, in our inquiry, to the exactions of the experimental method. Investigation must verify the truth of the facts related. But let us not reject all these accounts by dismissing the cases, though we should, above all, see to it that we accept the facts only for what they are worth. That is why it is important, in our personal investigation, to compare all observations, without prejudice.

It is noteworthy that people take advantage of every loophole: Lord Brougham's is a "dream"; Collin de Plancy's is a "presentiment." Let us remain free!

Perhaps it was the difficulty, or even the impossibility, of granting the real presence of the Marquis of Rambouillet's phantom, in war attire and boots, which prevented this story from being conceded as true. To-day we think that, as in

the case of Lord Brougham's friend, there was no material apparition in the case—merely the influence of a dead man's spirit upon that of a living man.

Before proceeding farther, we may well ask ourselves of what the phantoms consist whose manifestations we have here been examining.

A long study of these phenomena has led me to conclude, with Myers, that nothing justifies us in affirming that the phantom which appears is the person himself, in the ordinary sense of the word. We are here concerned, rather, with those hallucinatory forms or phantoms which we studied in the second volume, projections which we actually see, beyond a doubt. We investigated them without concluding that the apparition is the living person. Likewise, what we call a specter or a ghost is in no way the deceased person himself. There exists, certainly, a connection between the specter and the defunct human being, a connection the nature of which is still to be determined, but the identity is not complete.

All this was presented in Volume II, in the chapter "Thought as a Generator of Images." Myers writes, as his view:

A posthumous phenomenon may be a *manifestation of the persistence of personal energy*, or even an indication merely that a certain force, associated with a person whom we have known during his terrestrial life, continues to manifest itself after his death. Theoretically it is possible that this force or influence which, after the death of a person, creates a phantasmagorical impression of the person, is due not to the actual functioning of the latter, but to some residue of the force or energy which that person generated while still alive. We have examples of this in certain cases of haunting.

As for me, after a long, special study of apparitions (during a period of about thirty years) I have reached this double

conclusion: (1) They are real; (2) in general, they are not material, ponderable.

It will be helpful to pass in review a few cases, without further delay.

At a date already far in the past, an eminent seeker, Monsieur Castex-Dégrange, who was extremely desirous of learning the truth, wrote me as follows (it was in the last century, on March 13, 1899):

Though I value, quite at its true worth, your high personal distinction, and share fully your views as to those who are professionally "credulous" or "incredulous," there is, to me, something lacking in your investigations.

In my view—alas, I am a trifle skeptical!—the supremely interesting thing would be the proof of the survival of the individual *after death*, the scientific proof. This proof would have, for our poor human kind, many consequences that could make it happier and better.

In "*L'Inconnu*" you speak only of the "living"; for in my view these manifestations of dying people may be the last gleam of a lamp which is going out.

And now you promise that you will also speak of the "dead." Well and good!

I do not know if you have a great many "cases" in reserve. Will you allow me to relate an absolutely authentic one—one which I can vouch for, on my word of honor?

You may do what you like with this story, and what you consider necessary for the purpose of your investigation. I ask you only to keep the names to yourself, if you give this case, and to put down merely initials of some sort.

Two years ago an aunt of mine was still alive,—a fine woman and the best of friends. Her name was Madame A. B——.

This aunt, who died at the age of eighty-three, had as a childhood friend a certain Madame C——, whose daughter is still living. The latter can bear witness to the truth of the account, as can my wife, a niece of Madame A. B——.

These two women had made a mutual promise to pay each other

a visit after death. The first to die was to go to see the one remaining upon earth.

Madame C—— died. This caused my poor aunt great sorrow.

Some days later, my aunt, slightly indisposed, was lying on her bed. A night lamp half lighted her bedroom.

Suddenly she saw her friend, seated in her arm-chair, which was drawn up near her work-table.

But—and this is what is most odd about the vision—*Madame C—— had on, over her dress, a sort of cape with a hood, which my aunt had never seen her wear.* This particular circumstance surprised the latter a little.

One or two days after the vision, the dead woman's daughter came to inquire as to my aunt's health. My aunt told her of her experience, adding that it was probable that she had been the victim of an hallucination. Then Mademoiselle C—— said to her: "No, Madame. My poor mother was put in her coffin with a hooded cape on, which she only wore in the evening, when she was alone. She'd had a preference for it for a long time."

It seems to me (1) that there was no hallucination in this case, but a real intention on the part of the person to show herself, as well as to give absolute proof that she had really done so; (2) that since the vision took place *several days after death*, it would imply the continuance of the soul's existence.

CASTEX DÉGRANGE.

My readers are already familiar with the signer of this letter. (See "L'Inconnu," page 84, and "Les Forces naturelles inconnues," pages 512-525). He is no longer alive (1840-1918). He was head of the Lyons National School of Fine Arts. His observations of psychic phenomena, which I have just recalled to my readers, are particularly instructive, but I shall not repeat them here. They end with the statements just given, which I have not previously made public.

Yes, these visions are really produced by the dead, whose spirits act upon ours. In the same way, in our second volume, we proved that this was the case with telepathic transmission during life.

Let us investigate other occurrences.

A minister plenipotentiary, whose perfect sincerity I well know, related to me, in 1900, the following disturbing little adventure:

Father N——, parish priest of O——, in Moravia, had a niece whom he particularly loved; she had lived for some time at his home. When they parted, the priest said to her, jestingly: "Well, if you die before I do, let me know."

It happened that some time afterward this niece fell ill of a severe malady. A fatal outcome, however, was not expected.

One day, Father N——, quite overwhelmed, went to the young priest who was his assistant and told him that while he was quietly seated at his desk a short time before, and was, consequently, thoroughly awake, he had seen his niece appear before him, and that she had said good-by to him. He had recognized her at once and was convinced that she had died.

The news which he received confirmed this supposition, and the time of her death coincided with the day and the hour of the apparition.

I am giving you the names in the case, as well as my own name, because I, too, detest anonymity, and I wish you to know that there is here no mystification. However, you will, I am sure, take into account my wish, prompted by the regard due others, that in case you publish this account, the names be omitted.

Allow me, dear Master, to express my high regard for you.

BARON DE MARICOURT.

(Letter 964.)

(In conformity with my correspondent's wishes, I give only the initials of the names, in order to avoid indiscretion.)

Simply to deny these stories, as is so generally done, is not honest, though it is the simplest method of avoiding all explanation. It is our opinion that this apparition at the moment of death was connected with the compact that had been made.

One hears the objection, at times, that members of the clergy are more readily disposed than others to admit the reality of manifestations from beyond the grave. This is an error. Some of them are more skeptical than their calling would lead us to suppose (I have letters); others are believers, admitting the existence of hell, purgatory, and paradise, and refusing to grant the truth of these occurrences, because they attribute them to the devil. (I have letters in substantiation of this, too.)

The following manifestation, which took place after an odd promise, may be compared with the preceding one. The account was sent me, on March 25, 1899, by a correspondent whose sincerity can be questioned no more than that of the previous ones.

Do not think that members of the clergy are over-credulous.

About twelve years ago a colleague and friend of mine, who was a strong partizan of the cause of spiritualism, said to me at a gathering at which there were both laymen and clergymen, that several of his friends, in dying, had pushed his shoulder with their hands. Since this communication was received by us all, and by me, particularly, with a smile,—or, rather, a burst of incredulous laughter,—he turned to me, addressing me in particular, and said, laughing, that he would reserve his first reappearance for me.

When we parted, after shaking hands, no one gave another thought to the matter. Six months afterward, on an evening in February, when I was kneeling before a seat in church, I felt a sudden push on my shoulder, a push which made me bend forward sharply.

I turned around at once, to see whence had come this ill-timed familiarity. But I realized that it could have come from no one of the persons present, for the one nearest me was at least six meters away.

I then thought of the conversation which I have mentioned. I reflected that it was possible that some one I knew had produced this supernatural or extra-natural manifestation. Some days after-

ward I learned of the sudden death of my estimable colleague, which had come with lightning swiftness. He had died on precisely the day and at the hour of this manifestation.

BOUIN,

Honorary Canon, Pastor of Douze, Dordogne.

(Letter 4.)

This narration interested me doubly. It bears all the marks of absolute sincerity. We can attribute it not to some one living or to some one dying but to a worthy man who had just died and who kept his fantastic promise. We might conclude from this, too, that there is nothing disagreeable about the transition from life to death, and that it leaves us a certain freedom.

I am taking the following statement from another letter, which was sent me at the same period :

A young woman, a paralytic, would often spend the afternoon at my aunt's home. My cousins, who knew how good-natured she was, and who liked to laugh, would make from time to time some little jest as to the position in which she might find herself in the other world.

"You don't seem to believe in the other world, much," she answered, smiling, "and you're making fun of me. That isn't nice, you know. But I'll have my revenge: when I'm dead, I'll come and frighten you."

She died a short time afterward. Some weeks went by, and no one thought any longer of her little threat, when, in a thick cupboard door, a strange noise made itself heard. It sounded like a series of blows, purposely struck. Called by my aunt, my cousins hurried to her, and examined the piece of furniture. There seemed nothing unusual about it. But when they expressed their impatience, the noise answered so loudly that they drew back, terrified. I am telling you of this happening, though it is of such slight importance, because it is unquestionable and because we know that you overlook nothing in order to discover all, and because we all

have, for you, a feeling of profound veneration: I have named my child Camille, to commemorate my having read your works.

J. VIVOUX,  
Digne, March, 1899.

(Letter 386.)

The following was a similar occurrence. A correspondent who said that his name was for my eyes only wrote me from Paris on April 30, 1899:

I have the honor of telling you of the following experience, which bears out the results of your investigation. My clear recollection of it justifies me in guaranteeing its authenticity.

I had Monsieur Netom, a printer, at breakfast at my home. He said to my wife and me:

"I was most disagreeably surprised last night. I was waked up, suddenly, by a feeling as though my feet were being pulled violently; you can't think how painful it was."

I attributed this feeling of his to nerves or muscles affected by some physical cause, as happens, at times, during sleep. Then the conversation took another turn, but Monsieur Netom again brought up the experience of the night before, as though it had impressed him strongly.

We were not thrown together again until a year from that date. Then we saw him and he said to us:

"Since we were last together, I have learned of some one's death. . . . Well, his death coincided day for day—or, rather, night for night—with the night on which I felt that odd sensation of my feet being pulled!"

"What connection was there?"

"It's extraordinary! We'd always told each other that the one who died first should go and pull the other's feet!"

"Are you sure of the coincidence in dates?"

"Heavens! if you speak to me like an examining magistrate I'll have to admit that I did n't make a precise note of the date. What I'm *certain* of is that the date of the death was within the period when you extended your hospitality to me; I can answer for that.

And, besides, I can state positively that I was no more thinking of that friend than of the Sultan of Turkey, at the moment when the phenomenon occurred."

(Letter 648.)

One of my readers residing in Paris, who wishes that his name should not be made public, wrote me on March 26, 1899:

My relatives were living in the country. A first cousin of my mother, who had attempted to commit suicide after her fiancé's death, and had failed, had taken refuge with my grandmother, her aunt, in order that she might escape ill-treatment by her father, an inveterate drunkard. She was waiting until she should be summoned to a convent, which she had made application to enter.

She was a temperamental woman, and I have often heard it said that at night she would go to the cemetery, to her fiancé's grave.

All my relatives had many and many a time tried to dissuade her from the idea of shutting herself up in a convent,—she who was so charming, so captivating. By her work, she made her presence useful as well as a pleasure, for she knew how to do everything. There was no sacrifice which we would not have made to keep her from so sad an end.

We said all we could, but it had no effect. So she left, on a foggy day which heightened our sadness. She took all our hearts with her.

"To think that I shall never see you again!" said my mother, before her departure. "To think that I shall never see you again!" said my grandmother.

"My dear cousin," she replied to my mother, "I should like to come back and see you, for I can't live long. I've had so many shocks, and, what's worst, I have this poison in my blood; but as you're timid, I shan't trouble you by my presence. As for you, my aunt," she said to my grandmother, laughing, "I know you're not afraid; I'll make an outrageous racket for you."

On a certain evening, some time afterward, my grandfather and grandmother were about to get into bed, when they heard a *terrible uproar*. Everything seemed in a turmoil; the bricks seemed to be knocking against one another violently, *the roof seemed to have*

*fallen in.* They ran to open the door: all was intact. They were amazed and terrified. They went back to bed; there was the same noise. "Clémentine is dead!" my grandmother cried. The noise ceased at once. The next day, about noon, the telegram arrived. She had died on the previous day, at the very hour of the uproar, in a convent in Amiens.

The witnesses are still living.

J. L.,  
Paris.

(Letter 79.)

The readers of this work are familiar with loud noises of the sort and will not be astonished. The first part of our present investigation furnished many examples.

The foregoing manifestation also corresponds to the announcement of a purpose which was carried out, to an intention, to a previous promise.

Here is another incident, equally strange, which occurred after a promise had been made. It was sent us by that excellent review "*Luce e Ombra*"<sup>1</sup>:

In 1882, Count Charles Galatéri grew to know a certain Virgini, a former officer in the grenadiers. Their conversation turned at times to a discussion of spiritualism. Monsieur Galatéri tried in vain to convince his friend on the subject. One day, half seriously, half jestingly, the two comrades promised each other that the first who should die would warn the other of this fact. And how? *By tickling his feet!*

Several years went by. In November, 1887, Monsieur Virgini told his friend that he had again taken service with the troops in Africa.

On the night of Sunday, August 5, 1888, Monsieur Galatéri was in bed, when his wife, who was beside him, said to him a trifle crossly, "Keep still!" Her husband asked her if she were dreaming, for he had not stirred. She said again: "Keep still, I tell

<sup>1</sup> *Luce e Ombra* (Rome), Nov., 1905. *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, Dec., 1905.

you! Don't tickle my feet!" Since Monsieur Galatéri continued to deny doing this, they thought that some insect might have got into the bed; they lighted a candle and looked carefully. Nothing! They blew out the candle and got back into bed. But at once Countess Galatéri started and cried out: "Look! Look at the foot of the bed!" Her husband looked and saw nothing, but she persisted: "Yes, look; there's a tall young man, with a colonial helmet on his head. He's looking at you, and laughing! Oh, poor man! What a terrible wound he has in his chest! And his knee is broken! He's waving to you, with a satisfied air. He's disappearing!"

The next day, Countess Galatéri *told some friends and relatives of the experience*. On Tuesday, August 14th, the newspapers announced that a band of native troops commanded by Captain Cornacchia and by Lieutenants Poli, Brero, *Virgini*, and Adam Aga had been attacked near Saganeiti by the Abyssinians; *Virgini*, the last surviving officer, had been *struck on the knee* and then killed *by a bullet in the chest*.

Monsieur de Vesme remarks, in giving this account, that it would be desirable to have the written attestation of the different persons who were in some manner connected with the occurrences; but that nevertheless the unquestionable trustworthiness of the Galatéri family and of several of the people concerned—people whom he knows personally—gives the case a certain importance, even apart from the truthful tone of the narration. Count Charles Galatéri belongs to an honorable family of the Piedmont.

We may ask ourselves whether the officer who was killed, and who remembered his promise, chose the wrong feet by mistake or did so purposely, or if telepathic influence were exerted upon two minds near together, one of which perceived nothing. Certainly the story is an odd one, but *it was not fabricated*.

What proof is there that we have no caprices after death, and that we are of necessity sad, or even always serious?

Manifestations occur in every imaginable variety. The one just related is rather amusing; but that which we shall have before our eyes is really dramatic and frankly gruesome. I am taking it from Bozzano's excellent work on "*Les Phénomènes de hantise*." It is substantiated by Professor Hy-slop's investigation and the attestations of five witnesses connected with the strange experience. Let us listen to one of them, Dr. H. A. Kinnaman:

My uncle, John W. Kinnaman, my father, Jacob Kinnaman, and a young man named Adams were students of medicine, and intimate friends. One day they made a compact that if one of them should die young, the others should have the right to take possession of his body for purposes of scientific study, on condition that the skeleton should always remain in the keeping of friends; if the day should come when this condition could no longer be observed the skeleton was to be buried. Adams had declared that for his part he would insist on the scrupulous observance of the compact; otherwise he would protest by making a noise.

Some time afterward young Adams died; my uncle John, by his right as eldest brother, took possession of the body, prepared the skeleton and kept it until his death. After him it was kept by my father, Dr. Jacob; then by his brother, Dr. Lawrence; then by Dr. Jackson, then by my brother Robert, and, finally, by my other brother Charles. During this long lapse of time it was noted that when the conditions fixed by the compact were complied with, Adams remained quiet, but if they were neglected, people were tormented.

I remember that in 1849, when I was a child, my father was obliged to go to California for a time, and the skeleton was relegated to an attic. This did not satisfy Adams. That very night heavy, noisy steps were heard, mounting and descending the attic stairway, or coming and going in the attic itself. These manifestations seriously disturbed my mother, because they kept the family from sleeping. She begged my uncle to free us from Adams's bones. He consented, and as soon as he took them into his care, quiet reigned once more in the family.

My uncle kept them in his office for a long time, but one day he thought he would put them in a distant corner of the house. Two families which were living in this part of the building soon had to move out as a result of the inexplicable noises heard during the night. After these families had left, no one could live in this haunted house. When my father returned from California, he took Adams's skeleton back and put it in his office. There was silence once more.

My father died in 1874, and my brother Robert inherited the bones; he put them under the bed, in a room adjoining his office. One day, he thought he would carry them into a neighbor's cellar, which was used as a store-room for building materials. They were put there without the workmen of the establishment knowing it; but a short time afterward these workmen refused to go into the cellar in the evening, because of the mysterious noises heard there. My brother took the skeleton back, and once more the place became quiet again.

Adams's mortal remains are still in the possession of my family.

Another witness, Dr. C. L. Kinnaman, describes with a great abundance of detail the noises heard in the attic when Adams's remains were put there. He writes:

. . . The attic contained hundreds of bottles from a drug store. It happened that one night, when every one had gone to bed, extraordinary noises were heard, coming from the top of the house; noises of bottles knocking together with violence, breaking, and falling to the floor. Then we thought we heard a large cannon-ball roll downstairs to the dining-room, strike against the door, and then mount the stairs again, leaping from one step to another! A member of the family went up into the attic, with a candle in his hand; but the noises ceased at once; everything was found in its place. When we had gone to bed again and blown out the light, the manifestations began once more. Some one made the remark that the object that was rolling downstairs must be very heavy, to judge from the noise that it made; instantly the uproar diminished to the mere echo of a light touch, moving up and down from one step to another. The manifestations changed according to our re-

marks; they continued until we went to bed again, overcome by fatigue and sleep. From the day on which the bones were taken out of the attic, tranquillity reigned once more in the house.

Dr. R. C. Kinnaman testified in his turn:

I was the first to be awakened by the dull sound of a fall, as though some one had leaped out of bed in his bare feet; then there was a rustling of garments, a slightly louder noise, and at length the sound of a heavy body rolling over the floor, going down the stairs by leaping from one step to another, and up again, with frequent variations in force and tone. My mother chanced to come into my room then, with Olivier; although she was a vigorous woman, she seemed terribly affected. Both of them, taking lighted candles, ventured into the attic; their presence made the noises stop. After a fruitless investigation they went away, closing the door; at once the noises began again. They returned; the noises ceased. Again they left; the uproar began again as loudly as ever, the moment they closed the door.<sup>1</sup>

Such is, in abridged form, the extraordinary case investigated by Professor James Hyslop. Doubt is not possible. The threat of a manifestation, part of this student's singular compact, was fully carried out by the deceased man. The uproar did not come from the living, without their knowing it. This is proved by the fact that it came to an abrupt halt in the presence of the living, only to begin again when they went away—a thing frequently noted in phenomena of the kind.

Observed happenings, therefore, prove that the dead return after making pledges, promises, and threats, and consequently that they continue to exist. Where are they when they bring about these phenomena? I know nothing about that. Where was this skeleton's soul? I do not know. But it was evidently that soul which manifested itself.

We have just given, above, cases of visible manifestations,

<sup>1</sup> Bozzano, *Les Phénomènes de hantise*, pp. 50-52.

of apparitions, and we have already furnished (Volume II, Chapter IV) examples of the generation of images by the thought of the dying. These phenomena are extremely numerous; there are images that are visible, objective, external—considered real and material by those who see them. The images are nevertheless subjective, arising in the mind of the observer, though they cannot be called hallucinations, being neither unauthentic nor illusory. They proceed from a cause: the will of the dying or dead person, which produces them. They are psychic projections with the aspect of physical projections.

The case we shall relate is as significant as the preceding one, though less gruesome. It concerns a church singer, who, was, on a certain Saturday, to rehearse some musical selections with a colleague. He died the day before the appointment—in the street, of a stroke of apoplexy. He was then fifty years old. He appeared to his colleague, a roll of music in his hand; his colleague did not know of his death. The account was sent to Professor Adams of Cambridge (U. S. A.).<sup>1</sup> Let us read it:

St. Luke's Church, San Francisco,  
September 11, 1890.

Some weeks ago our choir-leader, a man robust in health and of a most skeptical turn of mind, saw, positively, the apparition of one of his singers who had just died:

Mr. Russell, the bass of the choir, had a stroke of apoplexy in the street, on a certain Friday at ten o'clock; he died in his home at eleven o'clock. My wife, learning of his death, sent my brother-in-law to the home of Mr. Reeves, the choir-leader, to discuss the music to be played at the funeral. He arrived at the choir-leader's house at about half-past one. Suddenly he heard an exclamation in the vestibule. Some one had just cried out, "Good God!" In

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings of the S. P. R.*, VIII, 214. Myers, *Human Personality*, II, 45.

the middle of the stairway, sitting on a step, was the choir-leader, in his shirt sleeves, showing signs of great terror.

When Mr. Reeves had come out of his room, he had seen Mr. Russell standing on the stairway, one hand on his forehead and the other holding a roll of music out to him. The choir-leader went toward him, but the phantom vanished. It was then that he uttered the exclamation mentioned above.

He knew nothing of Mr. Russell's death.

This is the most authentic ghost-story that I have ever heard. I know all these persons very well, and can swear to their sincerity. I have no doubt that the choir-leader saw something, subjectively or objectively: it made him ill for several days, in spite of his usual fine health.

To state my own personal conviction, Mr. Russell was a man of very regular habits, very loyal and very dependable; he had sung in the choir for years without pay; his last thought must have been: "How shall I let the choir-leader know that I cannot rehearse to-morrow evening?" He died in an hour, without having regained consciousness.

The attitude in which he showed himself bears out this hypothesis; it indicated his malady (pain in the head) and his desire to perform his duty.

W. M. W. DAVIS,  
Rector.

The "San Francisco Chronicle" gave in the following terms its version of the curious story:

On Friday morning, Edwin Russell, a well-known Englishman, had reached the corner of Stutter and Mason streets, when he had a stroke of apoplexy, and died before noon. He had lived in our city for ten years and was respected in the commercial world. He was a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church and had a magnificent bass voice. For this reason he was a great asset to the choir of St. Luke's Church, and was in constant touch with the Rev. W. W. Davis, rector of the church, and with Harry E. Reeves, the new choir-leader.

It was to Mr. Reeves that the sensational thing happened which

people are all talking about. I interviewed him at the home of his sister, Mrs. Cavenagh, on California Street. He told me that he was not a spiritualist, and gave me the following account:

"I had seen Russell on the Saturday before his death. He had come to rehearse. I had asked him where I might find a good cigar, and he had taken me to a cigar store. Then I had invited him to my home—or, rather, to my sister's home—to rehearse, and we arranged to meet on the following Saturday. I thought no more of the matter until Friday afternoon. As it is my custom to look through my volumes of music one or two days beforehand, for selections to be sung on Sunday, I chose two *Te Deums*. I left my room and saw on the landing, which was half lighted as it is now, my friend Mr. Russell, so real, so alive, that I went forward at once to give him my hand in welcome.

"He had a roll of music in one hand, and the other was before his face. It was really he. I am absolutely sure of it. Well, he melted away like a cloud which vanishes into the air.

"I was about to speak to him, but was struck dumb. I sank down against the wall, crying out: 'Oh, good God!' My sister, my niece, and another person came up. My niece asked, 'Uncle Henry, what's the matter?' I wished to explain, but could not speak. Then my niece said to me, 'Did you know that Mr. Russell is dead?' I was literally stupefied by this. I saw this Russell three hours after his death as well as I see you in that arm-chair."

The investigation made by the English Society for Psychological Research—one in which every possible precaution was taken—left no doubt as to this spontaneous apparition. The cry uttered by Mr. Reeves was heard by witnesses; the vision was perceived in an absolutely normal state, and the hypothesis of an hallucination is utterly inadmissible, given all the circumstances attendant upon the phenomenon.

We are concerned here, as in cases in which promises and pledges to appear were fulfilled, with a very definite intention not to miss a meeting agreed upon. To refuse to accept the occurrence, to go on indefinitely seeking flaws, would lead us nowhere.

Manifestations of the dead are numerous and varied, as we have ascertained. Here is still another, which greatly astonished the beholder. An Indian half-breed appeared to a traveler, a woman, after having sworn to her to do so. He was in Colorado, and she, having gone back to Europe, was then in Switzerland. Mrs. Bishop, née Bird, a well-known traveler and writer, related the following incident.<sup>1</sup> While traveling in the Rocky Mountains, Miss Bird had grown to know an Indian half-breed, James Nugent, called "Mountain Jim," and she had had considerable influence upon him. She writes:

On the day of my departure, he was much affected. I had had a long conversation with him on the subject of this mortal life and immortality, a conversation which I had ended with some quotations from the Bible. He seemed to me to be greatly impressed, and had cried: "I'll not see you again in this life, perhaps, but I'll see you when I die." I reproved him gently for his violence of speech, but he repeated the same words even more vehemently, adding: "I'll never forget your words, and *I swear I'll see you again when I die.*" On this, we parted.

For some time I had letters from him; I learned that his conduct had improved, then that he had fallen back into his savage customs; that he had been wounded in a brawl, then that he was better and was meditating plans of revenge. The last time I heard from him, I was at the Hotel Interlaken, in Interlaken, Switzerland, with Miss Clayton and the Kers. Some time after this (it was in September, 1874) I was stretched out on my bed one morning, writing a letter to my sister, when, lifting my eyes, I saw Mountain Jim standing before me. His eyes were fixed on me, and he said to me in a low voice, but very distinctly: "Here I am, as I promised." Then he made a gesture, and added, "Good-by!"

When Miss Bessie Ker came to bring me my breakfast, we noted the date and time of the happening. News of Mountain Jim's

<sup>1</sup> *Phantasms of the Living*, I, 531. *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 185.

death reached us some time afterward; taking into account the difference in longitude, the date coincided with that of his apparition.

In reply to inquiries concerning this story, Mrs. Bishop wrote that she had never had any other sensory hallucination. She had seen Mountain Jim for the last time in St. Louis, on December 11, 1873. At Fort Collins, in the state of Colorado, where he died, it was ascertained that his death took place on September 7, 1874. The half-breed's promise, or threat, was exactly fulfilled.

We cannot, however, refrain from remarking that these pledges, these compacts, these promises, are far from always being kept. As for me, people have made me a certain number, and I have never perceived anything. Is this the fault of those who have died, or my own fault? Is it always possible for some one dead to manifest himself? Is it always possible for a living person to perceive manifestations? They are produced by vibrations, and the harp-strings capable of being touched by them are doubtless rare enough.

While on the subject of the difficulty and rarity of apparitions we may, with Myers, take note of the experience of Countess Kapnist, and observe that the fulfilment of agreements of this sort is often made through intermediaries—a strange enough fact.<sup>1</sup> For example, it was Countess Kapnist's sister who saw the apparition, not she herself. It is probable that a good many attempts have not succeeded because of the maladaptation of the subjects, and that they would have ended in typical manifestation if the one who wished to appear had chosen more sensitive subjects.

It is the same in the following instance, the indirect fulfilment of a promise. A lady who had made a compact with a friend, was seen in phantom form after her death, by the

<sup>1</sup> *At the Moment of Death*, p. 113. *Human Personality*, II, 51 and 350, Sec. 727 A. *Proceedings of the S. P. R.*, V, 440.

friend's husband but not by the friend herself. This curious example was furnished by the Rev. Arthur Bellamy of Bristol, in February, 1886.<sup>1</sup> His account follows:

When she was a school-girl my wife had made a pact with one of her comrades that the one who died first should appear to the surviving one, God willing. In 1874 my wife, who for years had neither seen her school friend nor heard of her, learned of her death. This news reminded her of the compact which they had made, and she then began to dwell upon it, and spoke of it to me. I knew of this agreement of my wife, but had never seen a photograph of her friend, nor heard anything concerning her.

One or two nights afterward we were sleeping quietly; a bright fire shone in the room and there was a lighted candle. I awakened suddenly and saw a lady seated beside the bed in which my wife was sleeping deeply. I sat up in bed and gazed at her; I saw her so clearly that I can still remember her form and her attitude. If I had an artist's skill, I could paint her likeness upon canvas. I remember that I was struck particularly with the careful way in which her hair was dressed; it was arranged with a certain elegance. I cannot say how long I sat gazing at her; but as soon as this odd phantom vanished I got out of bed to see if the garments hung over the head of the bed had caused some optical illusion. But there was nothing, in my line of vision, between me and the wall. Since I could not think it an hallucination, I did not doubt that I had really seen an apparition.

I got back into bed and remained there until my wife awakened, some hours afterward. Only then did I describe to her the face which I had seen. Complexion, stature, etc.—all was in exact accordance with my wife's recollection of her childhood friend. I asked my wife if there were anything particularly striking in her friend's appearance; she answered at once, "Yes, at school we used to tease her about her hair, which she always arranged with special care." It was precisely this which had struck me.

I must add that I had never seen an apparition before this, and have not since.

ARTHUR BELLAMY.

<sup>1</sup> *Human Personality*, II, 350, Sec. 727 A.

We may suppose that the apparition was caused by the psychic influence which Mrs. Bellamy's deceased friend had upon her, and that she transmitted it to her husband, since there was no reason why the dead woman should manifest herself to this gentleman, who was a stranger to her. But other considerations perplex us. What strikes us above all is that the manifestation intended for the wife was seen by her husband and not by her. We have already noted ("At the Moment of Death," page 348) that an apparition intended for Mrs. Clerke was seen by her negro servant and not by her. And how about the case of Madame Galatéri's feet being tickled? And my readers have also been reminded of Countess Kapnist.

I have before my eyes five or six times the number of cases I have given, cases in which the dead fulfilled promises that they remembered precisely and were able to carry out—among others, the very touching story of General Thiébault, published in his *Memoirs* (Paris, 1893; Volume I, pages 43-47), as to the apparition of his brother, followed by this sentence: "I have never been able to believe in it, and nevertheless I have never been able to doubt it." Space is lacking for their publication. The examples just given are sufficient, it would seem to me, to convince us of the reality of the manifestations. Other cases will add nothing to the proofs. We must admit the authenticity of the phenomena. As for explaining them, that is more difficult.

I shall select one more letter from among those received. It was sent me from Kaliche, Russian Poland, on June 27, 1913.

**MOST ESTEEMED MONSIEUR FLAMMARION:**

My father, after his death in 1879, proved to me that he was still alive, through signs which we had agreed upon beforehand:

(1) The window-pane which we had designated cracked in a straight, horizontal line; it broke with a noise like the firing of

a gun; (2) the clock which we had selected (its strokes were ordinarily rapid and gay) began to strike the hours slowly and sadly, and for several weeks continued to do so.

I must be silent no longer, because I am old. And since you, the champion of truth, are no longer young, either, it is your duty not to be silent, for the world is listening to you.

NICHOLAS STEPANOW.

(Letter 2358.)

If in 1913 my advanced age constituted a reason for not keeping silent, there is still greater reason in 1922, and I bow to my duty by classifying all this testimony for the sake of our store of general knowledge.

In the face of the facts we have the impression, as Oliver Lodge said, that the souls of the dead are striving to enter into relations with us, as we with them, and that on both sides such efforts resemble those of pioneers who in order to open a tunnel through a mountain work at both ends of the tunnel. The wall separating the ends of the two passages is still thick, but we are beginning to hear, from this side, the blows of pickaxes on the other side. It would even seem that the barrier is already being penetrated by X-rays.

So we have seen, indubitably, cases of the dead returning by reason of mutual pledges or promises. It seems to me that this second chapter, read after the first, cannot fail to strengthen the foundations upon which the new science must be built. Let us go on with our investigation by proving, now, that the dead also return on account of personal matters, quite apart from the declared intentions of which we have spoken.

### III

#### THE DEAD WHO HAVE RETURNED TO ATTEND TO PERSONAL AFFAIRS

Truth may, at times, appear  
improbable.

BOILEAU.

**T**HIS heading may surprise more than one reader.

We have just had before our eyes varied examples of the dead who have manifested themselves because of promises made during life. The examples which we shall present in this chapter will show us posthumous phenomena no less worthy of our attention, having as an object the setting in order of personal affairs. Here, as before, the first objection which we must bring forward is that an explanation may be found in the observers' own minds; but it has seemed to us that this objection would not apply to the foregoing accounts, such as Lord Brougham's, the apparition of Ram-bouillet, Monsieur Castex-Dégrange's statement, that of Monsieur de Maricourt, of Canon Bouin, the apparition of Russell the singer, and so on. It will be the same with the following cases. Nevertheless let us make a careful examination, that no obscurity may remain after our inquiry.

Since we are seeking truth, whatever it be, our duty is to admit any hypothesis, while protecting ourselves through analysis. Let us compare, let us investigate everything.

A "possibility" which presents itself as an explanation of these manifestations, is that of thought-transmission from the living to the living. The solid body of testimony as to this sort of phenomena, supported ceaselessly by new occur-

rences, constitutes a foundation of the highest importance for our psychic investigation.

This thought-transmission may explain certain phenomena attributed to the dead, who appear to return from beyond the grave, and take a hand in our affairs, although the manifestations may be due, in many cases, to emanations from our world of the living.

Our "unconscious mind," or, if one prefers, "subconscious mind," is a receiving apparatus; its sensitiveness varies according to the particular person under consideration. It is, besides, a prodigious storehouse of latent impressions. Some of them, by reason of certain physical or psychic external influences, emerge from the inmost, mysterious depths of our psychic being, through a process that is still little known; others—the greater part of them—remain buried there and are absorbed.

A debtor's thoughts may, while he is alive, be transmitted to his children and remain for months in their minds—impressions that are hidden, unguessed, lost amid all the other latent impressions but not destroyed. Then, for some unknown reason, and in favorable circumstances, they may detach themselves—above all, in dreams—clarify, and emerge, distinct and definite, from the obscurity of the subconscious. It may be the same with knowledge of a secret hiding-place for money.

This is only a hypothesis, but it is worthy of our attention. Even if, in the manifestations, there were but new testimony as to the unknown faculties with which living beings are endowed, the acquisition to the new science, however modest it be, should be given due consideration. Before plunging into the future life, let us strive to know terrestrial life better.

Words are not indispensable for the expression of thought, for unformulated thought is at times transmitted. I, for

one, know of a number of cases scientifically verified by experiments.

Words are one of the last conquests of mankind. Before making use of articulate speech, our remote ancestors made themselves understood by uttering cries with a meaning, like animals. To-day, with language as our tool, we are incapable of understanding all that is hidden in the sounds of the animal world.

On the subject of thought-transmission, my learned friend Dr. Coste de Lagrave sent me an account, among others, of the following experiment, which he himself made. He said:

I choose the leaf of a tree. I fill my mind with its aspect; I make it a part of me *psychically*, so that I shall be sure to know it, afterward, among a hundred thousand others. I go back to the sensitive subject, who is standing about fifty meters away. He puts a bandage over his eyes, I take his wrist, place my fingers on his pulse, and, thinking of the designated leaf, follow him. He runs swiftly, drawing me after him, halts at the spot where the leaf is, stretches out his free hand and places it carefully on the leaf which I have chosen mentally some minutes before. This is the result of the transmission of unformulated thought.

I have, so far as possible, put myself in touch with those capable of transmitting thought, above all to discover if there were not some deception, and to make experiments myself. The power of transmitting unformulated thought is a faculty which really exists, but which is more or less developed according to the individual. With certain subjects, it is greatly developed; the power of receiving unformulated thought may be equally developed, and certain subjects give remarkable results.

The foregoing is what Dr. Coste de Lagrave has to say on the matter; in Paris his course in psychology has long been valued. In days gone by I myself made similar experiments with Ninof and Clovis Hugues ("L'Inconnu," page 316), which prove the reality of thought-transmission. And

readers may remember my experiment with Charcot at the Saltpêtrière Hospital; I told of it in the chapter entitled "Thought as a Generator of Images," in the volume "At the Moment of Death" (page 84).

In the course of more than a century, twenty-eight important works on *dreams* have been written, the first by Maine de Biran (1792), the last by Yves Delage (1920). The list includes one of the most authoritative books, Alfred Maury's (1861); I have all of them before me, and I must give it as my opinion that not one of them has yet furnished a complete and definite explanation of dreams.

How shall we decide whether an apparition, or a similar manifestation, of a deceased person is anything more than a simple subjective manifestation, or, if a dream, is caused by a mind exterior to ours?

We can reach a conclusion only by careful analysis.

Let us consider a few significant cases.

I have long been calling attention to psychic occurrences. My readers have already had an opportunity to read, in "Uranie," of the following odd episode, taken from the life of Swedenborg:

In 1761, Madame de Marteville, widow of a former Dutch minister to Sweden, received from one of her husband's creditors a demand for the sum of twenty-five thousand Dutch florins. She knew that this had been paid by her husband; to pay it again would have placed her in the greatest straits, would have almost ruined her. The receipt could not be found.

She paid a visit to Swedenborg, and, eight days afterward, saw her husband in a dream. He showed her the piece of furniture in which the receipt was, together with a hair-pin adorned with twenty diamonds, which she had believed was lost also. This happened at two o'clock in the morning. Joyful, she rose, and found everything in the spot indicated. She went back to bed, and slept until nine. About eleven o'clock, Monsieur Swedenborg was announced. Before learning anything of what had happened he

related that on the previous night, he had seen Monsieur de Marteville's spirit, who had told him that he was going to his widow.

These experiences are not so rare as people think. I have, at this moment, a great number of such accounts before my eyes. In the very era of which we are speaking, we may find in the story of the Seer of Prévorst (less unreal than it seems), the description of several.

Is there an immanent justice?

Can one be absolved of a theft committed? Can the theft be nullified?

Among the documents which I have received or collected, several communications from deceased persons would indicate that they were uneasy, and came back to demand that certain things be restored to their rightful owners.

Since we began this chapter with posthumous revelations of financial troubles, let us bring together, here, various occurrences of the same sort.

At the beginning of my inquiry, I received, from Algeria, the following letter (April 1899):

We know in our immediate circle of a curious happening having to do with Monseigneur Pavie, who, when he died, was Bishop of Algiers.<sup>1</sup> He was reading in his study, when he heard the door open behind him. He turned and saw a shade or vaporous form. Its contours were definite enough to enable him to recognize, in it, one of his parishioners who had been dead for some time, and of whom he had been particularly fond. Then he heard, distinctly, these words: "You who loved me, help me! I left a debt unpaid. [He gave the amount, as well as the creditor's name and address]. Discharge this debt, that I may cease to suffer."

The observer, much moved, could not, on account of the lateness of the hour, go that very day to the address indicated. He went the next day. The information given proved to be exact, and since

<sup>1</sup> I made this incident public, for the first time, in the *Revue des revues* of July 15, 1899.

the amount of the debt corresponded exactly with the sum mentioned by the deceased, the Abbé Pavie paid it.

There can be no question here of an hallucination. We might suppose that the priest learned of the debt, in the confessional, and that, through a "pious fraud," he wished to settle things thus. But that is hardly probable; it would seem that in this case he would have attributed the revelation to a dream. His precise account warrants a totally different interpretation.

I have received more than one communication similar to the foregoing. The following account was sent me from Nice on June 23, 1899:

A most estimable, pious lady, living in Paris, told me that her father, who had been dead for several years, appeared to her at eleven o'clock one night, while she was lying awake in her bed. (She was dreaming, doubtless.) Having first calmed the terror that had come upon her, he requested her to pay a definite sum (his daughter knew absolutely nothing of it) which he owed a certain person; he designated the person. Preoccupied by the extraordinary occurrence, the lady rose early. When she opened her window, the first person she saw was the very creditor named by the deceased. She asked him in hurriedly, though the hour was unseasonable, and requested him to inform her if her father did not owe him such and such a sum. He answered in the affirmative, and mentioned exactly the sum which the deceased had spoken of the night before.

I can vouch for this occurrence, since I was told of it by a lady in whom I have entire confidence. Without believing in apparitions of ghosts, one cannot, all the same, help thinking of these things, related by perfectly reasonable persons, quite sound in mind and body. I do not feel that I have the right to set down the name of this person, whom I am as sure of as I am of myself. But I am signing my name, and giving you my address.

PERETTI.

(Letter 732.)

Such dreams are usually explained on the supposition that people remember things they already know. But the narrator

took care to remark that this person *did not know* of the existence of the debt.

The following letter brings forward a serious argument in favor of survival. I leave my readers to judge of its contents:

Romanow, Province of Volkynie,  
October 13, 1899.

DEAR MASTER:

Since I wish to aid you in your honest, sincere inquiry as to manifestations from beyond the grave, I am taking the liberty of telling you of a happening that is well known in my family. I have frequently heard my relatives talk of it.

My grandfather's brother, Count Thadée Czacki, after the death of his father, saw the latter in a dream. His father told him that he had borrowed one hundred ducats from a neighbor, M. N—; the lender had not wished to take a written receipt for the sum. He asked his son, therefore, to pay the debt, that his soul might find rest.

My great-uncle treated this dream as any other dream, and paid no attention to it.

The next night he had the same dream, exactly in the same way. At once, my great-uncle had the horses harnessed to his carriage, to go and pay his neighbor a visit. Questioning him, he learned that he really had lent one hundred ducats, but had no written proof. My great-uncle paid him, and his father appeared to him once again, to thank him.

I should be delighted if this story were of use to you. I can guarantee its authenticity, for all the members of my family have always considered it indubitable.

HENRI STECHL.

(Letter 774.)

We may object that the son might have heard his father speak of the loan of one hundred ducats, might have forgotten the fact, and have remembered the debt in a dream, a dream into which his father entered in another form.

The lender's generosity and disinterested sentiments might have struck him when he heard his father mention the loan. But the objection is only a hypothesis. Another hypothesis (one which we have no right to disdain) is that the deceased man, being honest, told his son of the debt and asked him to pay it.

We are making an investigation. Let us consider and discuss every case. The objection just made would not be applicable to the following account, taken from a valued work by Dr. Binns. He published it with the remark that it had been completely verified. It concerns a letter written on October 21, 1842, by Charles M'Kay, a Catholic priest, to the Countess of Shrewsbury. The Earl of Shrewsbury had sent the letter to Dr. Binns. Dale Owen, too, had quoted it in his book "Footfalls" (page 294). Here is the narration, in abridged form:

In July, 1838, I left Edinburgh for the Perthshire Mission. Upon my arrival in Perth, I was summoned by a Presbyterian woman, Anne Simpson. For more than a week she had been extremely anxious to see a priest, because one of her friends, a woman named Maloy, had appeared to her for several nights, and begged her to ask a priest to pay a small sum of money (three shillings and ten pence) which the dead woman owed when she died. There was no other source of information.

I began to investigate, and found that a woman of that name had died; that she had been a laundress in a regiment. I ended by discovering the grocer with whom she had had dealings, and asked him if a woman named Maloy owed him anything. He consulted his books and told me that she owed him three shillings and ten pence. I paid this sum. The woman came to see me, to tell me that the apparitions had ceased.<sup>1</sup>

These cases of the dead who have returned to see to personal matters are significant and absolutely undeniable. I shall

<sup>1</sup> Myers, *Human Personality*, II, 345.

add the following one, taken from that work by Bozzano, so full of information, "*Les Phénomènes de hantise*." He himself took it from Robert Dale Owen's well-known book "*The Debatable Land*" (page 226). This explanation, by the author, precedes it:

The following case was brought to my attention by the protagonist in person, Miss V——, in the winter of 1869-70; I obtained her full consent to the publication of names and dates. Nevertheless, when Miss V—— spoke of the matter to her aged aunt, the latter feared the notoriety which it would give to their names. Miss V—— was obliged, in consequence, to withdraw her consent.

Owen continues in these words:

An unmarried lady whom I know, young and cultivated and belonging to one of the oldest families of New York (I shall call her Miss V——), was spending about fifteen days at the home of an aunt, who owned a very large and very old house on the banks of the Hudson River. This dwelling, like many European Châteaux, had the reputation of being haunted. This was spoken of as little as possible in the family, but a certain room was never used save in exceptional cases. At the very time of her stay, so many guests arrived that there were no more vacant rooms. The aunt asked her niece if she had the courage to move from her own room to the haunted room for two or three days, thus running the risk of a visit from a ghost. Miss V—— acquiesced without hesitation, adding that ghostly visits did not disturb her much.

When the appointed night came, Miss V—— got into bed and went to sleep without the least anxiety. She awakened at midnight and perceived the form of a grown woman walking up and down in the room, wearing a chambermaid's dress that was very clean and rather old-fashioned. At first she was not at all frightened, thinking it some one of the household who had come in to look for something; but, on reflection, she recalled that she had locked the door. This thought made her shiver, and her fear increased when she saw the form draw near the bed, bend over her, and

vainly attempt to speak. Absolutely terrified, Miss V—— hid her face under the covers and when, a moment afterward, she looked again, the phantom had vanished. Then she sprang from the bed and ran to the door; she found it locked, and the key on the inside.

Some time afterward, at the home of one of her intimate friends who was interested in spiritualism, she took part in the experiments, through curiosity. On a certain evening an entity manifested itself, which called itself Sarah Clarke, a name unknown to the experimenters. This personality explained that, long before, she had been a chambermaid in the home of Miss V——'s aunt, and that when Miss V—— had gone to visit her relative, she had vainly tried to speak to her, that she might confess that she was guilty of having stolen from the aunt, and beg the aunt's forgiveness. She added that the desire to confess her fault was so strong in her, that it compelled her to haunt the room in which she had lived when alive. She then said that, when living, she had allowed herself to take several household articles, among them a silver sugar-bowl and other objects which she enumerated. She ended by saying that she would be eternally grateful to Miss V—— if she would be so good as to take this message to her aunt and say that she felt a deep repentance and implored her forgiveness.

At the first opportunity, Miss V—— asked her aunt if, by chance, she had known some one named Sarah Clarke.

"Certainly," she answered. "She was a chambermaid we had thirty or forty years ago."

"What sort of girl was she?"

"She was good, industrious, and faithful."

"During the time she was with you, did you never miss any silver tableware?"

After a moment's thought the old lady cried:

"Yes, I remember, now; at that time a silver sugar-bowl disappeared mysteriously, and several things of that sort."

"Did you never suspect your chambermaid, Sarah Clarke?"

"Never. It's true that she had free access to everything; but all of us knew that she was very honest and above suspicion."

Then Miss V—— told her aunt of the message sent through the medium. They found that the list of the thefts, furnished by the

so-called spirit of Sarah Clarke, corresponded with the objects actually taken from the aunt's home. After this discovery the old lady said, merely, "If Sarah Clarke was really guilty, I'll pardon her with all my heart."

The most remarkable thing about this episode is that from that day on *the manifestations in the haunted room ceased* and Sarah Clarke no longer appeared to any one.

I repeat that I can vouch for the truth of these facts, since I know personally the two ladies chiefly concerned.

In this case, apart from the manifest proof of a causal connection between the dead woman's fixed idea and the haunting of the room—a proof confirmed by the spirit's words to the effect that the desire to confess her fault was so intense that it compelled her, in spite of herself, to haunt the room in which she had lived when alive—apart from this, we must also note a very important additional proof. This lies in the fact that the manifestations in the haunted room ceased immediately after the spirit gained its compelling desire for pardon.<sup>1</sup>

The story, related with so much detail, is instructive from more than one point of view, like all the foregoing ones.

The phenomena similar to this are too numerous not to be taken into consideration: apparitions of the dead in dreams, demanding that certain services be performed—asking people to do errands, we might say. It is often difficult, not to say impossible, to attribute the incidents to autosuggestion, to some recollection, to the dreamer's subconscious mind. In the little narration which we shall now give, the author attributes the manifestation not to the deceased, for he does not admit the existence of ghosts, but to a genius, a spirit, the existence of which has never been proved, either. Here it is. Though it happened in the seventeenth century, it is not to be disdained. People often say, "That's a very old story." But can they really think that Montaigne, Descartes, or Molière observed less keenly than we?

<sup>1</sup> Ernest Bozzano, *Les Phénomènes de hantise*, pp. 154-157.

The Abbé de Villars, author of "Comte de Gabalis" (1670), states that the account was given him by the observer herself, the wife of Marshal Grancey.<sup>1</sup>

A spirit showed itself to her as she slept, in the guise of her late husband. He did not speak long; he said only: "Madame, have my clothes-closet searched. There is a letter in my breeches pocket which is of the utmost consequence to one of our good friends; be careful to burn it." The marshal's wife tried to ask questions as to the other life; the phantom disappeared without replying. She awakened, greatly troubled, and called her attendants. They ran to her bed; she told of her dream. She had the deceased marshal's body-servant get up; he had remained in the house after the death of his master. He obeyed Madame de Grancey's summons; she asked him if any of the marshal's garments were still in his clothes-closet. He answered that there were none; that he had sold them for as much as he could obtain. The marshal's wife ordered him to make a thorough search. He left, and came back empty-handed. He was sent again, with no greater success. But at last, having gone a third time because of his mistress's urgent solicitations, he looked so thoroughly that he discovered, in the darkest corner of the clothes-closet, in the midst of a heap of sweepings, an old pair of black taffeta breeches with eyelets, such as were worn in former days. He gave these breeches to the marshal's wife; she put her hand into one of the pockets, from which she drew a letter. She opened it, read it, and, understanding its importance, threw it into the fire, that she might spare a friend of the household the grief that might have been caused him had its contents been divulged.

The narrator refuses to admit that the marshal himself appeared to his wife, and attributes the phenomenon to a spirit, a genius. (This refusal reminds us of our reflections on the subject of Lord Brougham and the Marquis of Ram-bouillet, page 49). As for me, I am giving the incident as it was related to me, and asking my readers to compare it

<sup>1</sup> *Le Comte de Gabalis, les génies assistants*, II, 87 (edition of 1742).

with other, similar ones. Let us investigate without prejudice; but let us be logical. Is it not more probable, in this, as in preceding cases, that the dead man's soul played a part, rather than some other spirit?

Such cases show us that the dead have returned to see to intimate personal affairs, to ask that long-neglected debts be paid, or to confess to thefts for which they were responsible. I have before my eyes many others more or less similar. Let us broaden our inquiry to include, also, testimony as to the discovery not of debts to be paid but of sums of money, disclosed through posthumous revelations.

The following manifestation, three days after death, would seem to be well authenticated. An account of it was sent me from Hyères, on May 31, 1899. The story was told to the narrator by a neighbor, a woman estimable from every point of view, "simple, truthful, and sincere." She said:

"Three days had passed since we lost our father through sudden death. (He had died of congestion of the brain.) Since it was customary in our house for my father to pay all expenses, he alone had charge of the money. He was in the habit of putting it—his ideas were a little odd—in certain places more or less hidden from us.

"After the funeral, when we wished to settle up everything, my mother, in order to pay pressing bills, began to look for the sum from which household and all other expenses were taken. We were certain that my father had hidden it somewhere. It was probable that the amount was very small.

"The whole family—my mother, myself, and two boys—began a search. We looked from attic to basement, with no more result than if we had not looked at all. My mother was in despair, since she had counted on the money to pay household and other expenses with. We did not know which way to turn, and were all in the deepest misery.

"In the course of the third night, between eleven and midnight, I heard, suddenly, steps descending the stairs which led to the hay-loft. These steps halted on the landing before the door of

my room, and immediately I heard the latch lifted and the door creak. And my father's well-known voice reached my ears, calling three times, 'Baptistine, my child!' As you may well suppose, I was more dead than alive. My girl cousin was sleeping with me; I pushed her with all the strength I had left, trying to waken her. It was useless; she slept on undisturbed. Then I answered my father, but in a voice so choked by emotion that only with difficulty could I utter the two words 'My father!'

"Listen, my child," he said. "Since I left you, you have been greatly worried and have suffered most terribly because you can't find the money. Well, it's in an old packing-case that once had oranges in it; the box is in the room behind the kitchen. It is divided into compartments; there are bags of several kinds of grain on one side of it. And on the other side, at the very bottom, under some rags, is the money which is causing you so much suffering! Good-by, my child."

"I need not add that the whole family was at once up and about; some minutes afterward we found the hoard.

"Such is my story. I shall neither retract from it, nor add to it."

HILARION MARQUAND, Landowner.

(Letter 710.)

Place des Palmiers, 34.

Following my usual methods of inquiry, I requested the writer of the foregoing to ask for confirmation of the account. I received the following reply:

I am very happy to oblige you. This morning I went to the Widow Eugène Ardouin's garden (née Baptistine Pons); she was picking strawberries. In a few words I explained to her the reason for my visit.

I read her the letter which I had the honor of writing you; I asked her if the account contained in it were identical with the one she had given as to her father's apparition. She answered, "That was it."

Then I said: "You must do me a kindness. You must send Monsieur Flammarion a simple story of the incident, as you remember it now." She began to smile, saying that that was quite impossible, since she did not know how to write! I was most dis-

tressed. I had her tell me, once more, how it had all happened; she did so with pleasure, but with much emotion. "Were you sure you were n't asleep?"—"Oh, quite sure; he made a loud noise, coming down the attic stairs; you'd have said he was dragging chains with him."—"But how was it that your bedroom—a young girl's bedroom, particularly—was closed only with a latch?"—"Why, you see," she answered, "we were n't in the habit of locking the doors, in our home."

"And the sum of money," I said to her. "How much was there?"—"Fifteen hundred francs. I still seem to see that old worm-eaten box, full of bags of grain on one side, and on the other the sum that had worried us so."

I asked, finally: "Could n't it have been your intense desire to find the money which made you dream of this sum and of your father?"—"No, no," she answered. "I was too young, then, to think of anything so practical as money. And then, how could my wish have made me discover the hiding-place?"

Such, my dear Master, is the occurrence which happened in this place. I may say, without flattery, that we all admire you too much to distort, in any way, the information we give you, that we may aid you to enlighten humanity.

MARQUAND.

(Letter 719.)

More than one discovery of the sort has been made in dreams. Was this a dream? The narrator declares that she was awake, that she heard the sound of footsteps, that the door of her room opened, that she heard but did not see her father, and that he told her of the hiding-place, *known to him alone*. Nevertheless it seems to me that all this took place in a dream. This would not, however, mean that there was no intervention on the part of the father.

The foregoing was a case of a voice heard subjectively,—but really heard,—a phenomenon caused by the deceased.

Because of my wish to consider only that which is indubitable, I related (Volume II, page 259) a curious incident

concerning a ring stolen from a dying man's finger, but classified the phenomenon among those attributable rather to the living than to the dead. A letter from Général Berthaut (dated July 22, 1921) requested me to refer to it again, in this third volume. He wrote:

We have here a clearly defined apparition, in a dream. It took place after death, since it was confirmed by the subsequent avowal. Occurrences of this nature are of immense value to those who wish to prove survival after death, because they are, unfortunately, least numerous.

(Letter 4583.)

I accede to the request with pleasure, and shall ask, simply, that pages 255 to 259 of Volume II be read once more, with care.

It would, indeed, seem virtually certain that the brother manifested himself to his sister, in a dream, about two months *after his death*.

General Berthaut had already sent me, in September, 1920, the following account. It was taken from G. Chardel's "Essai de psychologie physiologique." The author was a councilor of the Court of Cassation, and a former deputy from the Department of the Seine (Paris, 1841).

During the disturbances in Brittany there died in the village of la Garenne, near La Chèse, a weaver named Jean Goujon. He was a widower without children, and his thatched cottage was left empty and abandoned. It was harvest-time. A girl of nineteen, returning from the fields, was going to the farm next the cottage, when she drew back, screaming. She said she saw Jean Goujon, lying across the threshold of his door, looking at her. He asked that masses be said for him, and pointed out money which he had put, for this purpose, in the chimney-corner, behind a stone. The money was found, and the masses said.

(Letter 4270.)

It would be interesting to know *how* the request was made. Did she hear an inner voice? We are to-day rather exacting in our demands for precise information, all the more so because the manifestations take every form. In any case, the above incident belongs in the present chapter.

Let us read the following letter from a certain Mrs. P—— (who did not wish her name revealed) to Mr. Myers.<sup>1</sup> It is an account of a father who appeared to his son at a moment of great perplexity.

Married in 1867, my life was calm and happy until the end of the year 1869, when my husband's health failed and he became irritable. He answered all my questions evasively. On Christmas Eve, about half-past nine, he had gone to bed. He had left the lamp lighted because I was lingering for a moment near my little girl's cradle. Suddenly, to my great amazement, I saw a man in the uniform of a naval officer, with a pointed hat on his head. His face was in the shadow; it was all the more in obscurity from the fact that he was leaning on his elbow upon the head-board of the bed, supporting his head with his hand. I asked myself who this man could be. My husband had his back turned to me; I touched him on the shoulder and murmured, "Willie, who is that man?" He turned, gazed at the intruder, stupefied, then sat up suddenly and cried out, "What are you doing here?"

The form straightened slowly, then, in an imperious, unhappy voice said, "Willie! Willie!" I looked at my husband. He had grown livid and was greatly agitated; he rose from the bed as though to attack the stranger, but stood still at once, either in perplexity or fright. The form, impassive and solemn, crossed the room, moving at right angles to the wall. When it passed before the lamp, a shadow fell upon the wall and upon ourselves, as though it had been a real person. In spite of this, the phantom vanished mysteriously through the wall. My husband, still agitated, took the lamp, saying, "I'm going through the house and see where he went." I, too, was terribly agitated; however, re-

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings of the S. P. R.*, VI, 26. *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1909, p. 325.

membering that the door was locked and that the mysterious visitor had not gone in that direction, I said, "But he didn't go out by the door!" Nevertheless my husband drew back the bolts, opened the door, and went out to search the house. Alone in the darkness, I thought: "We've seen an apparition. What can it portend? Perhaps my brother Arthur is ill. [He was a naval officer and was on a voyage to India.] I've always heard it said that these things happen." Such were my thoughts as I trembled with fear, pressing my little girl against me; she had awakened. Then I saw my husband coming back, more livid and more agitated than ever. He sat down on the edge of the bed, put his arm around me, and murmured, "Do you know whom we saw?"—"Yes," I answered, "a spirit; I'm afraid it has something to do with Arthur, but I could not see the face." He answered, "It was my father!"

My husband's father had been dead for fourteen years; he had been a naval officer in his youth, then, on account of his health, he had been obliged to leave the service before my husband was born, and the latter had seen him in uniform only once or twice. As for me, I had not known him.

The next day, we told our uncle and aunt of the incident, and we could all see that my husband's agitation was not lessening.

As the days went by, my husband lost strength and was obliged to take to his bed, seriously ill. It was only then that, little by little, he confided his secret to me. For some time he had been in serious financial difficulties, and at the time when his father appeared to him he was about to heed the fatal advice of a man who would have led him to ruin, or perhaps to something worse. I cannot help seeing in this a providential warning given my husband by means of the voice and the features of the man he had most revered in his life, and the only man whom he would have obeyed.

The narrator's husband answered as follows the inquiries sent him: "I shall add nothing to my wife's story; it is rigorously exact, and the occurrence took place just as she described."

We have here the apparition of a phantom who showed

himself to be familiar with his son's affairs, thus proving himself to know things that had *happened after his death*, but which *were in his son's mind*. But the phantom was first seen by the very percipient who was ignorant of the facts in question.

Monsieur Bozzano observes that the hypothesis of telepathy must not be wholly ruled out in explaining this case, though the hypothesis becomes, here, too complex, too tangled, to be readily accepted. We should have to suppose that the percipient's husband, on the point of venturing into an undertaking which would have jeopardized his honor, thought instinctively of his father's revered memory. This brought about a corresponding telepathic hallucination on the part of his wife, who in turn, calling her husband's attention to her own thought, made objective, transmitted it to him. Thus the husband, seized with remorse at the sight of his father's phantom, must, by this supposition, have been the dupe of a supplementary *verbal* auto-hallucination, through which the phantom rebuked him in an imperious, unhappy tone—an auto-hallucination which the husband re-transmitted to his wife.

It is all very complicated! Is it not simpler to admit that there was intervention on the part of the deceased father, though such a thing be incomprehensible? Here, too, there was a financial question, and, above all, a son in a desperate position. This phantom was, apparently, real; it cast a shadow, and vanished through the wall (the fourth dimension).

We might compare this experience with more than one similar manifestation. A man on the point of being shipwrecked, with his vessel, was saved from peril by a protector long dead. Aksakof has told us how the vessel *Harry Booth*, commanded by Captain Drisko, who told the story, was saved from shipwreck while on a voyage between New York and

Dry Tortugas, in 1865. Here are the essential passages of his statement<sup>1</sup>:

Seeing that everything on the bridge was as it should be, I turned the command over to my first mate, an absolutely trustworthy officer, and went down to my cabin for a little rest.

At ten minutes to eleven I heard, distinctly, a voice saying to me, "Go up on the bridge and give orders to cast anchor."—"Who are you?" I demanded, running up on the bridge. I was surprised to receive an order. Up above, I found everything as it should have been. Nobody had seen any one at all go down into my cabin.

Supposing that I had been the dupe of an auditory illusion, I went down again. At ten minutes to twelve I saw a man clad in a long gray overcoat enter my cabin; he had a broad-brimmed hat on his head. Gazing at me fixedly, he ordered me to go up and have the anchor cast. Thereupon he went away calmly, and I heard distinctly his heavy steps as he passed in front of me. I went up to the bridge once more, and saw nothing out of the ordinary. Everything was all right. Since I was absolutely sure of my course, I had no reason for heeding a warning, no matter from what quarter. So I went back to my room, but no longer slept; I did not undress and was ready to go up, if there were need.

At ten minutes to one, the same man entered and ordered me, in still more authoritative tones, to go up on the bridge and give orders to cast anchor. I then recognized in the intruder *my old friend Captain John Burton*, with whom I had gone on voyages as a boy, and who had been extremely kind to me. With one bound I reached the bridge and ordered the sails lowered and the anchor cast. The sea, where we were, was fifty fathoms deep. It was in this way that the vessel escaped running on the rocks of Bahama.<sup>2</sup>

First, an auditory illusion; so much could be granted. In the second place, an optical illusion; this is going a little

<sup>1</sup> *Animisme et spiritisme*, p. 426.

<sup>2</sup> The details may be read in *Light* (1882), p. 303.

farther. But was this definite apparition imaginary? Events proved the contrary.

It is difficult to challenge the fact that we are here concerned with a manifestation on the part of some one dead. Surely, my readers have not forgotten the typical episode, similar to the foregoing one, of the phantom which gave this command: "Steer to the northwest." ("Uranie," page 214.)

Aksakof has told, elsewhere, how an important will was found through information furnished by the deceased person himself. On July 5, 1867, Prince Wittgenstens related the incident in the letter given below<sup>1</sup>:

A friend of mine, Lieutenant-General Baron de Korff, who has been dead for some months, manifested himself to me through a medium (without my thinking of him in the least). He ordered me to point out to his family the place where, through malevolence, his will had been hidden. It had been concealed in a certain cupboard of the house in which he died. I did not even know that the heirs were looking, without success, for the will in question. It was found at the exact spot designated by the spirit of the deceased. It was a document of the greatest importance for the management of the family estate, as well as for the solution of questions which would arise upon the sons' coming of age. Here is an occurrence that defies all skepticism.

In giving this remarkable instance of a communication from beyond the grave—supported by vouchers—Aksakof reminds us of the case of Dr. Davey's son, who revealed to his father that there were seventy pounds sterling in his pocket-book instead of the twenty-two declared to have been there. Aksakof reminds us, too, of the phenomenon connected with the carrying out of a will, made public by the London Dialectic Society. Under the heading "Identity of a

<sup>1</sup> *Animisme et spiritisme*, p. 566.

dead man's personality established by the communication of facts which could have been known only to the deceased himself, and which only he could have communicated," he gives a certain number of typical occurrences, among them the following:

Mrs. G——, the wife of a United States army captain in command of regular troops, was living with her husband, in 1861, in the city of Cincinnati. In December, 1863, her husband's brother "Jock," as he was called familiarly, died suddenly. In March, 1864, when Mrs. G——, out of curiosity, was making spiritistic experiments, she found that she was a medium. Jock's name was given her by rappings. Mrs. G—— asked him if he wished anything. By way of reply he gave her a list of debts to be paid; the details of these took up two large-sized pages of the last-mentioned work. This same chapter contains several other proofs of identity. But we already have too much testimony to warrant our giving more.

The famous hypnotist Deleuze who was, as is well known, librarian of the Paris Museum of Natural History (my readers are, surely, familiar with his principal works), related the following as an instance of the apparition of some one dead<sup>1</sup>:

A young woman who was a somnambulist and who had lost her father, saw him twice very distinctly. He appeared in a dream and gave her important advice. After praising her conduct, he told her that an opportunity for getting married would present itself; that this marriage would seem right and proper, and that she would like the young man, but that she would not be happy with him. Her father advised her to refuse him. He added that if she did not avail herself of this opportunity, another would occur soon afterward, and that all would be concluded before the end of the year. It was then the month of October.

<sup>1</sup> See Charpignon: *Physiologie, médecine et métaphysique du Magnétisme* (Orléans, 1841), p. 317.

The first young man was proposed, as a suitor, to the mother, but the daughter, struck by what her father had told her, refused him.

A second suitor, who came from the country, was introduced to the mother by friends. He asked for the young lady's hand, and the marriage took place on December 30th.

The foregoing was a premonitory dream; I have given a great many examples of dreams of the same sort. Usually they originate in the mind of the dreamer himself. But was that true in this case? Is it not plain that the father intervened?

I shall give still another case. A dead man who had just been buried appeared and made a personal revelation having to do with his son and daughter. The case was investigated with special care by Hodgson, and made public by Myers in Volume VIII (page 200) of the "Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research," in "Human Personality," Volume II, page 36, and by Bozzano in the "Annales des Sciences psychiques" of April, 1910. The following is an abridged account of it. We are now in the United States.

On February 2d, a certain Michael Coulay, a farmer living in the environs of Ionia, was found dead in the livery-stable of the Jefferson Inn. After the customary inquest, held by Mr. Hoffmann, an examining magistrate, the corpse was placed in the coffin, ready for burial. The old, soiled clothes which the farmer had worn were thrown into the yard.

When the deceased man's daughter learned of her father's death she fainted away, then came to and cried: "Where are our father's clothes? He appeared to me in a white shirt, a black vest, and satin slippers; *he had sewed a packet of bank-notes into his gray shirt*, and in doing that he'd used a piece of red cloth cut from one of my old dresses. *He warned me that the money is still where he put it.*" Then she fainted once more.

The members of the family thought this only an hallucination.

Nevertheless the doctor advised them to send for the garments, in order to calm the ill girl. The son telephoned to Hoffmann, the judge, who found them in the yard. His sister had exactly described the costume in which the dead man had been clothed, including the slippers, although she had not seen her father after his death, and although those related to him had seen his face only, through the lid of the coffin. The gray shirt was found, and in the inside of the part over the chest was found a packet of bank-notes (thirty-five dollars) sewed up in a piece of red cloth, like that of which one of his daughter's dresses was made. The stitches were long and irregular, as though made by an untrained hand.

The Rev. Amos Crum, a pastor in Dubuque, sent an attestation as to these incidents, with supplementary details; they were further confirmed by Judge Hoffmann, by the Rev. R. A. Green, Messrs. Ham and Carver, owners of a newspaper, "The Herald," Mr. H. L. Sill, a writer for this same newspaper, and Mrs. George Brown, a farmer's wife. All these lived in the same town with the Coulay family.

This account led to an immediate, careful investigation; it revealed the fact that the deceased communicated two essential bits of information, one of which (concerning the garment in which he had been clothed) was known only to persons whom the seer had never met; the other (the existence of the inner pocket and the sewed-up money) was known only to the dead man himself.

The apparition of the father and the daughter's clairvoyance are two phenomena equally remarkable.

Testimony as to identity is rare and precious; to reject it through prejudice is not honest. Some testimony emanates from particularly estimable quarters. The following account, it seems to me, is worthy of the highest consideration. Monsieur de la Roulière, residing at the Château des Loges (Saint-Christophe-sur-Roc, in the Department of Deux-Sèvres) wrote me on July 16, 1920:

I had the misfortune, last year, to lose my daughter, who was twenty-four. She was very good; she died like a saint. I also had a son, who was killed at Douaumont. He was charming, very splendid. It happened that my cousin, Madame de G——, said to me one day: "Don't grieve so about your children's death. They are very happy. Their souls are in brightness; they know perfect happiness. Your dear daughter spoke to me the other day. She said to me: 'My poor *little papa* is crying on my account; tell him I'm very happy. He tried to keep a promise he made me, but he didn't keep it.'—'What? Why, what is this promise?'—'Speak to my *little papa* about it; he'll know what I mean.' "

I was greatly agitated by my cousin's words. It was true that on the day before my daughter's death I was telling my beads with her and she said to me, "*My little papa*, promise me you'll tell ten beads for me every day."

After a month I stopped doing this. No one in the world knew of this promise. How could my cousin have known of it? It follows that my daughter told her of it.

I answered my cousin: "That's true; but I've lost the rosary that my daughter gave me."

"Come to my home this evening; I'll give you another one."

My cousin took out a box in which there were twenty or twenty-five rosaries which she was planning to give to children in the nuns' charge; she offered me one of them, a silvered one.

"Ah," she said to me, "your daughter does not wish me to give you this rosary, for my hand encountered resistance."

My cousin gave me another rosary, a black one.

"Why," I said, "that's odd; this black rosary is exactly like the one my daughter gave me."

It was true. I had found the rosary again.

Explain that, Monsieur Flammarion.

There is a further problem. My son was killed on March 4, 1916, near Douaumont. My cousin said to me one day: "My poor cousin, you think that Jean is a prisoner. Well, he is not. He was killed by a bullet that pierced his heart. His last words were addressed to his dear wife: 'Ah, Renée! My poor wife!'"

Two months afterward my son's orderly (a prisoner in Germany)

wrote me: "Your son, my brave Lieutenant, fell ten paces from me. He said as he fell: 'Ah, Renée! My poor wife!'"

How could my cousin have known his last words, which were sent me by letter three months after his death?

From that day on, without being what is called a spiritualist, I have believed in spiritualism.

DE LA ROULIÈRE.

(Letter 4200.)

I agree with my esteemed correspondent, and with his relative the Marchioness of G—— (who did me the honor of coming in person to tell me of her experiments), that the manifestation on the part of this pious young deceased woman is worthy of attention. It would seem as though she herself came to remind her father of his promise. And as he was not with the cousin, he had to be informed. But can Monsieur de la Roulière be absolutely certain that he never spoke to his cousin of his conversation at his dear child's death-bed? Then, too, could there not have been a telepathic transmission from the brain of one to the brain of the other? Would it not seem that there is, about the case, something very human? One can see how careful we must be in investigations of this sort, in order to draw indubitable conclusions.

The episode of his son, who fell on the field of battle, is equally deserving of an adequate explanation. The entire structure of psychic science is still to be built up.

The following manifestation is that of some one dead protesting against an unjust accusation. An account of it was sent me from Curitiba, Brazil, on May 21, 1921, in this letter:

DEAR MASTER:

Must not all thinking men aid you in your work, no matter in what latitude they live?

I consider it a duty to tell you of the incident given below. It

happened some months ago in Rio de Janeiro, and was much talked of.

It concerns the death of a police officer who had, in his keeping, certain army accoutrements. After his death it was found that these had vanished. This led to a meeting of superior officers, to decide on the liability of his widow.

While this meeting was at its height, and was not proving favorable to the deceased man, suddenly *an extraordinarily violent blow was struck upon the table—so violent that the ink-stands rolled to the floor.*

It was discovered afterward that the dead man was in no way responsible for the disappearance of the accoutrements.

GASTON CORD'HOMME.

(Letter 4511.)

One of our colleagues, Monsieur Léon d'Einbrodt, sent me, in reference to this phenomenon, the following comment:

It would be helpful to know if the widow of the incriminated officer were present at the inquiry, if she were there at the moment of this violent blow, because, if she were, we might believe that the blow was produced by this lady's subconscious mind—an explosion of reserve psychic force. In case she were not present, it would be easier to attribute the blow to the intervention of her deceased husband.

I recall that in his book "Vies des Dames galantes" ["Lives of the Courtesans"] Brantôme tells a story which would seem to prove the possibility of defending oneself psychically. A young woman, seeing her jealous husband rushing upon her, sword in hand, had only time to call upon the Virgin, and instantly the husband was sent rolling over the ground; but instead of getting up more furious than ever, which would have been natural, this man grew, suddenly, as mild as a dove. He was content merely to ask his wife what could have saved her.

Every one may read the story in the book by Brantôme (Dissertation I). Doubtless, we should not have gone in search of it there, except for my painstaking correspondent's erudi-

tion. . . . There was here a typical and definite mental phenomenon which comes within the scope of our investigation.

By sending letters of inquiry to Brazil, regarding the police officer's case, I received confirmation of the exactitude of the above account. But I was not able to learn if the widow were present. We may ask how her "subconscious mind" could have struck a resounding blow. We are concerned here with invisible forces. A manifestation on the part of the accused man would seem the most probable explanation.

What shall we think of the following?

On the very day of her death, a young woman who had died in bringing a baby into the world, appeared to one of her friends (a woman) and said to her, "I am dead, but the baby will live." Some days previous to this, she had said that she was frightened on account of her condition and feared she was going to die. It was in the month of June, 1879. The narrator was Mrs. Smith, head of the children's boarding-school in Amble, Northumberland (England). The apparition went around her bed, moved toward the door, which was hidden by hangings, and vanished. Much affected by this vision, Mrs. Smith rose to make an investigation, ran toward the door without finding any one, then called her sister, who was in bed in a room near by; the latter took care to make note of the occurrence in her memorandum-book. Professor Sidgwick and his wife made a careful inquiry and published a report of it. The narrator was then twenty-nine years old and in perfect health. Children were taken into her school and brought up with especial care.<sup>1</sup>

We have already noted, in Volume II (page 314) an odd case similar to the one above. A young mother died in Bruges. In a vision, her new-born baby was presented, together with its elder brother, to their mother's sister-in-law in England, Miss Lucy Dodson. In this instance Miss Dodson's own mother held the children out in her arms; she

<sup>1</sup> See Myers, *Human Personality*, II, 33 and 342.

had been dead for sixteen years. But we took care to state that the apparition could not with certainty be said to come within the scope of this third volume. There may have been here only thought-transmission on the part of the dying woman, together with an association of ideas (thought as a generator of images). The phantom of the mother holding the two children in her arms would seem to us, then, a telepathic manifestation proceeding from the mind of the woman in childbed. This fits in with what we said above, as to the visioning of phantoms (page 51).

As we see, such cases are always those of the dead, manifesting themselves because of personal affairs. It is instructive to bring them together and to compare them.

There are sometimes, among these posthumous manifestations, examples of revenge taken—dramas, tragedies. Space is lacking in which to give all of them. I should not like, however, to neglect to place before the eyes of my careful readers the following manifestation on the part of a man who had been assassinated. He appeared to revenge himself upon his murderer. Monsieur Bozzano himself witnessed it, at a spiritistic séance in which he took part. The account of it was published very recently, for in order to make it public it was necessary to await the death of the hero. Monsieur Bozzano writes<sup>1</sup>:

To-day I can speak of it in the general interest of metaphysical research, omitting, however, the name of the person chiefly concerned.

*Séance held on April 5, 1904.*—The following were present: Dr. Giuseppe Venzano, Ernesto Bozzano, the Cavaliere Carlo Peretti, Signore X—, Signora Guidetta Peretti, and the medium L. P. The séance was begun at ten o'clock in the evening.

From the beginning we noted that the medium was troubled, for some unknown reason. The spirit-guide Luigi, the medium's father,

<sup>1</sup> *Luce e Ombra* (Rome, 1920). *Révue spirite*, 1921, p. 214.

did not manifest himself, and L. P. gazed with terror toward the left corner of the room. Shortly afterward he freed himself from his "spirit-controls," rose to his feet, and began a singularly realistic and impressive struggle against some invisible enemy. Soon he uttered cries of terror, drew back, threw himself to the floor, gazed toward the corner as though terrified, then fled to the other corner of the room, shouting: "Back! Go away. No, I don't want to. Help me! Save me!" Not knowing what to do, the witnesses of this scene concentrated their thoughts with intensity upon Luigi, the spirit-guide, and called upon him to aid. The expedient proved effective, for little by little the medium grew calmer, gazed with less anxiety toward the corner of the apartment; then his eyes took on the expression of some one who looks at a distant spectacle, then a spectacle still more distant. At last he gave vent to a long sigh of relief and murmured: "He's gone! What a bestial face!"

Soon afterward, the spirit-guide Luigi manifested himself. Expressing himself through the medium, he told us that in the room in which the séance was being held there was a spirit of the basest nature, against which it was impossible for him to struggle; that the intruder bore an implacable hatred for one of the persons of the group. Then the medium exclaimed in a frightened voice: "There he is again! I can't defend you any longer. Stop the—"

It is certain that Luigi wished to say, "Stop the séance," but it was already too late. The evil spirit had taken possession of our medium. He shouted; his eyes shot glances of fury; his hands, lifted as though to seize something, moved like the claws of a wild beast, eager to clutch his prey. And *the prey* was Signore X—, at whom the medium's furious looks were cast. A rattling and a sort of concentrated roaring issued from our medium's foam-covered lips, and suddenly these words burst from him: "I've found you again at last, you coward! *I was a Royal Marine. Don't you remember the quarrel in Oporto? You killed me there. But to-day I'll have my revenge, and strangle you.*"

These distracted words were uttered as the hands of the medium, L. P., seized the victim's throat, and tightened on it like steel pincers. It was a fearful sight. The whole of Signore X—'s tongue hung from his wide-open mouth; his eyes bulged. We had

gone to the unfortunate man's assistance. Uniting our efforts with all the energy which this desperate situation lent us, we succeeded, after a terrible hand-to-hand struggle, in freeing him from the desperate grip. At once we pulled him away, and thrust him outside, locking the door. We barred the medium's access to the door; exasperated, he tried to break through this barrier and run after his enemy. He roared like a tiger. It took all four of us to hold him. At last, he suffered a total collapse and sank down upon the floor.

On the following day we prepared to clear up this affair—to seek information which might enable us to confirm what “the Oporto spirit” had said. We were, in fact, already quite certain of the truth of the accusation, for it was noteworthy that Signore X—— had not protested in the least when the serious charge of homicide had been hurled at him.

The words uttered by the furious spirit served me as a means for arriving at the truth. He had said, “I was a Royal Marine.” And I knew vaguely that Signore X—— had, himself, in his youth, been an officer of marines; that he had witnessed the Battle of Lissa, and that after resigning his commission he had devoted himself to commercial enterprises. With these facts as a basis, I proceeded to ask a retired vice-admiral for other details; he, too, had fought at Lissa. As for Dr. Venzano, he questioned a relative of Signore X——, with whom the latter had broken off all relations years before. Between us we gathered separate bits of information which tallied amazingly, and which, brought together, led us to these conclusions:

Signore X—— had, indeed, served with the Royal Marines. One day, being upon a battle-ship on a training cruise, he had landed for some hours at Oporto, Portugal. During his stay, while he was walking in the city, he heard a noise of drunken, furious voices coming from an inn. He perceived that the language was Italian, and, realizing that it was a quarrel between men of his vessel, he went into the room, recognized his men, and commanded them to return to their ship. One of the drinkers, more intoxicated than the others, answered him back and even went so far as to threaten his superior officer. Angered by his attitude, the officer drew his sword and plunged it into the insolent fellow's breast; the latter died soon afterward. As a result of this adventure, the officer was

court-martialed, was sentenced to six months' imprisonment, and, on the expiration of his term, was asked to resign his commission.

Those are the facts; it follows from them that the disturbing spirit had not lied. He had exactly stated his rank as a Royal Italian Marine. He had remembered that Signore X—— had killed him. He had, moreover,—and this was a particularly remarkable statement,—indicated the place where he had died, the setting for the drama, Oporto.

A painstaking inquiry confirmed the authenticity of all this. By what hypothesis could one explain occurrences so strikingly in agreement—those which were revealed to us at the séance of April 5, 1904, and those which had taken place in Portugal many years before?

ERNESTO BOZZANO.

That was, beyond a doubt, a dramatic manifestation. I have no criticism to offer, unless we suppose that the officer's remorse created a phantom *in the medium's mind!* This is scarcely probable. We know of threats to Dr. Gibier still more savage than this, perhaps. The carrying out of these threats was actually begun.<sup>1</sup>

It is time for us to call a halt in our special investigation of "the dead who have returned to attend to personal affairs." Like all our chapters, this one might well contain three or four times as many accounts of conclusive occurrences. Those we have just read amply suffice to prove that dead persons have manifested themselves for personal reasons, just as the dead of the preceding chapter returned to carry out promises they had made. It seems to us that the petty affairs of earthly life should no longer disturb those who are gone, and that they should enjoy everlasting rest (*Requiem æternam dona eis Domine*). Yes, so it would seem; but this is not so. They are still living. The possibility of communication with the dead is shown to be as unquestionable as that of telepathic communication from one living person to another. Among

<sup>1</sup> See *Analyse des choses* (Paris and Philadelphia, 1890), p. 196.

the cases omitted from this chapter, for lack of space, I must mention (it may be read in the book on "*Maisons hantées*" "*Haunted Houses*") that of Monsieur Sainte-Foix, father of the translator of "*La Mystique*," by Gorres. He was tormented by the spirit of one of his parents, until he had assumed the guardianship of his children. These manifestations are unquestionable, and doubt is no longer possible.

The various occurrences given here show us dead persons who returned for personal reasons. In interpreting them, the only objection which presents itself is the unknown part that the living may have had, without their knowledge, in the odd manifestations. These first three chapters state the problem clearly, and in most of the cases we have eliminated this objection.

While admitting, naturally, that we do not at present know the whole range of a living man's faculties, can we logically attribute to these faculties all phenomena the nature of which we do not know? Shall we suppose that we are making a perpetually false interpretation of that which seems real? Let us recapitulate. The unknown being which returned to strike upon the gas-fixture, as Sirchia had formally announced he would do (page 11) would seem really to have been the deceased Sirchia; the phantom seen and recognized by Monsieur and Madame Ballet-Gallifet was actually identified (page 16); the worthy woman from the café in Nantes actually came to state that she had been dead for two days (page 22); Robert Mackenzie, said to have committed suicide, actually appeared to clear himself of the false accusation (page 27); the scratch upon the body of the young American woman was quite real (page 32); Monsieur Bosan's wife, Augustine Chabert, who died in Grenoble, actually manifested herself in Nancy (page 38); Lord Brougham's friend kept his promise to show himself (page 47); the old lady in the shawl was actually seen and recognized (page 53); Canon Bouin's deceased colleague actually pushed him

on the shoulder (page 55); Adams's skeleton actually caused an uproar (page 61); Russell the singer really showed himself (page 64); Pavie, Bishop of Algiers, really paid a debt revealed by some one dead (page 76); Sarah Clarke really returned to accuse herself of theft (page 81); a father who had been dead for fourteen years actually showed himself to his son and his son's wife (page 88); Captain Drisko really avoided shipwreck through a command which came from somewhere outside himself (page 91); Mrs. Smith's friend, who died in giving birth to a child, really provided for her children's future (page 99); and as for our last case, the marine's revenge (page 102), it was equally spontaneous, and as unexpected as it was disagreeable. The hypothesis that the living—those present, those making the experiments—are responsible for such manifestations would seem, in most of the cases, not only unlikely but inadmissible. As we have already said, an incomprehensible fact is still a fact, but an incomprehensible explanation is no explanation.

We see that the investigation begun with the purpose of studying these problems has led to interesting results. I am happy to have instituted this investigation, despite the banter, the sarcasm, and even the insults of a large number of ignorant persons.

What are all of us seeking? The truth. We wish to know. What is life? What is death?

I paid a visit one day to Westminster Abbey, in London, the burial-place of great men. I read there, on the monument erected to John Gay, the following inscription—odd, for a tomb:

Life is a jest; and all things show it.  
I thought so once; but now I know it.

Whether life be a jest, a bit of sportive humor, whether it be buffoonery, irony, mystification, comedy or drama, farce

or tragedy—if those on the other side of death's door know, like John Gay, let us continue to question them.

We shall now consider a rather large number of diverse happenings, and, the better to analyze them, we shall classify them according to how long after death they occurred. We shall begin with those just after death—a continuation of Volume II. But before proceeding farther, let us not forget that by reason of what has been proved we shall know from this time on that dead persons manifest themselves, that their acts prove they see us and hear us. . We say *dead persons*, and not *the dead*, for there is nothing to prove that it is the same with all. The life beyond the grave is more complex than one might think; all souls are not alike, and do not proceed along the same path. Let us continue our inquiry; let us adhere to the same rigorous, scientific method which has led us to the results already obtained.

## IV

### MANIFESTATIONS AND APPARITIONS FROM A FEW MINUTES TO AN HOUR AFTER DEATH

Except for facts, all is but a matter of opinion. For Man there are no positive truths save those facts which he can learn through observation.

LAMARCK.

**A**S we have just said, we shall cite in chronological order all cases to be investigated. There is a necessity for our method. The subject is a serious one. We must discover reality; the three preceding chapters have already furnished us with remarkable revelations as to this reality. The subject concerns each one of us, and that which awaits each one of us, to-morrow or later, at an inevitable hour. The earth will not have turned a hundred times around the sun before you and I, dear readers, shall have entered upon a future life.

No one can have seen, in Venice, Canova's splendid and sublime tomb—so penetrating in its symbolism is the setting forth of the human soul into the unknown—without feeling deeply moved before this door partially opened upon an eternal night. Who has not experienced the same emotion before Bartholomé's magnificent monument to the Dead, in the Père-Lachaise Cemetery, which symbolizes with equal eloquence the disturbing mystery of death?

All those who think have felt the importance of the subject, and every one feels that the problem, not yet solved, can from this time on be approached only by the positive method which we have adopted; by ascertaining facts and discussing

them. The new psychic science has need of the same reasoning which the natural sciences needed at the time of the reform proposed by Lamarck. That profound naturalist wrote in 1809, in his "*Philosophie zoologique*," which transformed the whole of natural history, from mollusks to Man: "Except for facts, all is but a matter of opinion. For Man, there are no positive truths save those facts which he can learn through observation."<sup>1</sup> That is the principle I have adhered to in these pages, from the very first line of our first volume.

The scientific and philosophic importance of this is not understood by every one. How many times have people not tried to divert me from my research, thinking it could lead to nothing? Well, have not the three preceding chapters sufficed to induce us to continue our investigation?

It is only through comparative research that we may arrive at a solution of the problem. The subject thrusts itself upon us. What question-mark has ever been more challenging than this one?

But the letters which I receive from deniers and those who contradict astonish me. They come from two groups that are poles apart: ecclesiastical spiritualists and radical materialists:

Here are two examples of such letters:

Barcelona, July 15, 1900.

DEAR AND ILLUSTRIOUS MASTER:

Those about me speak of you in these terms, and in Spain unbelievers venerate you as a god. The triumphal journey you have just made there because of an eclipse of the sun is a proof of this.

But you are not a master but, rather, a slave of the devil.

It is incredible that so famous a savant should lose time, which might be put to better uses, in seeking what was revealed to us nearly two thousand years ago.

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophie zoologique* (Charles Martins Edition, 1873), I, 16-17.

No one can have any doubt as to our destiny after death. One must be totally ignorant (allow me to tell you this) not to know that the good go to heaven, the wicked to hell, and those neither one nor the other—that is to say, the greatest number—to purgatory. If these last are able to manifest themselves, it can be only with God's permission. Otherwise, they are fallen angels.

Have you never read the Gospel? Do you not know that our Savior descended into hell on Good Friday, after having poured out his blood for the salvation of the world?

What need have you to seek, then? The Church has been entrusted, by the Holy Ghost, with the mission of teaching, and it alone has the right to teach. You are a renegade, like Julian the Apostate, and you will end like him, with your Sun Cult.

You are disturbing men's souls. Let them slumber upon the pillow of Faith.

Yes, you serve Lucifer, Satan, Beelzebub, and Ashtoreth, like the Free Masons; you are a slave, while believing yourself free and a master.

Then renounce these barren investigations, which can lead you nowhere and which are compromising your reputation as a savant. This is the earnest solicitation of a former admirer, who was greatly deluded concerning you.

CANONICO DELLA VENTURA.

(Letter 1049.)

This is rather like the ideas, cited in our first volume, concerning Lourdes and the healing attributed to the Virgin Mary. Opinions are divided. A very devout Christian—one who is eager, even, to make converts—Monsieur Jean Vetter, wrote me from Switzerland, on October 7, 1921 (Letter 4710): "Only Jesus is in question. As for his mother, Mrs. Joseph, or Mrs. Mary, who does not deserve the name of Virgin because Jesus had brothers and sisters, her influence is non-existent."

These various interpretations do not concern us here. The myth of the Virgin mother is a Hindu and also an Egyptian myth which came long before Christianity. Let us give *facts*.

Here is a protest identical with the preceding one, though its antithesis:

Lyons, September 10, 1900.

MY DEAR SIR:

I did not reply to your solicitation, published by the newspapers, regarding so-called psychic phenomena, because it depressed me greatly to see a man of science, like you, seeking to begin a second such book as Julius Obsequens's "De prodigiis." You are doing this by the worst of methods: by evoking the lucubrations of all the farceurs, of all the impostors, of all the practical jokers, of all the neurotic and hysterical persons in the world, and of all those who are weak-minded, crazy, and given to hallucinations.<sup>1</sup> I can discover no explanation of what you might hope for, unless you are seeking large sales for your book; such sales you will certainly have, but at the sacrifice of your dignity as a savant.

I have not the honor of knowing you, but have been a careful reader of your works since your first book appeared. At that time I myself was a student in Paris, living at my father's publishing house, number 5 rue de Tournon, where Allan Kardec (Monsieur Rivail) was bookkeeper. He was also bookkeeper for the newspaper "L'Univers"—incognito, of course. He was a good sort, but, apart from his work, absolutely crack-brained.<sup>2</sup> I used to enjoy talks with him. The clergymen and the prelates who used to come to our house, because of the nature of my father's business, believed firmly in spiritualism, in the existence of spirits, in manifestations from beyond the grave, but stated positively that all these phenomena were manifestations of the devil. You will understand that between the clergymen and book publishers there was a professional antagonism as well as a blind and wilful faith in statements which both groups took care not to verify seriously, for fear of destroying the lucrative framework of the two professions, about which there was more coöperation than rivalry.

<sup>1</sup> Which of these epithets could be applied to a single one of the published accounts? As for Obsequens's book, my readers have long since known what I said of it.

<sup>2</sup> That is not my own opinion. I knew him personally (1861-69).

From my boyhood these visits have drawn my attention and my curiosity to so-called psychic or supernatural phenomena.

But my emphatically critical turn of mind allowed me to believe nothing without proofs. Nobody has been able to give me a single one. Every time I wished to verify, by scientific methods, some story, some account of an apparition, an evocation, or whatever so-called psychic phenomenon it was which passed beyond the sphere of the known natural laws, I found myself face to face with a void, a distressing and often painful void.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes I had no "psychic fluid," sometimes the presence of a person who did not believe halted the "spirits," sometimes I was not ready to receive their communications. Sometimes persons such as Madame Blavatsky and the theosophists admitted to me, honestly, that it was necessary to torment oneself, to addle one's brain, to hypnotize one's powers of reasoning for long years in order to work oneself into a state of—besottedness, capable of putting one into communication with the principle of universal intelligence. In short, I heard fine things talked of, but each time that I got to the bottom of such stories, I always found either gross illusions, or farces, or second-hand testimony accepted without verification by weak or disordered minds, or lies, the originators of which ended by believing in them seriously, after having told them; this last happens very often. I am not speaking of deliberate and wilful imposture, like that of the mother superior of the commune of —<sup>2</sup>, who, in order to hide her nocturnal meetings with the head mason who had built the school-house, terrorized the whole village for eighteen months—even the archbishop, who did not know what exorcism to resort to.

Later I traveled in the Orient, to do research work in natural history and the history of religions; there, Indian fakirs showed me things that were absolutely astonishing: the phenomenon of the mango-tree, levitation, the invisible carrying of certain objects to a designated spot, etc. But there is an important difference between

<sup>1</sup> The known natural laws? Where do they stop? This statement presupposes that all the men of science who have ascertained the reality of psychic phenomena have not known how to observe! To declare that these phenomena *do not exist* is contrary to truth.

<sup>2</sup> I am omitting the name given by my irascible correspondent.

all these prodigies and the study of our so-called psychic manifestations in the Occident. The Oriental marvels may be repeatedly brought about by the will of the person causing them, and may therefore be classed at once with scientific applications of natural laws.<sup>1</sup> Certainly we do not know the forces by virtue of which they are produced, but we see clearly that they are caused not by a capricious and unknowable entity, but by the working out of a general natural law. This distinction is the best criterion by which we may distinguish the true from the false—the phenomena of a scientific nature, which must be investigated, from imposture which must be exposed and deception which must be brought to light.

If the dead could come back, all of them would do so. They would come back, above all, to do useful things for those they had loved: to save innocent persons unjustly accused, to reveal treasure which they had hidden and the secrets which they know would be useful to their suffering loved ones; these apparitions would not appear to a very few persons, merely, and talk nonsense to them. As for the payment of debts, the advantage in deception is only too evident: *is fecit cui prodest*. Besides, Monseigneur Pavie may well have thought of this way of doing a service without hurting a person who he knew was worthy of his interest.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, it is very evident that if the dead could return, they would do so entirely naked. Where could they procure the clothing, long since rotted away, in which people assert that they see them? These apparitions can only be subjective; they can exist only in the minds of those who see them. Then how can they leave material traces upon furniture, upon photographic plates? There is here a dilemma from which it is impossible to escape. In short, there is in all this absolutely nothing that can be taken seriously, nothing worthy of a man of science. And as for those who have taken or are taking delight in childish nonsense of the sort, they will find

<sup>1</sup> I have often refuted this error. To think in this way is to confuse *observation* with *experiment*; astronomy and meteorology with chemistry and physics. Can one reproduce, at will, spontaneous phenomena such as the fall of a meteorite, the appearance of a new star, a magnetic solar eruption, a flash of lightning which tears a man's clothes off without killing him, etc?

<sup>2</sup> The writer is referring to an article which I had published in *La Revue des revues*, July 15, 1899. (See above, p. 76.)

much more of it in the *Acta sanctorum*; it would seem quite superfluous to compile a new edition of that work.

All this, my dear sir, is not my reason for writing this letter, which is already very long, but simply my pretext. What I wish to discuss with you is a question exclusively scientific; in this matter you may, if you will, render an incomparable service to the science of which you are master . . .

This letter, interesting from more than one aspect, held nothing new to me in the way of subject-matter, the sort of thing which has been considered and refuted a hundred times. It went on to ask me to found an observatory on Bourbon Island, upon Mount Bénard, at a height of three thousand meters—one similar, as to situation, to the Flammarion Observatory established in 1880 in Bogota, on the equator (also at a height of three thousand meters), by José Gonzalez. The letter (Number 770) was signed by that man of most estimable judgment, Monsieur E. Pélagaud, President of the Lyons Anthropological Society, Doctor of Letters and of Law.

I wished to place these two protests (selected from a large number of analogous ones among the four thousand, eight hundred letters received since 1899) before the eyes of my readers, who are well informed as to psychic phenomena. It is my wish that they themselves should judge whether reason lies on the side of those who deny, or those who seek.

I have made allowance, naturally, for cases in which there was a possibility of there being concerned farceurs, liars, and minds that were disordered or given to illusions. I have for years made careful note of such cases. (See "L'Inconnu," page 81, and "Les Forces naturelles inconnues," page 201: *Cheating, Deception, Mystification*.) Such cases exist, but constitute a minimum. In almost every instance in which I have been able to make a personal investigation I have encountered perfectly trustworthy people. A few of them may have suffered from self-deception, may have been

the dupes of illusions; but they themselves had taken the possibility of illusions into account.

Among those who have told of the occurrences given here, it would be absolutely impossible to find a farceur, an impostor, a practical joker—the terms used in the second of the letters.

It will be readily understood that the arguments just cited did not stop me. I have been considering and reconsidering them since 1865 (the date of the first edition of "*Forces naturelles inconnues*"). I have received a certain number of criticisms of this sort; I grant that most of them have been prompted by the desire to do me a service, and I sincerely thank my unknown friends. It is not to be doubted that established science, as well as the opinion of the worldly-minded, is opposed in spirit to these investigations. I have found this to be the case every time I have called attention to the problems, in various French and foreign reviews. The fruit is not yet ripe. People are afraid. Often their scruples are prompted by father confessors. Believers as well as rationalists fail to understand that my investigation concerning the existence of the human soul and its survival after this life that is so transient, so fleeting, so easily destroyed, is a study of the greatest importance—that it is conducted in a manner rigorously scientific. Such investigation constitutes the first duty of savants. People will understand some day—in a hundred years, perhaps.

We may find consolation in the fact that Lamarck was in exactly the same position when he set out to transform natural history. He was not understood before the time of Darwin.

Since I have never written anything nor done anything from personal interest, and although my independent investigations are in general taken in bad part, I shall continue my research in the belief that I am laboring in the cause of general enlightenment and freedom of conscience.

But we are not concerned with my ephemeral self (I regret to bring myself forward so often); we are concerned with the *method* here extolled, one very different from that underlying ancient beliefs and sentimental considerations. Let us study in all freedom the manifestations and apparitions of the dead. To suppose, as people do sometimes, that an apparition is an illusion because they cannot admit the existence of phantoms, comes down, simply, to this: "I do not believe because I do not believe." What logic! Is it not time to proceed as free men?

Let us begin our chronological exposition by giving the occurrences which followed closest upon the moment of death. They belong, in naturel sequence, after the accounts set forth in Volume II, of apparitions and manifestations at the moment of death. After careful analysis we attributed them to the dying, to those still alive. Nevertheless we gained an impression from several that they may have taken place after dissolution. For example, this would seem true of the last manifestation (Volume II, page 331)—that of the madman Landry, who made an uproar when the nun in the hospital came to bring breakfast to his former neighbors in the adjoining cells. Then, too, there was the apparition of the servant who had been drowned, and who showed herself to her mistress, dripping water (Volume II, page 366); and also the statements made by dead persons, expressed in these words: "*I am dead*," in the cases given on pages 282, 285, and 287 of the same volume. There was also (Volume II, page 308) the young soldier from Ivry, who was killed in the war by the bursting of a shell, on June 16, 1915, and who announced his death by three blows struck upon the door of his mother's room. There was the case of Madame Pierre Ulric's son, killed on the famous Hill 304 (upon which our attention was fixed so desperately during the whole of the German war); the manifestation followed immediately after the young sergeant's death. His mother did not hear the

noises in question before the ball struck him; probably she did not hear them long afterward. In all likelihood, she heard them at the very moment of his death: they were telephonic blows. Moreover, a question we have often asked ourselves always arises, that of time. What is duration of time? As we have said, a minute of analysis is longer than six hours of sleep.

The cases of manifestations on the part of persons who have come to announce their death are so numerous, so varied, so wholly without connection one with another, that it is impossible to doubt them. Let us consider those which followed immediately upon the moment of dissolution. I shall present in this chapter only occurrences which took place *during the first hour after death*.

Here is an odd happening, an account of which was sent me in 1900 by a Russian correspondent:

My grandfather took real pleasure in startling people in a way that was naïvely original. He would clap his hands three times if one seemed absorbed, preoccupied, and without fail if one were unfortunate enough to be half asleep.

Since he had had this mania from the time he was very young, he had several serious quarrels with strangers, or even with friends who would grow impatient. His real butt was an aged relative of his, a certain Mademoiselle Stéphanie, who was deeply devout. She liked to sit very quietly, was a little apathetic, and often dreamed away the time in a corner.

My grandfather, delighted by this propitious habit of mind, always surprised her at a moment when she least expected it, and frightened her so with his terrible clapping that she would fall, literally, into a swoon! And he would laugh, the heartless wretch, as happy as could be. He would tell her over and over again that she could be absolutely sure of hearing him clap his hands three times at the moment of his death, no matter where he died, even if it were a thousand miles away.

This had gone on for a number of years. Once my grandfather, before making a long trip, spent some weeks at Mademoiselle Stéphanie's home. Although he was particularly fond of her, he did not deny himself the pleasure of frightening her more than ever. It was a veritable mania, and he always found amusement in her terror. When he left her, he assured her once more that she could be certain of hearing him clap his hands three times at the moment of his death. Several months went by without news from him. My grandfather was still on his travels.

One evening, when she was having supper with a woman, a neighbor of hers, what did they both hear, at precisely half-past nine, but the terrible, thrice-repeated clapping of hands! Absolutely astonished, they looked in the hiding-places where my grandfather might have been, but in vain. Poor Stéphanie fell ill from it. Several days afterward she received a special-delivery letter sent by my Uncle Max. This letter informed her of the sudden death of my grandfather, at half-past nine, on November 13th, *just as they were sitting down to supper*. At that very instant they were speaking of Mademoiselle Stéphanie. My grandfather, laughing uproariously, emptied his glass and fell dead.

The district where he died is situated in the interior of Volhynia (European Russia), about a hundred and fifty Russian leagues from the château where Mademoiselle Stéphanie was living. Since there was no way of telegraphing at that time, and the means of communication were inadequate, my Uncle Max sent her a special-delivery letter, which took, I believe, nearly two weeks to arrive. All the members of my family can vouch for this incident.

OLGA POUCHKINE.

(Letter 1007.)

This is, undeniably, an odd story. It is not probable that the amiable practical joker, who died suddenly at the dinner table, thought of clapping his hands before he was dead; he must have thought of it *afterward*. We may conclude from this that death is not so dramatic an event as we suppose it to be, and that our personalities do not change instantly.

The only way of escaping the dilemma of granting the reality of this significant incident is to declare that the narrator lied! And it is the same with all similar happenings.

An account of another purposive manifestation, through the striking of blows, was given me in the following letter, sent from Paris on May 16, 1900:

On November 23, 1893, I had gone to bed at about nine o'clock. A quarter of an hour afterward very distinct blows were struck upon my bookcase. Surprised, I attributed the noise, at first, to the fact that the furniture might possibly have made a cracking sound. Some minutes afterward three blows were struck upon the wall; I sat up in bed; the moon was shining brightly in the sky; there was no sign of any wind that could shake the windows or the blinds, and I concluded that in the repeated blows there must be the warning of an event which concerned me.

I then demanded that, if this were the case, the same blows be struck upon the head of my bed (the sound had come from various spots: the wall, the table, etc.). Two or three minutes went by, and the knocking sounded again, near me, and very distinctly. It continued in this way until two o'clock in the morning, when it ceased.

The next day (the twenty-fourth of November) I was informed of the death of my nephew, Ernest Jouard. It had occurred on the preceding night. He was forty years old.

I am absolutely sure that my poor nephew thought of me, at the final moment, and that his soul came to give me warning of his departure. The hour of his death coincided with the strange manifestations.

I affirm, on my honor, the absolute exactitude of this account. It may be useful to you, since you are gathering information.

A. L. DANET,  
Paris.

(Letter 919.)

In this instance also it would be difficult not to see a very close connection between cause and effect; difficult not to think that the blows were a purposive warning, probably

on the part of a man already dead, for a dying man does not act thus. What we call "death" is a continuation of life, under another form. I did not cite this case in Volume II; it seems to me to belong in the present volume, since the replies were made with definite intent. It forms a continuation of the manifestations at the moment of death which we have already given. As we said before, it is often difficult to decide whether such and such a manifestation took place at the very moment of death, or some seconds afterward.

I am constantly receiving communications concerning unexpected revelations. A teacher in Copenhagen, who asked me not to give her name, told me that when she was about twenty years old she was in the habit of corresponding with her husband by means of thought. Both of them usually put down, in automatic writing, the same ideas at the same time. She adds:

My husband fell ill, and was being nursed in a hospital which was some distance away from me. One morning he appeared to me at the foot of my bed, seemingly in good health. It was a dream, but a dream which awakened me, and made me cry out suddenly, "You here, and well!" I gazed about, I sought for him; he was not there, of course, but I heard his voice say, in tones so pleading that I shall never forget them, "*Pray, my dear, pray.*"

On that morning he had died suddenly, the victim of an accident.

On the supposition that a large number of accounts, sent you from all countries, may help you to solve the deepest problems of the soul, I am sending you these lines, Professor, written from Denmark. They may aid in your investigations, so helpful to humanity. But if my true statement is to be published, I shall ask you not to let my name be known.

(Letter 929.)

We have always the tendency to see in such things only hallucinations coinciding with the hour of death. Is this admissible? No. There are too many cases. Arithmetical

calculation has shown the improbability of the hypothesis. This case might be open to discussion if the sick man had seemed to be dying; but he appeared to be cured. The manifestation on the part of some one dead may therefore be considered real. But why the requests for prayers? What good can they do? Here we have mystery upon mystery, and yet reality. Was it mental transmission? Was it an interpretation by a religious person's subconscious mind, a mind that believed in prayer? Was it a wandering soul?

Whether phantoms actually exist, or are only telepathic transmissions of the thoughts of the dead, we may safely say that the question is of interest to us all, since all of us must disembark upon the unknown shore.

It is inconceivable that people should prefer to know nothing for the childish reason that this knowledge may not be pleasant. The subject concerns all of us personally. But is destiny the same for all? When they leave this life, are all souls errant souls? Do not some of them take flight at once to higher spheres? Is not the invisible world as varied as ours, even more varied?

All these are questions which future science must solve.

The only way of enlightening ourselves is by comparing observations. I should like to add to the preceding communications one which was sent me at the time of my earliest inquiry. I did not publish it in "L'Inconnu," because I omitted, on principle, all anonymous letters. Since I am now better informed, after a quarter of a century of comparative research, I often find, when reading these letters again, the marks of an indubitable sincerity. Here is the letter of which I was speaking:

I was seven years old, and was at a school in Italy; my mother had gone to Vienna (Austria) with my father, where he was to be operated upon for gall-stones. On November 23d I was punished, since I did not know my music lesson, and put on dry bread. My

teacher, who was sorry for me, probably, said to me, "Go up and get your music-book and if you know your lesson, you may have dinner." The piano was in a little room on the third floor. I went up, as a matter of course, without a light; the word "fear" was unknown to me; and, besides, in our home we were not accustomed to admit that there was such a thing. I picked up my music-book and turned as I heard some one call, "Mimi, Mimi!" three times in succession. I saw my father and threw myself towards him. He was not there, and I went downstairs four steps at a time, calling out, "Papa is up there!" They went up with a light: nothing—absolutely nothing. I cried all that night; I said that my father had come back, that he had hidden himself because I had not been good, and I promised to work hard, so that he would come back. The next day a telegram reached the school: my poor father had died at half-past seven in the evening, at the hour at which he had appeared to me.

He appeared not only to me but also to my grandmother. She was my mother's mother, and therefore my father's mother-in-law, but he loved her dearly. There were three of them in the dining-room: my grandmother, her second husband, and my grandmother's daughter, when the door opened and my father came in. My grandmother exclaimed: "There you are! How splendid that you got well so soon!"

There was no one there. My grandmother said: "Let us pray! He is dead."

I can vouch for these occurrences. I should, perhaps, have forgotten them because of my youth (I am now forty-six years old), but people told me of them so often that they are engraved upon my memory; my conviction is unshakable.

I should prefer that you give only my initials as a signature.

L. M. G.,

(Letter 76.)

Venice.

After a careful reading of this account, there was no doubt in my mind as to its sincerity. The two distinct apparitions give it an especial value. And a child of seven!

These may be illusions, hallucinations, we always say to

ourselves. But, emphatically, this hypothesis of the lazy-minded satisfies us no longer. We wish an explanation. It is certain that there are, at times, hallucinations; but it is inadmissible that there be only hallucinations in all the cases cited. The following experience, for example, was so definite, so spontaneous, so unexpected, that it seems to me impossible not to consider it conclusive. It was taken from a letter which I received recently (April 17, 1921).

**MOST HONORED MASTER:**

I should never have dared to write you, if I did not feel that the modest but authentic information which I can bring to your notice may be of service in your exalted task.

I am a young engineer. I have long known you through my father, one of your earliest readers.

I had a friend named Charles, a youth of sixteen. It was in 1908. One evening, when I was reëntering my home, I heard myself called several times, most distinctly, and I recognized his voice perfectly. The voice was disturbed and beseeching, but very tender. I instantly recalled that Charles had told me that at times during our spiritualistic séances he had seen one of his uncles, who had died a short time before, beckoning to him to approach.

Disturbed in spite of myself, I did not go to sleep until very late. Then, almost at once, I was awakened by some one touching my forehead, and a voice calling me; I saw Charles distinctly at the head of my bed; he said to me: "Good-by! Good-by! All is well with me! Comfort my family! I'll come back to your séances!" And he disappeared slowly. Then there was nothing more!

As soon as morning came I ran to our friends' home. I found them greatly disturbed: Charles had not come back that night.

Instinctively—I do not know why—I thought of a little piece of ground in the country which they owned. I confided my fears to the family, and took them there.

In the garden, under the arbor, we found his body, stretched out on the ground; in his right hand he held a flask in which there was still left a little cyanide solution.

He had killed himself of his own free will, and had warned me of it through this manifestation.

There was one curious thing which struck all of us: the ground about the arbor was covered with little white flowers, which looked as though they had come up spontaneously, for I am sure that they were not there some days before, and nothing had been done to make them grow.

There, dear Master, is something the exactitude of which I can guarantee. You can verify the facts if you like, although I lost sight of this family long ago.

HENRY BOURGEOIS,

(Letter 4443.)

Macon.

There is an indubitable connection between the manifestation and the act of the man who committed suicide. The theories of the subconscious mind, of the subliminal, give us no explanation of the vision, of the utterance: "Good-by! Comfort my family! I'll come back to your séances!" These were Charles's very own words.

Those whom we have loved while they were alive and to whom we remain attached until they die do not grow to be strangers to us. They still exist, and in various circumstances we feel their invisible presence. But positive material proofs of their communication with us are rare.

From that most informative but slightly prejudiced work of the Marquis of Mirville "Des Esprits et de leurs manifestations diverses" ("Spirits and Their Various Manifestations") we take the following incident, given also by d'Assier ("L'Humanité posthume"—"Human Beings after Death"—page 41):

Monsieur Bonnetty, the present editor of "Annales de philosophie religieuse" tells us that one evening before he went to sleep he saw the shade of one of his friends, who was then in America, partially open the curtains of his bed. The shade told him that *he had just died* that very moment. The sad news was confirmed later, and that

hour was mentioned as his friend's last. Moreover, the shade wore a vest; Monsieur Bonnetty was much struck with the design on it, which was most extraordinary. He made inquiries later, and asked that he be sent the pattern of the vest. It was precisely that of the one which the apparition wore.

In this case, what rôle could the subconscious play?

The letters which I have been sent concerning manifestations immediately following dissolution are too numerous to be published in this chapter; there is one among them, however, which I should not like to omit. Madame Thénard, of the Comédie-Française, wrote me in August, 1908:

My great-grandmother perceived Etienne Thénard's death from a distance, in an odd manner. She was playing loto one evening. Since she was already blind at that time, Mademoiselle Rachel had had special cards, in relief, made for her. Suddenly she ceased playing and cried: "Stop, children! My grandson is ill!" We began to joke with Grandmother, and to say that she was disturbed without reason. How could she think that Etienne was ill? Had she not heard from him the very day before? But she insisted: "I'm sure of it. I heard two blows struck on the window." It is to be noted that she lived in a third-floor apartment, without a balcony, at 176 rue Montmartre. We believed that she had been the dupe of an hallucination, and, very gently, we made her resume her game. But after some minutes she burst into sobs and commanded in a firm tone: "On your knees, my children! Etienne is dead; let us pray for him!" Terrified by her attitude and full of sadness, each of us did as she did. We spent a part of the night grouped about her, in prayers and tears. The morning of the next day we learned, through a telegram, that Etienne had died, the day before, at nine o'clock in the evening,—that is, at the very moment when the scene which I have described was taking place. "I was sure of my misfortune," the poor blind woman moaned. "I had heard a knocking at the window a second time: it was my grandson's soul saying good-bye to me!"

J. THÉNARD,  
Of the Comédie-Française.

(Etienne Thénard, of the Opera-Comique, was born in Lyons, in 1807, and died in 1838. The first Madame Thénard was born in 1757, in Voiron, and died in 1849. She played at the Théâtre-Française from 1777 to 1819; she was the great-grandmother of our contemporary, Madame Thénard. Rachel was born in 1820 and died in 1858.)

Here, too, we have a case of telepathic transmission immediately after dissolution. Blows struck upon the windows were heard—blows which had no actual reality. It was a mental impression produced by the dead man. We found in Volume II a large number—selected from a still larger number—of fictitious physical phenomena produced by the *dying*. Those which proceed indubitably from the dead are much less numerous, less automatic, more purposeful. I shall, however, give one, among others, that is quite comparable to those in Volume II. I am taking it from an old letter, sent me in April, 1899. Here is the account:

My grandparents were living in a little town in the Canton of Savoie. Grandmamma had a brother of whom she was very fond; he lived about fifty kilometers from the town. One evening, at about eleven o'clock, Grandfather and Grandmother heard *a loud noise of falling dishes* in the kitchen, out of which their bedroom opened.

My grandfather got up to see what had happened and, to his great surprise, found that nothing in the kitchen was broken or out of place.

Then my grandmother said, after a moment of thought: "That noise was not natural. My brother is dead; I'm sure of it. Get on your horse and start off." Grandfather left some minutes later. When he had gone about twenty kilometers he met one of his brother-in-law's servants, who was coming to announce the latter's death.

He went on his way, and, when he reached the home of the man who had died, he learned that death had taken place fifteen to twenty minutes before the noise had been heard.

This statement which I have made is rigorously exact.

H. MOLLIER,

(Letter 313.)

Paris.

If I should repeat for the twentieth time that these noises seem absurd to us though they are indubitable, that would not aid in the solution of the problem. For the moment we are making sure of the reality of the synchronism; that is all. Did the fictitious noise occur at the moment of death, or afterward? I am giving the account just as I received it.

The following incident would seem to me to have followed immediately upon dissolution. In this case we are concerned with an adventure of a very personal nature. It was published, together with an account of the inquiry which established its truth, in "Phantasms of the Living," and was related by a well-known sculptress, Mademoiselle Hosmer.

A young Italian woman named Rosa who had been in my service for some time, was obliged to go back to her sister's home because of chronic ill health. When I took my usual horseback rides I often went to see her. On one of these visits, which I made at six in the evening, I found her gayer than she was ordinarily. I had long since given up hope that she would get well, but nothing in her appearance led me to believe that there was any immediate danger. When I left her I was counting on seeing her often in the future. She expressed a wish for a bottle of wine of a special sort, and I promised to bring it to her myself the next morning.

I do not remember thinking of her for the rest of the evening. I went to bed, my mind calm. But I awakened from a deep sleep with the feeling that there was some one in the room. I reflected that no one could have come in. My bed was in the middle of the room; a screen was at the foot of it. Thinking that there might be some one behind it, I cried out, "Who is there?" But there was no answer. The clock in the next room struck five. At the same instant I saw Rosa's form standing before my bed, and in some way (I cannot state definitely that it was through speech) I gained an impression that the following words came from her: "*Adesso son*

*felice, son contenta.*" ("Now I am happy and content.") Then the shade vanished.

At breakfast I said to the woman friend who shared my apartment, "Rosa is dead."—"What are you thinking of!" she replied. "You told me yesterday that you'd found her better."

Then I told her what had happened to me that morning. She laughed and said that I had been dreaming. She continued to make a jest of the matter, and even annoyed me a little by her persistence, since I was absolutely sure of having been fully awake. In order to settle the question, I sent a messenger for news of Rosa's condition. He came back with the report that she had died that morning at five o'clock.

The account was followed by a statement of supplementary details establishing the fact that Mademoiselle Hosmer was thoroughly awake at the moment of her vision. She wrote:

I heard familiar noises in the apartment below me, the noises which the servants made in opening the windows and doors. An old clock struck the hour sonorously and vibrantly; I counted "One, two, three, four, five," and decided to get up at once. It was then that I saw that Rosa was looking at me and smiling.

H. G. HOSMER.

I shall not stop to refute the objections of obdurate deniers, who continue to contradict all, blindly. We shall continue to point out examples of manifestations which occurred during the first hour after dissolution.

The apparition described below appeared half an hour after death. It is among those which bear the most convincing stamp of authenticity, and which are best explained by mutual sympathy. Mademoiselle Stella wrote from Chiari (Italy) on January 18, 1884<sup>1</sup>:

When I was about fifteen, and was spending my vacation at the home of Dr. J. G——, I formed a close friendship with my host's

<sup>1</sup> *Phantasms of the Living*, I, 532. *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 186.

cousin, a boy of seventeen. We grew to be inseparable. We worked together, rode horseback together, and shared the same amusements, like a brother and sister. He was in very delicate health; I took care of him, and we never spent an hour far from each other.

I am giving you all these details to show you that there was no trace of passion in our case; our relations were like those of two boys.

One night they sent for Monsieur G——, to examine his cousin who had suddenly fallen seriously ill with inflammation of the lungs. The poor boy died on the following night. I had been given no hint of the danger in which he was, and was not disturbed in the least about him. The evening he died I was quietly reading, when the door opened and Bertie, my friend, came in. I got up abruptly to push an arm-chair over to the fire for him, for he seemed to be cold and had no coat, although it was snowing. I began to scold him for having gone out without wrapping himself up well. Instead of answering, he pressed his hand to his chest and shook his head. I interpreted this as meaning that he was not cold, that his lungs hurt him, and that he had lost his voice—a thing which sometimes happened to him.

As I was still reproaching him for his imprudence the doctor entered and asked me to whom I was speaking. I answered: "To this poor boy without any coat, who has a terrible cold. We must lend him a coat to go home in." I shall never forget the horror and the stupefaction depicted upon the good doctor's face, for he knew (*what I was ignorant of*) that the poor boy had died half an hour before, and he had come to tell me of this. His first thought was that I already knew, and had gone mad. The doctor made me go out of the room, speaking to me as though I were a little girl. For some moments we talked to each other at cross-purposes. At length he explained that I had had an hallucination, an optical illusion; he did not deny that I had seen Bertie with my own eyes, but he gave me a "most scientific" explanation of this vision, fearing to frighten me or leave me with a painful impression. As for me, I am sure of what I saw. I was reading an amusing book, and I clearly remember that I was laughing with all my heart at some absurdity of the hero at precisely the moment when the door opened.

J. S.

The investigation brought out the fact that the narrator was neither nervous nor over-excitabile, and had never had any other hallucination.

The house in which the youth died was a quarter of an hour's walk from the doctor's house, and death had occurred half an hour before the apparition appeared. It always seemed strange to the narrator that she *heard* the door-knob turn and the door open, for it was the noise of the catch that made her lift her eyes from her book. The phantom walked across the room toward the fireplace and sat down. All seemed absolutely natural to her, and it is her opinion that the experience may have lasted almost five minutes. The room was lighted only by the large fire on the hearth, by the light of which she was reading. She lighted a candle when her friend arrived.

Thus we have the specter<sup>1</sup> of a youth who had been dead for half an hour, opening a door, crossing a room, and seeming to be cold. His constant companion did not suspect that he was dead, and spoke to him, but received no reply. This "double" would appear to be much like those of which we read in "At the Moment of Death"; it was an image produced in Mademoiselle Stella's mind by the dead boy, who was thinking of her. There was, besides, a material manifestation.

We must also give in this chapter the two following apparitions; the first of these manifested itself immediately after dissolution.<sup>2</sup> The Bishop of Carlisle wrote in the "Contemporary Review"; of January, 1884:

My correspondent, a student in Cambridge had some years before made an agreement with one of his college friends: they were to meet in Cambridge on a certain date, and were to work together.

<sup>1</sup> Read again the chapter on *Simulacres* (Lucretius, *De Natura Rerum*).

<sup>2</sup> *Phantasms of the Living*, I, 414. *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 130.

Shortly before the time set for this meeting my correspondent was in the south of England. Waking up one night, he saw, or thought that he saw, his friend seated at the foot of his bed. He was, naturally, most surprised by this sight—all the more so from the fact that his friend was dripping water. He spoke to him, but the apparition merely shook its head and vanished. This vision came back twice that same night. Soon afterward the news arrived that, a short time before the moment of the vision, his friend had been drowned while swimming.

Learning that the bishop's correspondent was Archdeacon Farler, those who were making the investigation wrote to him. He answered on January 9, 1884:

Pampisford Vicarage, Cambridge.

I told of the vision the following morning, at breakfast, several days before receiving news of my friend's death. I related it to my professor, John Kempe, and to his wife and family. I was living in Long Ashton, in Somerset County; my friend died in Kent County. Since I was not in the least frightened by this vision at the moment when I saw it, I spoke of it as a singular dream rather than an apparition of some one dead.

My vision occurred on September 2 or 3, 1868. It was repeated on the seventeenth of the same month. I have never had any sort of hallucination.

G. P. FARLER.

It was learned, from the official records, that the narrator's friend was drowned in the Crouch River on September 2, 1868.

Therefore, on the very night on which he was drowned the student first appeared twice to his comrade, and the latter saw him again fifteen days later. Was the second vision a recollection of the first? But it was not the same phantom; the first was that of a drowned man, and the second seemed clothed as usual.

In "Phantasms of the Living" we may find similar cases

of various apparitions manifesting themselves repeatedly. (Volume I, pages 415, 444, 561, and Volume II, pages, 59, 237, 256, 467, 500.) As for those who have been drowned, we have seen more than one case of the sort in the volume "At the Moment of Death," the second in the trilogy "Death and Its Mystery."

One often hears persons, when one speaks to them of ghosts, of apparitions of the dead, express the traditional belief that "these things can happen only by the special dispensation of Providence." As to this statement, Frederic Myers remarks that it involves implications the truth of which cannot be verified, since, for those who believe in a God ruling all, the words *dispensation* and *Providence* are no more applicable to these occurrences than to any other occurrences; furthermore, nothing proves that the man who has died is there himself, and that the phantom is not a "double," something projected to a distance by the deceased, an hallucinatory image. Instead of defining a *specter* as "some one dead who has been given permission to communicate with a living person," we might see in it "a manifestation of the persistence of personal energy"; an indication that a certain sort of force comes into play after death, in connection with a person who has lived upon this earth. Then, too, images may persist, though the dead man may have ceased to be the cause of them.

Communication between some one dead and some one living can be only communication between thought in a certain state of existence and thought in a wholly different state. It is not like two persons talking together. There is, on the one side, spirit that is separate from matter, and, on the other, spirit in a brain. A hypnotized subject, who is in communication only with the hypnotist, gives us a conception of these differences in the state of the spirit.

These distinctions will grow clear, of themselves, in the following pages. Let us proceed methodically.

It seems to me that no impartial reader of the preceding

accounts can doubt that dead persons have manifested themselves immediately *after* death to friends who did not know of their demise. One would have to be unpardonably and ridiculously intolerant to consider that these statements are of doubtful authority.

The occurrences given in this first chapter, selected from manifestations and apparitions classified according to their remoteness from the moment of dissolution, took place *during the first hour* after death. Let us now read of those which took place several hours afterward, up to twenty-four hours, during the first day after dissolution.

I think, however, that it may aid us if I remark that not one of the incidents given in this chapter occurred during a spiritistic séance. "Spirit" manifestations, as they are called, will take up a special chapter.

## V

### MANIFESTATIONS FROM ONE TO TWENTY-FOUR HOURS AFTER DEATH

The swarm of the dead hums and  
swells.

SOPHOCLÉS.

LET us continue our research, following the same method of approach. We shall gradually draw away from the ending of earthly life. Let us bring together, in this chapter, manifestations and apparitions observed during the first twenty-four hours after death. There is a great number of them, and we are obliged to restrict ourselves to a very limited choice.

The accounts in the chapter just read concern manifestations immediately after death—within an hour after it. Those of which we are about to read occurred at various periods from one to twenty-four hours afterward.

The first in this classification is offered us by one of my colleagues of the Royal Astronomical Society of London, the Rev. Charles Tweedale. It was related in a scientific periodical well known to astronomers, "The English Mechanic and World of Science" of July 20, 1906. We give it in full:

The evening of Friday, January 10, 1879, I went to bed early. Awakening in the midst of my first sleep, I saw the moon through the window giving on the south; its bright beams lighted up my room. At once my gaze was drawn toward the panels of a cupboard, which was part of the wall, and which served as a wardrobe. My eyes followed the shaft of light which illuminated the

eastern wall of my room, in which was the cupboard. Gazing fixedly in this direction, I saw, suddenly, a form appear in front of me, before the panels of the cupboard. Indistinct at first, it gradually grew clearer, until I recognized the face of my grandmother. I had been observing it for some seconds, when the vision melted away gradually, and disappeared in the moonlight. An unusual thing struck me, and stamped itself upon my mind: it was the fact that my grandmother had on an old-fashioned cap, which was fluted in a shell-like design. I was not in the least afraid and, thinking myself the victim of an illusion caused by the moonlight, I turned over and went to sleep again.

The morning of the next day, at breakfast, I was beginning to tell of the apparition of the previous night, when to my great surprise my father left the table abruptly. He was most agitated; he went out of the room hastily, leaving his breakfast almost untouched. I asked my mother for an explanation. She silenced me with a gesture. When the door was closed once more, I repeated my question. Then my mother answered: "Charles, I'm going to tell you the strangest thing I've ever heard of. This morning your father told me that he had waked up in the night, and that he had seen his mother standing near his bed, but just at the moment when he wished to speak to her she had disappeared."

This scene and this conversation had taken place about half-past eight, on the morning of Saturday, January 11th. Before noon we received a telegram announcing that my grandmother had died during the night. But that was not all, for my father next learned that his sister, who lived about thirty kilometers from our home, had also seen my grandmother appear. *Three* persons, therefore, had the same vision *independently*, and each attributed it to an hallucination.

There is no doubt that this apparition was that of a person passing through the change we call death, in view of the moment when this triple apparition occurred. I remember perfectly that it was two o'clock in the morning; my father made a note of the precise moment of the vision. I did not get up to look at the time, but made an approximate reckoning of it. The house faces south, and the window of the room in which I was sleeping also looks toward the south.

When I set about verifying details, I tried to find out at what hour the moon was at its highest point on the night of January 10-11, 1879. The Nautical Almanac showed the time to have been nineteen minutes past two in the morning. When the moon is at its height, the two east and west walls are lighted up equally, as well as the north wall, at the back of my room. Consequently, I am sure that the moon was not far from its highest point at the moment of the apparition, and that it was about two o'clock in the morning. This confirms in a remarkable way the time noted by my father. My aunt, too, said that the apparition which she witnessed occurred *after* death. Dissolution *took place at fifteen minutes past twelve*. This proves that we are not concerned with a telepathic or subjective manifestation, occurring before death or at the very moment of death, but with a really objective apparition occurring *after* life had left the body. We may conclude, therefore, that the dead woman, though apparently lifeless, was sufficiently *alive* some hours later to manifest herself to different persons separated by considerable distances.

As for the "garments of apparitions," I described the vision to my parents just as I had seen it, without attempting to find out if my grandmother had actually worn a cap with the trimmings which had struck me. Several weeks ago, with the idea of obtaining precise details as to this mystery, I wrote my uncle (my aunt departed this life in 1900), asking him to clear up certain interesting points, and sending him a sketch, drawn from memory, of the face I saw in my vision. Here is an extract taken from the reply which I received:

"I can vouch for the exactitude of these details, for your grandmother died in my house the morning of Saturday January 11, 1879, at fifteen minutes past twelve. Her death-agony began on Friday and she breathed her last a little after midnight, according to my memorandum. My daughter and I have a distinct memory of what my wife said when she told us of the apparition of which she had been a witness.

"You ask me if the sketch of the cap which you sent me is at all like the dead woman's last head-dress. The resemblance is *striking*. It is certainly the fluted cap which your grandmother wore the whole time she was ill and when she died; also, your description

of the phantom is in exact agreement with the dying woman's appearance at the moment when life left her. I am telling the simple truth, and can, if necessary, vouch for these details by oath."

My father died in 1885; but my mother is still living and has a distinct memory of the whole scene of which she was a witness. She confirms its essential points:

"I have read carefully my son's account of his vision, and I also remember that of my deceased husband (Doctor Tweedale). At that same time, my sister-in-law told us of the phenomenon which she had witnessed that night."

The occurrence which I have just related presents so many remarks of authenticity that we cannot hold it under suspicion. I advise those who are incredulous to inform themselves as to analogous happenings which have already been observed, and I shall add that there are many very interesting and very authentic phenomena which are still unexplained.

CHARLES TWEEDALE,

Member of the Royal Astronomical Society of London.

It seemed to me helpful to give this story in its entirety. It is remarkable in that it relates an occurrence observed about one hour and three quarters after death—one that was seen independently by three persons. Death occurred fifteen minutes after midnight, and the apparition was seen at two o'clock.

What is the explanation?

Plainly it is in this case impossible to think that there was any deception whatsoever.

In the "*Annales des Sciences psychiques*" of October, 1906, I discussed this most valuable observation and compared the hypotheses of illusion, hallucination, and telepathy.

In our present state of ignorance as to the nature of matter, energy, and spirit, attempts to discover whether apparitions exist or not can only be approved of by all friends of truth, and we must congratulate Mr. Tweedale on having made this triple observation known.

That there was an illusion, an hallucination on the part of three independent witnesses would seem to me inadmissible.

The narrator declares that so far as he and his father were concerned, the phantom was there *objectively* and that *the cap proved it*. It seems to me that the reality of the apparition may be explained on the assumption that the dead woman influenced the minds of her children, and that this suggestion took the form of an image. A dead person may act upon a living person at a distance; may manifest himself under one form or another, doubtless by an impression made upon the brain.

Let us continue our investigation. The apparition of which we have just spoken was seen one hour and three quarters after death. Here is one, that of a mother to her daughter, seen a little later.

I owe my acquaintance with this remarkable story to a kindness of the brilliant poet Auguste Dorchain. The account was set down in 1821, and is of a very clearly defined case of telepathy. The observation was made at a time when these phenomena were not known and had not been given a name. The dramatic incident was taken from Colonel Voutier's<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs*. He was an ardent philhellénist; in the middle of an account of his campaigns in Greece appears the story of an apparition, in a dream, immediately after the death of a Turkish woman who had been assassinated. The soldier historian was neither a braggart nor over-credulous; he does not undertake to explain the mystery, but gives an honest account of it. Here is the story:

*October, 1821.* Before taking up my narrative (it will carry me far from Tripolitza) I yield to my desire to relate a remarkable occurrence.

<sup>1</sup> *Mémoires sur la Guerre actuelle des Grecs* (I vol. Paris, Bossange, 1823), pp. 97-100.

A young Turkish girl was brought me by my soldiers. She was beautiful, and her fear of the misfortunes which in the case of a girl of sixteen follow upon captivity in a country where the enslavement of women is so odious—this fear made her still more interesting. I accepted the present of her which they made me, and in order to reassure her, I gave orders that she be placed in separate rooms and treated with all the regard due her sex and position. The procedure filled my captive with astonishment; she showed her gratitude by tears.

A few days went by and my kindness to her and, above all, my restraint, so foreign to Mohammedan ways, had won her affection and her confidence. I used to spend a little time with her, trying to console her. Since she was separated from her mother, I was the only one to whom she could confide her grief. She loved me as a friend, and I was attached to her by that spiritual satisfaction unknown to him who reads these lines with a mocking eye. (A firm resolution which I had taken to save a young girl in all this upheaval, and the necessity of giving my soldiers an example of a virtue which they were beginning to forget forbade any other sort of relation with the pretty slave.)

One day I saw her approaching me, her head bent low and her eyes full of tears. "What's the matter, my girl?" I asked her. "Won't you ever be able to get over your sadness?"—"Oh, I have a good reason for crying! They've killed my mother."—"Who told you?"—"She did."—"When?"—"Last night. I *saw her*; she spoke to me, and said: 'See, my daughter! The wicked men have killed me.' And she showed me her neck, which was cut through; there was another wound in her side. 'Dig a grave for me,' she added. 'And the spade, my dear mother!'—'Dig up the earth with your nails, my daughter.'"

That I might calm the unhappy child, I gave orders that information should be sought as to what had become of her mother. They came to tell me that a woman had been found dead, with wounds that were still bleeding, in her neck and side. I asked Emmé, who was still depressed, how we could recognize her mother. "She wore trousers of this material." I went to the spot where the body was; I secured a piece of the trousers and showed it to the young girl: "Was your mother's garment made of material like

that?"—"Yes, it was really my mother; you found her, but you found her dead. Poor Mother!" And, summoning all her strength, she threw herself upon me, to seize my dagger and kill herself. I stopped her, and, that I might turn her from her fatal course, I told her that they had carried off her mother and sent her to Asia. This lie calmed the unfortunate girl.

I confess that the memory of the occurrence made an extraordinary impression on my mind. I do not believe in nocturnal revelations, and nevertheless I am still utterly at a loss when I think that the terrible reality corresponded to the young Turkish girl's dream; we must see in this at least a strange trick of fate.

I have the consolation (it is very gratifying), in ending this sad story, of being sure that poor Emmé is happy; a respectable family of the Peloponnesus adopted her.

We can but repeat here what we have said of certain other happenings: chance coincidence is possible, since the young girl was uneasy as to her mother's fate; she may have dreamed that she saw her assassinated. But one cannot help pointing out (1) that this was no ordinary dream, and that the impression received was most violent in its intensity; (2) that the wounds were seen, that the drama was lived through. Though *possible*, the chance coincidence of a dream is quite *improbable*. Moreover, a considerable number of similar cases that are, to-day, known, and have been investigated and discussed, would lead us to consider that the probability of telepathic communication approaches certainty. We have been prepared for this by Mrs. Tweedale's phantom, and by all the others.

The apparition of the mother to the daughter, in a telepathic dream, would appear to have occurred a short time after she was assassinated.

According to the law of probability, hallucinations representing such and such persons should not coincide by chance with some particular event—for example, the death of these persons—in greater proportion than it should with other

events. If this proportion is exceeded, we have some warrant for excluding the element of chance and, as a consequence, for thinking that the phantom had a real cause.

My readers may remember reading of a phenomenon concerning two members of the same family which rather recalls the preceding case: it was a most remarkable apparition of a dead man to his brother, several hours after dissolution. I gave the story in "L'Inconnu" (page 450). It concerned Mr. Frederic Wingfield, Belle-Isle-en-Terre, Côtes-du-Nord, who writes:

On the night of March 25, 1880, I dreamed that I saw my brother, Richard Wingfield-Baker, *seated on a chair before me*. I spoke to him; he merely bowed his head in reply; then he rose and left the room. I awakened and found that I was standing, one foot on the floor near my bed and the other on my bed, and that I was trying to speak and utter my brother's name. The impression that he was really present was so strong, and the whole scene was so lifelike, that I left the bedroom to look for my brother in the drawing-room, where I found no one. I then had a feeling of impending misfortune, and I made a note of this "apparition" in my daily memorandum, adding the words: "May God prevent it!" Three days afterward I received news that my brother had died that day, at half-past eight o'clock, as a result of a fall when hunting.

Death, therefore, had preceded this well-defined vision, by some hours.

The objection which we raised as to the reality of the apparition of the young Turkish girl's mother would not apply in the present case. Thus one occurrence confirms another.

The following experience was not less conclusive. It took place when the observer was fully awake, and even out in the open air. A person was seen—seen clearly, and recognized with certainty—two hours after her death, by a gardener who

did not know that she had died. A special investigation of the incident was made by Frederic Myers.<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. C. T. Forster, pastor of Hinxton, wrote on August 6, 1885:

My late parishioner Mrs. de Freville was a rather eccentric lady; she had, in particular, an abnormal interest in graves. Two days after her death, which occurred in London in the afternoon of May 8th, I heard that the gardener, Alfred Bard, had seen her that same evening (May 8th). I sent for him, and he gave me a very clear and very detailed account of what he had seen.

He is a man who has the habit of observing carefully. He educated himself as a gardener, and I am convinced that he is speaking the truth without any exaggeration. I am absolutely sure, also, that news of Mrs. de Freville's death could not have reached Hinxton before the next morning (May 9th). She was found dead at half-past seven in the evening. She had been left alone in her room; she was rather unwell, but was not believed to be seriously ill.

C. F. FORSTER.

Here is Mr. Alfred Bard's own story:

July 25, 1885.

I am a gardener; I work at Sawston. When I go home from my work I always go through the Hinxton cemetery. On Friday, the eighth of last May, I was returning as usual. When I was in the cemetery I looked down rather closely at the lawn, at a cow and a donkey lying there just within the gateway. As I lowered my head I glanced in the direction of the square vault where Mr. de Freville had been buried. Then I saw Mrs. de Freville leaning against the grating, dressed just as I used to see her ordinarily; she had on a hat of the sort called a coal-scuttle bonnet, a black jacket trimmed with crêpe and a black dress. She looked straight at me. Her face was very white—much whiter than usual. I

<sup>1</sup> See *Phantasms of the Living*, I, 212, and *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 235.

knew her well, for I had worked at her home for some time. I supposed that she had come, as she sometimes did, to go into the mausoleum, and thought that Mr. Wiles, a mason from Cambridge, must be in the tomb, busy about something. I walked all around the door, looking closely to see if it were open. My eyes were riveted on her, and I myself was not more than five to six meters from her. She turned her face toward me, following me with her eyes. I walked between the church and the tomb (they are about four meters apart) looking to see if the tomb were open, for she was in just such a position that she hid the door of it from me. When I turned around she was gone. It was impossible for her to have left the cemetery, because to reach either one of the two exits she would have had to pass me.

I was, therefore, convinced that she had gone into the tomb quickly. I went toward the door, which I expected to find open, but to my great surprise it was locked. As a matter of fact, it had not been opened at all; there was no key in the lock. I hoped to be able to look into the tomb itself; I shook the door to make sure that it was firmly locked, but there was no sign that any one had been there. Then I was very much frightened and looked at the clock; it was half-past nine. When I got home, I asked myself if what I had seen had been a product of my imagination; I told my wife of it, however. When, the next day, I was told that Mrs. de Freville was dead, I was so startled that it made me jump. I have never had any other hallucination.

ALFRED BARD.

A statement, sworn to by Mrs. Bard (space is lacking to give it here), confirms the truth of the account.

Forster, the pastor, took Mr. Myers through the Hinxton cemetery, and the description of the place was found to be absolutely exact. Furthermore, the date of the death was verified, by looking at the "Times."

Shall we think this experience an hallucination? But (1) the worthy gardener had never had one; (2) the apparition followed the death, which he did not know of; (3) the woman, original in her way of thinking, loved to visit graves.

This too was, unquestionably, an apparition some hours after death. The phantom's garments demand an explanation. We may think that the woman who appeared remained faithful to her habit of visiting the cemetery (she was, moreover, destined to be borne there herself), and that her invisible, spiritual presence had an effect on the gardener's mind and showed him a corporeal image.

The following case is, perhaps, still more curious.

A young woman who had just died, suddenly, showed herself to her doctor. She died at one o'clock in the morning, and the doctor was awakened at four o'clock by a bright light in his room and a woman's form which he did not recognize. Let us give the story; it was published by Podmore in his "Apparitions."<sup>1</sup>

The doctor wrote from Albany (U. S. A.) to Dr. Hodgson on September 10, 1888:

I am a physician, have been practising for eleven years, and am in excellent health; I have never believed in apparitions.

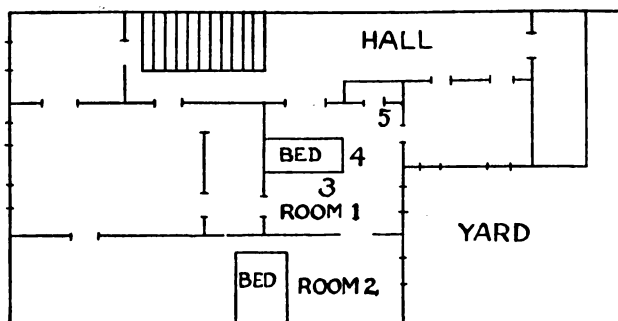
Last Monday, on September 3d, I went to bed about eleven o'clock, after my daily work. I had dined very lightly, at seven o'clock.

My bedroom is on the second floor, and I lock all my doors except the one communicating with my wife's room. Below is the plan of our apartment.

I occupy room Number 1, and my wife Number 2; her room has only one window and only one door, communicating with mine. My room has three doors, locked at night, and one window. The two windows of our rooms are hung with thick green curtains, which fall below them in order to exclude the light from without. No artificial light shines on the windows, and moonlight scarcely reaches them.

I undressed, went to bed about eleven o'clock, and was not long in going to sleep. About four o'clock in the morning I was awakened by a bright light in my face. At first I thought it was my wife, standing at the point marked 3, for she was to get up at

<sup>1</sup> *Apparitions and Thought-Transference* (1915), p. 401.



half-past five to catch a morning train. The light was so brilliant that I began to ask her questions at once, but no voice answered me. While I was speaking, the person I had seen withdrew toward point 4 and seemed gradually to disappear toward point 5. The light, gliding along silently, made me think that it was a servant crossing the hall, and that the light he carried had passed through the keyhole. But this was not possible, for hangings hid the lock. Then the idea occurred to me that a thief might be in the other room. I shouted to my wife to strike a light at once. She awakened and asked me this unexpected question: "Why, what's that brilliant light in your room?" I lighted the gas in my room, made a search and found that there was no light in any of the rooms.

My wife left on the morning train. I busied myself with my work as usual.

At noon, when I went back home, my servant informed me that during my absence a man had come to ask me for a certificate for a young woman who had died suddenly at an early hour in the morning, as a result of a hemorrhage of the lungs. She had died about one o'clock. I had seen the apparition about four o'clock. So far as I was able to note, there was no great resemblance between it and my patient, except in the matter of height. The lack of facial resemblance was not so great, perhaps, but the apparition had seemed much older to me. I had seen the young woman on the previous evening, and her illness had not seemed to promise any immediate danger: she had been ill for only two days. She had at first spit a little blood, as a result of having strained her-

self. When the hemorrhage occurred that morning she had called for help and had uttered my name.

This is the only phenomenon of this nature that has come within my personal experience. The apparition was very clear, but it vanished rapidly. My wife had noticed the light before I said anything to her, at the very moment when I awakened her. As for me, I had got up at once when the luminous apparition appeared, for I am accustomed to answer the telephone during the night.

It would seem clear that we must see here a cause-and-effect relation, and that the dying woman—or the dead woman—produced the manifestation. Chance cannot be made an explanation.

Frank Podmore, in conformity with his title “Apparitions and Thought-Transference,” is willing to see only a case of transference of thought from the young woman to her doctor, before her death. But is this really the explanation?

In the first place, the phenomenon occurred three hours after death. Why should the dying woman’s summons have required this time to take effect on her doctor, who was accustomed to awaken for telephone calls, and who did not, therefore, sleep very deeply?

Then, what caused the light, seen by two persons? It could not be attributed to an hallucination.

The question of deciding whether the light and the apparition were caused by a person still alive, or by that same person three hours after death, is put before us flatly. No subterfuge will avail. We must decide without preconceived ideas, without prejudice of any sort.

Would not the simple, logical answer seem to you to be that the dead woman manifested herself, rather than that there was a strange case of thought-transmission and that the thought remained latent for three hours in the doctor’s mind and then resulted in the light and the phantom?

Let us note that, unlike the apparitions of Mr. Tweedale’s

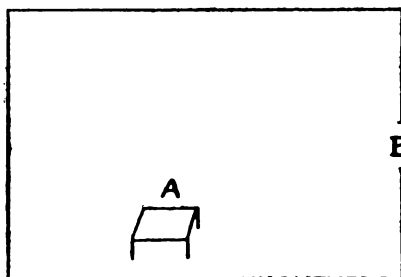
grandmother, of the young Turkish woman's mother, of Mr. Wingfield, and of Mrs. de Freville, this phantom remained very vague. The impressions received are most varied. Here is another example:

A native of Bordeaux heard a door open and felt that some one had just come in behind him and sat down at a table. He looked round. It was his uncle, who lived in Laroche-foucauld; he had killed himself at five o'clock in the morning. It was then half-past nine. Let us listen to the narrator's story:

In 1888 I was in Bordeaux, in the rue du Palais-Gallien, living in an apartment arranged according to the little diagram which accompanies this note.

At half-past nine on the morning of February 27th (the weather was quite good) I was seated at the point A, before my work-table, when I suddenly had the impression that the door B had just opened and that some one, who had entered noiselessly, was standing behind me.

I turned toward the left and saw, very distinctly, my uncle G—. The vision was of rather short duration.



About a quarter of an hour afterward I was interrupted in my work by the arrival of a telegram announcing that my uncle was very ill, and asking me to go to him in Laroche-foucauld, Charente. The telegram had been taken to the telegraph office a little after eight o'clock.

I left immediately, and upon my arrival I learned of my uncle's death. He had fired two bullets into his head, and the doctors said that death had occurred at five o'clock in the morning. When I saw him in the apartment in the rue du Palais-Gallien, he was wearing the same clothes that he had had on at our last interview, about eight days before that time. I had been carrying on a brisk correspondence with him. Upon my arrival I found several letters from him that were intended for me, written during the night which preceded his suicide.<sup>1</sup>

Another occurrence. A woman, in excellent health and under absolutely normal conditions for observation, saw her uncle appear, for several minutes, seven hours after his death, which she did not know of.<sup>2</sup>

On Tuesday, May 25, 1897, at eight o'clock in the morning, Mrs. de Lagenest was in her apartment in Fontenay-le-Comte, making her bed in the absence of her maid, when, on the other side of the bed (which was in the middle of the room), she saw her uncle, Monsieur Bonnamy. He was living in Loché (near Loches), and she believed him in good health. She saw him smile happily, but this apparition distressed her, and she walked to the other side of the bed, hoping to escape it. To her great surprise, she saw her uncle in the spot which she had just left. Then she spoke to him, asking the reason for his presence. She received no reply from the apparition; ceasing to smile, it gazed at her in a kindly way. Madame de Lagenest attributed this obsession to an hallucination. To escape its gaze, which disturbed her, she went down to the rooms on the ground floor, and went into her husband's office. The same phantom rose before her. "But Uncle, why have you come here? Are you dead?" The apparition vanished immediately after Madame de Lagenest had uttered these words.

She went to take a walk in the garden, to regain her self-control. Half an hour afterward, hearing some one ring the door-bell, she said to the servant near her, without having seen the person who had just arrived: "Go and get the telegram that's come; my

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1897, p. 114.

<sup>2</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1900, p. 65.

uncle is dead." This was true; Monsieur Bonnamy had died in Loché on May 25th, at a quarter-past one in the morning.

According to Madame de Lagenest, the vision lasted for ten minutes. It caused her excessive fatigue, which did not disappear until very late in the evening.

F. BODROUX.

We may legitimately think that this was an optical illusion; but we must not accept one-sided reasoning. These were *illusions corresponding to reality*. As a matter of fact, the uncle appeared to his niece seven hours after his death, which she did not know of.

We are familiar with many observations of the same sort. Have we not already read, in Volume II, page 140, of the apparition of a friend seen in an arm-chair in a drawing-room twelve hours after his death? To think that all these things, seen spontaneously, are illusions, is an hypothesis that grows less and less admissible, given the number of the phenomena and the normal conditions under which they were observed.

The sensation described below, experienced by a son after his mother's death, would seem to have been due to the influence of the mother, who was dead and happy at her deliverance from earthly life. The communication, sent me on December 11, 1920, by my friend Warrington Dawson, an American diplomat already known to my readers ("Before Death," page 130), is doubly interesting by reason of the strange premonition recounted in it. Here it is:

Sixteen months before her death my mother saw herself lying dead in the spot where she was to die as the result of a chance cold.

In January, 1908, we were under the necessity of finding an apartment very quickly. One morning I had found one with which I was most satisfied, in the rue de l'Université. When I went back to luncheon with my mother, in the rue de Varenne, where we lived, I proposed that she go and see it at once, telling her that if she liked it I would find the agent immediately and sign the lease.

We did this. My mother seemed as satisfied with it as I. As we were passing from one room to another, she talked to me of how we would arrange the furniture and the pictures. Lastly, we arrived at the threshold of what was to be her bedroom. Suddenly I saw her face grow pale, and she fixed her eyes upon the central panel of the left wall; I had never seen such an expression on her face. I uttered an exclamation, and asked her what was the matter. At the sound of my voice a shiver ran through her body; she recovered herself, and answered in a strangled voice: "It's nothing; I'm cold."

As it was January, and the apartment was unoccupied, this seemed natural to me, and I thought no more of the incident.

Some weeks after we had moved in I was more than surprised to learn from my friends that my mother was very unhappy in our new apartment; that she had a horror of it and bitterly regretted my haste in signing the lease. I asked her for an explanation, for I should never have taken an apartment which was not to her taste. She seemed very much embarrassed; she said that our friends should not have repeated an unconsidered statement on her part. But her confusion showed me clearly that she was hiding something from me. I insisted, and she answered me with futile objections.

I returned to the attack several times, only to see that she was always hiding her inmost thoughts from me. At length I persuaded her to open her heart to me. She then said: "It's this. When I reached the door of my bedroom, *I saw myself lying dead on that bed*, which was where it is now. Then I knew that I should leave this apartment in my coffin."

At these words I remembered her expression on our first visit. She had approved of everything until that moment, and had then let me make all arrangements without protesting.

By force of argument I tried to banish her ideas, calling them morbid. Since I did not succeed, I proposed that she go and spend some months with my sister, in America. She left, and did not return until December. I asked her if she still wished to move out; I did not remind her of her vision, hoping that she would have forgotten it, for she seemed in very good health. She answered simply that she would never be happy in that house, and asked me to give up the lease.

I obtained the owner's permission, but on condition that I find another tenant. I began to look for one immediately, and succeeded. It was then that I left for Africa, unexpectedly, with President Roosevelt, in April, 1909. She made preparations to move out. It was a strange thing that in one of the last letters which she wrote me, she spoke of her packing and added, "I am preparing for the great Exodus." This letter, written from the rue de l'Université before her illness, did not reach me until long after her death.

But friends had telegraphed me that she had developed pneumonia, and was seriously ill. Day after day the cablegrams succeeded one another, and left me no hope. It was with terror that I used to wait until the afternoon, when the telegrams were given me; day and night I was oppressed with a feeling of inevitable and imminent catastrophe.

One day, May 5th, I experienced, suddenly, an indescribable relief. I felt her presence near me; I was pervaded by a heavenly well-being such as I had never known.

I thought at once of the telepathic bonds which had united us for long years. My only idea was: "The crisis is past; my mother is saved, and in thinking of me she has transmitted her relief."

I was completely happy for the first time since I received the first telegram. At sunset I heard my name being called; a native had come with a telegram, as usual. I rushed out to him. I opened the envelope: *it announced my mother's death!*

I was absolutely thunderstruck by this news. I thought that she was alive; she had transmitted her thought to me; I had been in mental communication with her, and she was dead! Her loss would have been terrible for me, even if I had been prepared for it. Since I was no longer prepared, it was like a blow with a club.

It took me several years to comprehend the truth. My mother had indeed sent her thought, but from what we call the other world. She had made me feel her presence, had made me experience her relief, her celestial well-being, had expressed to me all her mother-love, showing that our souls could not be separated. I had been able to hear, but not to understand.

As nearly as I could compute the time, this occurred *several*

*hours after her death* in Paris; her soul had required this delay, either to accustom itself to a state of eternal life after leaving this life, or to make itself felt by me through the veils of the flesh.

WARRINGTON DAWSON.

(Letter 4352.)

There was nothing material about the manifestation. It was none the less remarkable on this account, and I was all the more ready to accept it as genuine from the fact that I had for many years known of the profound affinity which united this son to his mother. Both of them were endowed with special psychic faculties. As we remarked above, the manifestations of the dead are extremely varied.

The following apparition, twelve hours after death, bears, like the preceding one, all the marks of authenticity. The writer is already known to us (Volume II, pages 360-361). It was sent me from Münster on April 22, 1899.

I am a man in good health, aged forty-seven. I am straight and tall, moderately stout, and good-looking. I have a good appetite and sleep well. I was formerly employed in a telegraph office. I am a free thinker. One of my friends died on April 9, 1898, on the night before Easter, at six o'clock in the morning. He appeared to me in my room and began to look at all the pictures with war as a subject which were hung there; I had promised to show them to him. Some days before his death, when I told him that he was looking better and that a French cuirassier of 1870 could not die before Alsace had been freed, he had answered that he was going to get well to see my fine pictures. I recognized him, though he was in a shroud and no longer had his characteristic mustache. He stayed for a long time looking at my pictures, then nodded to me in a friendly way and vanished suddenly. I was fully awake. I went, that very morning, to the house in which he had died, and found that his mouth and mustache had been covered with a white cloth.

JEAN LAU.

(Letter 618.)

Judging from the writer's description of himself, it would be difficult to admit that there was in this case an hallucination, an affection of the nerves, or an illusion caused by imagination. No conclusive argument could be brought forward to prove that it was impossible for a dead man's spirit to have paid a visit to his friend some hours after dissolution. There is nothing absurd, either, in the possibility that his image was transmitted, together with his thought. It was a telepathic transmission on the part of some one dead. The account confirms what we said in Volume II.

Similarly, it was twelve hours after death that the curious incident given below occurred. It, too, was related to me at the beginning of my investigation, in March, 1899, in the following letter, written by a boy about twelve years old:

I did not know what fear was. One of my cousins, with whom I had taken a walk the evening before and talked with until half-past nine, died suddenly at eleven o'clock.

At four o'clock in the morning (it was in the month of August) I left the farm, to go to school as usual, but earlier than I generally did, to report his death at the town hall.

At eleven I usually went to ring the bell and wind the clock. The latter was in the tower of the church. In order to reach it, it was necessary to climb a long spiral staircase and cross a loft about twenty meters long. The teacher stopped me that day and said to me, "If you don't want to go up alone to wind the clock to-day, stay down, and I'll go myself."—"I?" I said. "Why should n't I want to?"

I am telling all this to explain my state of mind at that moment. I remember very well that I said to myself, "How funny that the teacher asked me that question!"

When I reached the loft I was, therefore, very much surprised to see my cousin standing there, hiding a part of the door which led to the clock. The light from the window in the roof fell right on his face. He was in his working-clothes, and was looking at me hard, his face a little sad. I picked up a small iron bar which lay on the floor, and, going forward, I threw it right at the appar-

tion. The bar struck the door with a dull sound and the illusion—if it was an illusion, for your accounts make me doubt this—vanished. Then I wound the clock and went away.

My cousin was on my right, in the loft, leaving me a free passage this time, and smiling. "This is too much!" I said out loud, as if to prove to myself that I was not dreaming. The phantom made a movement as though to raise its arms, and disappeared suddenly.

I went downstairs quickly and told my story to the teacher, who said to me, "Now you'll know what fear is."

(Vouched for by) J. TURQUIN, Instructor,  
Ardennes.

From the evidence in the account, it would really not seem possible for the boy (who was absolutely calm, whose mind was at rest, and who was care-free, as was natural at his age) to have been the dupe of an illusion—above all, one that occurred twice—and not to have been affected in any way; he regarded it merely as a curious, causeless phenomenon demanding investigation. The fact that he threw an iron bar at the phantom demonstrates that there was an utter absence of fear on his part. He was astonished, merely, and had not the least idea that this was possibly a manifestation on the part of his friend. His was a purely automatic movement. This apparition, twelve hours after death, was spontaneous.

Following my usual method of investigation, I asked the writer of the narration if the instructor of whom he speaks could confirm his story. I received the teacher's attestation; it gave me an impression that *he himself had seen the apparition*.

Here is another communication, sent at that same period:

Montbéliard, March 26, 1899.

On a certain evening of the year 1888, my son-in-law, who was living in Haute-Loire, appeared to me. It was about eleven o'clock, and I was thoroughly awake.

On the following day I learned that he had died on the morning of the previous day, at eleven o'clock. It is noteworthy that I had no reason to believe him ill, and that he died suddenly.

I shall ask you to give only my initials, if you publish my letter.

C. H.

(Letter 210.)

It should be pointed out that this apparition, twelve hours after death, occurred without the observer knowing of the death.

I should like to give only concise, very short accounts, of the sort which we have just read, that I might offer a larger number of them; but there are cases in which details are indispensable, such as the following one.

A dead woman who did not believe that she was dead, announced her death! I take from a letter sent me from Cherboung on October 10, 1921, the following:

Madame Boullier, on a certain night (September 13-14, 1918) thought that she was awake, and heard some one calling her by name. Her first thought was: "Why, I was asleep, since I was dreaming." But at that moment she heard once more: "Madame Boullier!" Sure of being awake this time, she looked about her and saw, between the window and the cupboard, the bust of a woman which had emerged from the wall and was speaking to her. "Who are you?" she demanded.—"You don't recognize me?"—"No."—"But you bought fish from me this morning, at the market; I am Mother Arondel."—"Oh, indeed! What would you like?"—"Why, I must be dead; I saw my body stretched out on the ground and my children around it, crying. I tried to talk to them, but it was no use; they did n't hear me."—"How did you die?"—"I flew into a temper when I was going home, and then fell down. I saw my body on the ground, and people all around it; still, I'm not dead!"—"Well, what would you like?"—"You must go and tell the people at home that I'm not dead."—"No, they would think I was crazy; I can't do that. Go away, my good woman."

Then the apparition vanished, sliding sideways through the wall.

Early the next morning Madame Boullier went to call on one of her neighbors, Madame Micheau, and told her of the apparition. They went to the market to verify the happening. A bit of paper, glued to her stall, announced Mother Arondel's death, and the other venders explained that she had died suddenly, as soon as she got home.

GASTON THORIN.

(Letter 4712.)

I made an investigation in Cherbourg, that I might verify these statements, and I wish to thank the writer of the letter for his care in making the inquiry. Several persons took part in it. At the town hall the record of births and deaths gives, as the date of death, September 13, 1918, at one o'clock in the afternoon: the widow Arondel, born on February 22, 1846. A neighboring fishwoman stated that she had seen her at noon, on the day of her death, when she left the market, and had learned upon her own return at two o'clock that Mother Arondel had died suddenly at one. The attestations are all the more convincing, so far as I am concerned, from the fact that I myself was in Cherbourg in September, 1918.

In this case we must remember that the dead woman did not believe that she was dead; her apparition appeared about twelve hours after death.

The following manifestation proceeded, plainly, from some one dead, like the one above, and not from some one living or dying. A young man died, in Paris, on January 8, 1908, in the afternoon, at a hospital. His grandmother, who lived in Vierzon, had, on the following night, a nightmare in which she saw the face of her grandson, passing and repassing behind the window-panes, and gazing at her. He vanished, and she saw him stretched out dead upon a kind of slab. The vision occurred ten or twelve hours after death. Let

us listen to an account of the happening, related by a competent judge. I am taking it from a letter written by Dr. Fernand, in Vierzon:

You are, above all, seeking facts. Here is an incident which chance brought to my notice; it will, perhaps, be of interest to you.

Let me tell you, first, that I am thirty-nine years old and that, personally, I have no preëstablished convictions as to any philosophic system. But I am of the opinion that we do not know all, and that it would be *contrary to scientific principles to deny the inexplicable*.

As a physician, I have under my care, here in Vierzon, Madame X—, who is about seventy years old (allow me to omit her name). She is most intelligent, and is nervous to the point of having been neurotic in her youth. I am now giving her treatments for attacks of asthma.

Upon her request, her daughter, who was living in Paris, had come to live with her in December, 1907.

During the night of Wednesday to Thursday,—from the eighth to the ninth of last January,—about two o'clock in the morning, the invalid called her daughter and demanded a light, saying: "Light the lamp. I've had a terrible nightmare." These were the only words she spoke. The following Sunday, she said to her daughter, "You can't have eaten much for breakfast." And, after her daughter had shown her astonishment: "You can't have eaten much, for you are suffering a great deal. It's useless to keep it secret: your son is dead. The other night, when I called you, I had seen his face; it passed and repassed behind the window-panes, and he looked at me. Next, he disappeared, but then I saw him lying dead on a sort of slab, covered with a gray cloth."

The invalid's grandson had really died on the afternoon of Wednesday, January 8th, in Paris, in a hospital where he had been treated for some time for tuberculosis of the lungs.

This was the account given me, in the first instance, immediately after the happening, then subsequently on several occasions, at intervals some time apart. The story was related both by the

invalid herself and her daughter, without any variations, despite my discreet but searching questions.

If I may be permitted a few more words, I should like to show the occurrence in all its extraordinary aspects.

The invalid's daughter was not informed of her son's death until *Thursday morning*, when she learned of it through a telegram. She did not go to Paris for the funeral and did not leave her mother: there was, therefore, no absence on her part which might have led to suspicion. She was already wearing black, and did not change her clothing to go into mourning.

And, lastly, no one spoke, in the invalid's presence, of her grandson; besides, his condition had seemed unchanged for some time: the announcement of his death was almost a surprise.

Such was the occurrence. I am giving you a dry account of it, as I would of an observation made in a hospital, without relying in the least on imagination. Without wishing to offer an explanation, I should like to add these remarks:

(1) The apparition corresponded to actual reality.

(2) The description given by the grandmother was absolutely exact. When a death occurs in a hospital, the corpse is taken into a room where autopsies are performed, and placed on a long narrow table, usually zinc-covered, "a sort of slab." The description is correct, and Madame X—— did not know of this particular detail.

(3) There can be no question, under the circumstances, of telepathy from one brain to another: the apparition occurred after the young man had actually died.

(4) It would seem that we are confronted by two separate phenomena:

(a) The replica of a *dead* man in Paris appeared to his grandmother in Vierzon. (One detail deserves to be noted: the apparition did not enter the room, but remained *behind* the window-panes.)

(b) The grandmother's consciousness (she was *alive*) seems, *after that*, to have been borne from Vierzon to Paris, and to have *seen the corpse*.

(Letter 1823.)

DR. FERNAND,  
Vierzon, Cher.

This double observation is so deserving of wide publicity that I asked the doctor if it would be indiscreet to publish it. Here is his answer:

I do not think that I am betraying any professional secret, since I am not giving the person's name. I authorize you, therefore, to make whatever use you wish of my communication, even with my name: I have no respect for any other than signed accounts.

I consider that there are all possible guarantees of the veracity of the "observation" which I have told you of. Were the contrary true, I should have put no faith in it. I had the story from the very lips of my patient and her daughter.

These two persons are intelligent and well educated.

What shall we think?

The phenomenon occurred ten or twelve hours after the death. The simple, direct interpretation is that the grandson, who had died, thought of his grandmother and manifested himself (1) by showing himself to her; (2) by causing her to see his corpse.

We may seek other interpretations. We may suppose that he thought of her before his death, and that an impression made by this thought remained latent in the percipient's mind until two o'clock in the morning. But this is more complicated.

We may suppose, also, that the seer of the vision, bound to her grandson by a deep affinity, was borne to him in spirit, from Vierzon to Paris. This is all very well, but why, then, should she have seen him behind the window?

Every one of my readers is, like me, free to seek an explanation.

It seems to me that for the moment we must confine ourselves to *recording occurrences*, above all when their truth is as carefully established as it was in this case. Even that is a great deal, given the prevalent idiotic incredulity.

Where does life end? Where does death begin? In Chapter X of Volume II (it is called "Between Life and Death") we read how a young girl, Mademoiselle Noell, summoned her brother eighteen hours after her death. To quote this summons: "Louis, what are you doing? Why don't you come?" It would seem that she uttered this just as she was dying, before dissolution. It is through the comparative study and wise discussion of observations that we may enlighten ourselves as to their nature and their psychological meaning. As a matter of fact, an account of a similar, very curious observation was sent me, which it will be interesting to analyze. Its authenticity is as certain, as unquestionable as that of the account I have just given. Here is the narration:

On the evening of Saturday, May 28, 1921, and the whole of Sunday May 29th, I felt unwell without any apparent cause. I was so tired that I lay down for part of the afternoon. It was as if I had a weight on my shoulders, and I had a vague impression that something out of the ordinary, something painful was about to happen. The evening of the twenty-ninth, I went to bed early, and as soon as I fell asleep I began to dream. This lasted all night, and what a dream it was! I was standing near one of my friends, a woman living in Versailles; for two years circumstances had prevented my seeing her. I saw her most distinctly, lying upon her bed, with the bloodless face of those who have died after much suffering. She stretched out her arms to me, wishing to kiss me, but terror nailed me to the spot, and I made no movement to approach her. This filled her poor face with sadness. The appeals which she made for me to kiss her and her efforts to draw near me lasted the whole night. I awakened often, and each time I went to sleep again the dream began once more. It was a real struggle, the whole night long, to escape from this nightmare, to such an extent that in the morning, when I was quite tired and worn out, my first words to my husband, on awakening, were an account of this painful dream. I had scarcely finished telling him of it when the door-bell rang, and he was given

a letter with a black border, telling of my poor friend's funeral; her death had occurred on the evening of Saturday the twenty-eighth, at nine o'clock.

Greatly disturbed by all this, I went to Versailles on Tuesday, the day of her funeral. When I got there, three of her friends, who had been with her during her last moments, said to me, "Is that you, Madame David?"—"Yes," I answered.—"Well, our dear friend asked for you on Saturday night before she died; she asked several times, and repeated your name insistently!"

Then I remembered the whole of my dream. It had really been an appeal from my poor friend; she had come to look for me, not at once but twenty-four hours afterward. Perhaps the uneasiness which I had felt on Saturday evening was an unconscious recording of her thought, which was seeking to stamp itself upon my mind.

L. DAVID,  
149 rue de Rennes, Paris.

(Letter 4669.)

This precise account is highly interesting. The dying woman thought with intensity of her friend Madame David before she died on the evening of Saturday, May 28th. That evening and the whole of the next day Madame David felt unwell and in pain. The night of Sunday, the twenty-ninth, to Monday, the thirtieth, a terrible nightmare showed her this person, in the guise of a living corpse; she had not seen her for two years. Madame Denis had breathed her last on Saturday, the twenty-eight, and she was buried on Tuesday. Is there not unquestionable evidence in favor of a telepathic transmission from Madame Denis to Madame David, which began at the hour of death and was continued the following day? Is not the hypothesis of chance coincidence utterly improbable?

When I made my methodical investigation, Monsieur David (who is a state official) was kind enough to give me complete confirmation of all the details set forth above.

There is no question that this was a case of telepathic transmission—transmission that was continued after death.

The following occurrence did not have this somber aspect.

We shall now have an account of a curious, amusing, and ingenuous apparition. A little girl appeared to a little boy eighteen hours after she had died; he did not know of her death. The occurrence is of special interest to us, for it was certainly an unusual one. I owe my knowledge of it to an observer with whom my readers are already familiar<sup>1</sup>; she and her husband were good enough to make a careful, special investigation of this particular case, which deserves our undivided attention. The letter which informed me of the incident is worthy of being given word for word. It was written before the letter which we read in Volume II. Here it is:

Paris, Sunday, November 30, 1917.

Pardon me, Master, if I monopolize your attention for a few minutes, to tell you of something which happened recently in my home. You must forgive me because of my humble desire to bring to your notice a bit of testimony. This, added to the thousands of other narrations of this sort already in your possession, will add to the information at your disposal, and aid in the triumph of Truth.

One night, about two o'clock in the morning, my husband and I were awakened by our little boy Fernand, aged six and a half; he was calling to me. Since I was half asleep at that moment and thought that he was dreaming, I told him to go to sleep again; then there was silence once more.

The next morning the child came into our room, as he usually did, to kiss us good morning. Then I asked him why he had been so disturbed in the night—what dream he had had. And here, without my changing a word, is the dialogue which took place between us:

"Why did you call me last night?"

"I was afraid, Mamma."

<sup>1</sup> *At the Moment of Death*, p. 134: a manifestation before death.

"Afraid? Why, my dear?"

"A little girl was sitting at the foot of my bed."

"A little girl! Tell me about it."

"A little girl with a doll in her arms. She was rocking it, and in front of her on the table [I must add that our child sleeps in the dining-room, in a little iron bed, and that the table touches his bed] was a little basin, with a sponge; she was washing her doll's face." He gave me an imitation: "Just like that."

"Ah," I said, "you were dreaming, my dear."

"No, Mamma, I was n't dreaming, because I did this to see if I was asleep [he then made a comical movement; with his little fingers he lifted one of his eyelids]; my eye was open, I could feel that it was, and to make sure that I was n't asleep I shook my bed, too, and it went *click-clack*. Then the little girl got up and walked on my bed, coming toward me. I was afraid; I called you and hid under the covers for a few minutes. Afterward I put my head out and there was nothing there any more."

"Ah!" I said, and looked at my husband.

"What was it? Tell me, little mother," my boy said, still frightened.

"It was doubtless your guardian angel, my dear; he came to see if you were good."

Completely reassured and full of enthusiasm, the child then asked me if he would come back, and added: "How pretty my guardian angel was! He was dressed like a little girl and had beautiful curls."

Then I sent the little boy into the adjoining room. When we were alone, my husband and I looked at each other, though we were not much surprised. We had both been witnesses of an occurrence of this nature when my father-in-law died.

"That little girl," we thought, "has died. We're going to learn something."

In the afternoon I had some errands to do. I met a woman whom I had not seen for *about ten days*. Since her little girl had been unwell, I asked her for news of her child, and the happy mother gave me very good news. At that moment another woman came up, a friend of the first, whom I scarcely knew. Out of consideration I was about to move away, when I heard this person

say: "Just think of it! What a terrible misfortune! Such a beautiful child!" Puzzled, I drew near her involuntarily, moved by I know not what curiosity, and asked whom they were speaking of. I learned in this way that the little daughter of the concierge of the first woman to whom I had spoken had died the day before of cerebro-spinal meningitis, which had carried the child off in forty-eight hours.

I wish to tell you again, Master, that I had not seen this person for *about ten days*, and that she alone could have told me of this little girl's illness.

The mystery was then explained. The little girl was a playmate of my child, and many a time that summer these two children, who were the same age, had played together. Since winter weather had begun, *they no longer saw each other*. The darling loved to play with dolls, like so many other little mothers of the future, and she loved above all to dress and wash her baby; and it was in this way that the little angel, to insure recognition, came to say good-by to her small friend Fernand.

Returning home, I told my husband this news, and asked my child if he had been able to recognize the little girl's face. I give his own words again:

"Her face seemed to have a veil over it, I couldn't see it well; it seemed as if she had a piece of muslin over it. She was all white; her dress, her hair, everything about her was white."

That, Master, was the occurrence in all its simplicity; a little child was the truthful and innocent witness of it.

I shall ask you to pardon the simplicity of this poor letter, which (I dare not hope for anything else) will doubtless remain unanswered. My only excuse for writing it is, I repeat, the fact that it is absolutely sincere.

Believe me, dear Master, you have our deep and respectful admiration.

F. GAYRAUD,  
5 rue Nobel, Paris.

(Letter 3995:)

After receiving this letter, I wrote the sender of it, following my usual custom of making an analytical investigation.

The narrator is the wife of Monsieur Paul Gayraud, a

pianist, who won first prize at the Conservatory. Both of them were kind enough to place themselves at my disposal, in order to bring the inquiry to a successful conclusion.

This is what the investigation brought out:

It was on Wednesday, November 21, 1917, at eight o'clock in the morning, that the little girl died: Emilienne Blin, 117 rue Caulaincourt. And it was on Thursday, November 22d, at two o'clock in the morning—that is to say eighteen hours afterward—that little Fernand Gayraud saw her on his bed, at a time when her death was known neither to him nor to his parents. The two children were playmates.

#### ATTESTATIONS

Paris, January 11, 1918.

I hereby certify, Master, that the facts given by my wife are stated with the most rigorous exactitude.

I wish to state that when I went home at noon, on Thursday November 22, 1917, my wife said to me: "I have the explanation of last night's phenomenon. You know little Emilienne, that child who used to play so often with Fernand last summer?"

"Yes," I said.

"She's dead."

"Really! When did it happen?"

"Yesterday. You see, she was really dead when she appeared that night."

"Yes," I said, "and that gives us a great deal to think about."

PAUL GAYRAUD.

We, the undersigned, certify that Monsieur and Madame Paul Gayraud told us the story of the apparition which their little boy Fernand witnessed, during the night of November 21-22, 1917, —an occurrence that followed the death of one of the child's playmates, which had taken place on the day before and which was unknown to them.

EM. BOULANGER,  
18 r. Saint-Jean.

E. PRUD'HOMME,  
10 r. Custine.

M. FORCIN,  
72 r. Lamarek.

The inquiry made at the town hall, apart from the preceding communications, brought out the fact that the little girl in question was Emilienne Blin, 117 rue Caulaincourt, who died on Wednesday, November 21st, at eight o'clock in the morning.

There is no doubt, therefore, that eighteen hours after her death she appeared to Fernand, her little playmate. What was the nature of the apparition? She did not go to him, sit down at the foot of the bed, and wash her doll's face. But she influenced the little boy's mind. How did she do this? Did she think of him when she was dying, and did her image reach the child's brain and remain latent there for eighteen hours? This is a defensible hypothesis, but one that has not been proved. It would seem more probable that the influence was exerted after death; that it was a communication from mind to mind which took the usual form of an image of the little girl.

Let us repeat, for the hundredth time, that the impossibility of explaining a thing does not in the least lessen its reality.

There is a considerable number, relatively, of manifestations of the dead on the first day of their life after death. They alone would suffice to make up a volume such as this one. I can give merely the outstanding ones, and my only regret is that I must omit too many. For example, I should regret not to tell here how Madame Juliette Adam, so well known and so esteemed by all French people<sup>1</sup> (she is the charming author of "Payenne"—"Pagan"), came to write "Chrétienne"—"Christian"—through being converted by a manifestation on the part of Madame Blavatsky on the very day of the latter's death (May 8, 1891). I numbered among my acquaintances the Duchess of Pomar, at whose home I gave some lectures, as did our friend A. de Rochas. She threw

<sup>1</sup> My readers are already familiar with an observation made by her in 1898 (*L'Inconnu*, p. 187).

herself into spiritualistic experiments with a certain fervent enthusiasm. But let us listen to Madame Adam:

I had a habit of never going out in the evening without glancing rapidly through the latest news in the "Temps." Well, when I had opened that newspaper on one occasion, before going to the home of the Duchess of Pomar (she had promised to introduce us to an astonishing medium) I was struck to see an announcement of Madame Blavatsky's death; it seemed to me to be printed in huge letters. I attached no further importance to it, and went on to the evening meeting.

We began the séance; one of those present called off the letters of the alphabet. There was a rapping, and the name rapped out was Blavatsky.

"That's impossible," cried the duchess. "I left her only three days ago!"

I remained silent; the medium insisted that the communication had been authentic. Madame Blavatsky returned, and dictated: "I am dead; I left a will with Colonel Olcott, in which I ask to be cremated. Cremation, as it is practised in India, in the open air, is in conformity with religious precepts, but it is done in an oven here, and means a loss of one's psychic personality. I implore you to write to Colonel Olcott not to have me cremated, though I have a presentiment that you will not succeed. However, I was determined to tell you this, in order that I might save a soul: that of Madame Adam; fifteen days ago she made a will in which she, too, asked to be cremated.

And was this true?

Absolutely, though none of the persons present could be aware of the circumstance.

Madame Blavatsky was cremated in London, where she died. There is, in the preceding statement, a curious confusion between the soul and the fluid body.

The Duchess of Pomar, whom all occultists knew, lost the sense of direction requisite in following the path of this research. She believed that she was the reincarnation of Mary

Stuart, and nevertheless used to invoke the unfortunate Scotch queen's spirit! We have not the space in which to wander amidst these memories, and our next chapter urgently demands our attention. It will be a continuation of the present one, and will be given over to manifestations observed from one day to one week after death.

It would seem to me that in the face of the occurrences of which we have just read, no impartial reader can remain indifferent or undecided.

## VI

### MANIFESTATIONS AND APPARITIONS FROM ONE DAY TO ONE WEEK AFTER DEATH

Death dominates all of the living.  
AUGUSTE COMTE.

**L**ET us continue to investigate posthumous manifestations, classifying them as we have done heretofore. Let us consider those which occurred the first week after death, from one to eight days. Like the preceding ones, they are very numerous.

The author of that great work, well known to my readers, "Phantasms of the Living," states, after patient and long-continued research, that the interval between the sending of a psychic message and the time that it is received would appear never to exceed twelve hours. This would lead us to conclude that the apparitions and manifestations observed after that length of time are not delayed communications from the *living*, but are caused by the dead. This is true of all the accounts which are to follow.

We are now about to read of the apparition of a dead woman seen by two persons on the day after her death. I am taking the following account from a letter sent me from Italy on July 16, 1899:

In an article in the newspaper "La Stampa," dealing with the investigations which you are making public, I read that you would be happy to learn of occurrences similar to those which you are studying, and I feel that it is my duty to tell you of the following one. It is absolutely authentic.

One evening, about nine o'clock, every one in the house was still

up and about. When my sister, aged seventeen, was walking through a hall of the apartment, she was stupefied to see a tall, beautiful girl standing near her under the lighted gas-jet. She did not know this girl, who was dressed in the costume of a peasant. Astounded, she uttered a cry, and the phantom vanished. She wept with fright, and my mother scolded her. Next morning, the cook, a girl of about twenty-five, came to my mother and told her that that evening, when she had got into bed, she had heard a sound of breathing, and felt on her face something that was like a breath; that when she had opened her eyes she had seen, standing near her bed, one of her friends whom she had known in her native place: a tall, beautiful girl dressed in peasant costume. "That beautiful girl," said the cook, "was in the habit of behaving badly; I often gave her good advice, but it did n't have any effect." She had died on the previous day.

COUNTESS AMÉLIE CARANDINI,  
Parella, Province of Turin.

(Letter 751.)

People believe that they can find a way out by calling such visions causeless hallucinations. But in this case there were two independent manifestations. The numerous, successive pictures which our inquiry reveals show that we can no longer be content with this childish explanation.

In 1915 Jules Lermina, the writer, sent me the following account. It had been sent to him from Brussels by a lady to whose family he was related.

I saw one of my relatives on April 4, 1878, and spoke to him, though he had died in an accident the day before; *I did not know of his death*. The incident was odd enough for me to recount it as faithfully as possible.

Absolutely contrary to my habit, I had left the table during dinner—that is to say about half-past six in the evening—to go into the kitchen to get something or other which the servant had forgotten. When I was bending down in front of a cupboard where china was kept, and had put out my hand to take up a

dish for stewed fruit which was not in its proper place on the shelf, I was called by name and recognized my cousin's voice. I lifted my eyes toward the window of the kitchen (it was partially underground) and did actually see my cousin, bending down to the window. He nodded and said several times, "Good-day, Loule." He usually said this when he saw me. "Good-day, Wenand," I answered. Springing up, I left in the cupboard the thing I had come for. I went upstairs to the ground floor and myself opened the street door, but there was no one there.

My father, who was in the dining-room, was astonished to hear the door opened, though no one had rung the bell. He left the room and went into the hallway to see what was going on. I explained to him that my cousin had arrived, and even added that he was doubtless hiding, to tease me. But my father answered: "*It's impossible for Wenand to be here! He died yesterday.* I did n't want to tell you."

In short, I saw a person who had been dead for twenty-four hours, and spoke to him. I was neither depressed nor ill when I had this vision; I had not a trace of fever.

Lermina, extremely well versed in this sort of happenings, classified the experience as we have classified all those of the kind with which we are familiar. There were in this case two phenomena: the dead person's words and the apparition. Here is something still more remarkable. A murdered man appeared to his wife and to his mother, and told of a physical peculiarity of the assassin.<sup>1</sup>

Count Ubaldo Beni had been living for some months in the little commune of Pietra Montecorvino, as manager of the smelting-works.

In this work Count Beni employed young Garibaldi Veneziani, the son of the station-master in Lucera. It was the young man's duty to take charge of the sums of money which reached the railway station, destined for the company. That he might do this,

<sup>1</sup> See *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1919, p. 67.

Count Beni gave him receipts with the space for the signature left blank.

In the month of May, 1916, Veneziani kept nine hundred francs out of the twelve hundred which he had received in Count Beni's name. It was not long before the latter learned of this fraudulent appropriation, and there followed lively scenes between the manager and the faithless employee.

After this incident Count Beni distrusted his subordinate. The latter, knowing that the count intended to give up the manager-ship, wished to succeed him. He was able to arrange things so cleverly that during the latter half of August, two days before the manager left, he was put in his place, provisionally. Unfortunately for Veneziani, the count, before leaving, stopped at the Lucera station and took the opportunity to look over his successor's books.

On August 24, 1916, Count Beni went to Lucera to sell a horse. About eight o'clock in the evening he left in a cabriolet, to go back to Pietra Montecorvino. He was accompanied by Veneziani, who rode beside his vehicle on a bicycle, along a part of the road, and then turned back to go to Lucera.

The morning of the next day, passers-by found the count's body covered with wounds, on the road from Lucera to Pietra, near a little wood. He had, still on him, his watch, hanging by its chain, and his pocket-book containing twenty lira.

The spot in which the body was found was only some hundreds of meters away from the point where Veneziani declared that he had left his companion and gone back to Lucera. It was not long before suspicion attached to the employee, and an investigation brought out the fact that he had cashed various money-orders, amounting in all to sixteen hundred lira, and said not a word about it. At first he denied the embezzlement. They put the post-office receipts before him; confronted by the evidence, he was obliged to confess that he had taken the money and kept it, while pretending to have given it to the count some days before his death.

Veneziani was arrested, charged with homicide and embezzlement of funds. The legal inquiry was nearing its end, when the

presiding magistrate received from the commissary of police in Spoleto, Umbria (where the members of the Beni family lived), a note and two letters, one from Countess Anne Beni-Gasparini, the widow, and the other from Countess Catherine Beni, the victim's mother. Here are these two documents:

"I hereby declare that on the night of the twenty-fourth of this month, when I was anxiously awaiting Ubaldo's return, I saw my husband before me. He said: 'Look! The reins of my horse have been taken from my hands. Look for the traitor. The guilty man has a spot on his eyeball.' On the morning of the next day I spoke of the vision to Signora Philomène Ramponi, in Pietra Montecorvino; I also told Prince Strozzi, of Florence, about it.

"ANNE BENI."

"On the night of the twenty-sixth of this month I am certain that I saw, enacted before my very eyes, the crime which meant the death of my poor son Ubaldo. It seemed to me that I saw him approaching in his cabriolet, on a deserted road; then he was attacked. The assailant was peculiarly marked; he had a spot on his eyeball. My poor son, who fell to the road, made a slight movement. Then the assassin fled precipitately.

"CATHERINE BENI."

In short, Countess Beni-Gasparini and the countess mother saw the same vision, with the characteristic detail of the spot upon the eyeball. The first saw the vision the day after the crime, the second two days afterward, at a time when she did not yet know all the details of the drama.

When we try to account for the nature of the phenomenon, we may think at first that we have a case of double telepathy, in which Count Beni was the "agent" at the moment when he was assassinated, and thought of his wife. But it is difficult to admit that this hypothesis would cover the countess mother's vision; she had it two days after the crime, which had been committed five hundred kilometers away.

We may also suppose that after the widow saw the vision in Lucera, she transmitted it, by means of telepathy, to her mother-in-law in Spoleto. But how complicated that is!

Since the countess mother's vision occurred two days after the crime, it was a *post-mortem* manifestation on the part of the victim. The dead man, as though to prove the assassin's identity indirectly, furnished a detail unknown to the percipient and those with her, the spot upon the eyeball. If he had restricted himself to giving the assassin's name, the proof would have been debatable, since public opinion had already selected Veneziani as the guilty man.<sup>1</sup>

In making my usual investigation I had recourse to a native of Lucera—my learned friend Dr. Lastaria, a member of the Astronomical Society of France. He had completely verified the accounts of the various phases of the drama, and sent me *the attorney general's declaration*. (Letter 4732.) It would be out of place here, it seems to me, to publish all the attestations. I think after so many cases, so completely in agreement, my readers are well enough informed not to wish for useless phrases.

We are always trying to explain such occurrences by attributing them to human faculties; but there are cases in which the explanation is unacceptable. Monsieur Beni's wife and his mother saw the crime. Let us admit that there was thought-transmission from the count to his wife and his mother. But what shall we make of the fact that two days after the crime the victim spoke of the spot on Veneziani's eyeball?

We gave on page 70 an example of manifestations following previous promises. This was the case of Monsieur Stepanow: a window was broken and a clock made to strike more slowly. We asked ourselves whether these were not mere fortuitous coincidences, and how much could be attributed to chance. Let us always be on our guard against illu-

<sup>1</sup> G. Veneziani was condemned, by the Court of Assize, to twenty-one years of imprisonment. His appeal to the Court of Cassation was rejected.

sions! Plainly the narrator was sufficiently impressed by the manifestation to have described it in the words which we read. If father and son had previously designated the window and the clock, chance could not have played any great part. All the occurrences set down here are scrutinized with the greatest care.

We are making our investigation in a painstaking, critical spirit. In regard to this scientific discussion, I should like to warn my readers against certain statements which the newspapers often put into my mouth. I shall ask them to consider authentic only those statements *signed* by me, and not those which may be attributed to me.

An account of the following manifestation on the part of some one dead was sent me from Florence on November 9, 1920, by Madame J. de Vasconcellos:

On January 15, 1915, at ten minutes to three in the morning, I lost my brother, aged forty-one. His was a master mind, because of his great intelligence, and he was a confirmed idealist. His illness lasted twenty years! He had lung trouble; his heart weakened, and he passed away suddenly. During the last months of his illness he often discussed the question of immortality; he believed in a future life rather by reason of that instinct inherent in every superior nature than because of any religious conviction.

During the night of the second day after his death, at an hour corresponding to that of his demise—ten minutes to three in the morning—I was awakened by a loud noise near my bed. The room was lighted by electricity, and the noise came from the *combination washstand and chest of drawers* a meter from my bed. It was *one of the handles* of the chest of drawers which was striking distinct and very loud blows! I did not have the courage to look at once in the direction of these blows. After a few minutes they began again. I turned my head, very much agitated. The blows ceased, but I no longer had the courage to keep on looking, and turned over on my back once more. Several times there was a repetition of the blows, and immediately, emanating from this part

of the chest of drawers, a fluid in violent motion (I shall never forget the strange sound it made) *passed over* the whole of my bed, and flowed to the end of the room. When this strong current was flowing by (I cannot describe it, since it was not of the nature of air) I had the impression that my bed was about to fall to pieces; the continuous cracking noises were so loud and so violent that a Belgian lady and gentleman who were in the room next mine were awakened, and I heard them cry out, "What's that?" The current passed over my bed a second time, moving in the direction of the chest of drawers, and once more one of the handles struck, clearly, several loud blows, as though it had been seized by an invisible hand. I could not go to sleep again. In the morning my chambermaid, before I had spoken to her of the phenomenon, told me that about three o'clock some one had tried to open her door; that she had lighted the light and asked who was there, but had received no reply. I do not doubt that it was my brother's spirit seeking to manifest itself; wishing to give me a proof of survival.

J. DE VASCONCELLOS.

(Letter 4306.)

What a prodigious variety there is in all these happenings! And people claim to know the laws of nature! The disturbances, which seem to be electrical, astonish us by their trivial nature. But we should try to find out *how* spirits may draw attention to themselves; the means at their disposal are not, perhaps, numerous.

The foregoing manifestation was observed two days after dissolution. I have before me a great number following, like it, almost immediately after death. Such is, among others, the strange statement which I shall now give; it was sent me at the period of my general inquiry (1899):

A friend of my father had just died. The evening of the funeral, my father, my mother, myself, and two of the younger children (the youngest of us was at least fifteen) were gathered together for the evening meal. We were talking of the friend who was

gone, when we heard a strange and very loud noise, which seemed to come from the attic. From that day on, from nightfall until dawn, this noise continued, growing louder, if anything, and this lasted for twenty consecutive nights. We could hardly sleep at all except during the day. It became very tedious, not to say unbearable. I need not tell you that we tried in every imaginable way to find the cause of the strange racket, but without success.

At last my mother resolved to have recourse to the "supernatural," and without telling any one, for fear my father would make fun of her, she sought out a parish priest and asked him to say masses for the dead man. After this act of faith we heard nothing more.

Judging from what I have read in your books and heard from your lips, you do not admit the supernatural, you acknowledge the truth of no religion, and you do not believe that God can have revealed himself to Man in any perceptible way. I conclude, therefore, that you will not admit that my ghost-story is possible, because it was an act of faith in the supernatural which brought about the cessation of the noise.

THE WIDOW MONTCENY,  
8 rue des Anges, Lyon-Saint-Just.

(Letter 136.)

I am, above all, sincere, and I am making this letter public with the wish that it, like all the others, should serve to enlighten us.

The circumstance that the masses for the dead man brought about the cessation of the noise does not keep me from admitting that the noises were really heard. Before Christianity, when the mass did not exist, the pagans observed the same phenomena. (See the letter from Pliny the Younger, Valerius Maximus—Simonides, I, 7, etc.) We are not obliged, for all that, to admit the supernatural, for all must be included in nature. Let us deny nothing. I am submitting everything in these pages to my readers' judgment. A dead man may continue to believe in the efficacy of prayer. Moreover, have we not gained an impression that the manifes-

tations of the dead are connected with the minds of the living? Are not spiritualism and animism related?

An account of an apparition on the day of burial was given by Mrs. Blackwell in the "Revue scientifique et morale du Spiritisme" and in the "Revue des Etudes psychiques." We have often been halted, in explaining these happenings, by the idea that possibly they may have been hallucinations—which are of frequent occurrence, by the way—and I, for my part, have eliminated a large number of such cases from my notes. But there are limits. Where do cases of subjective hallucinations stop—hallucinations without exterior causes? When we read of the following occurrence, do we not feel that it was a real phenomenon? Here is the strange story:

During the afternoon of Friday, March 1, 1901, my chambermaid's mother-in-law died of cancer, in the hospital. I had never seen the old woman, had no idea how she looked, and had never heard her given name spoken. My chambermaid, when she referred to her, always called her "my mother-in-law."

The burial was on the next day, Saturday, in the afternoon. About six o'clock in the evening, on that same Saturday, I was reading in my room and I was, one might say, alone in the house, for my husband had gone out and the servants were all in the basement, two floors below. During half an hour or more I heard repeatedly, *very loud blows*, sometimes one, sometimes several in rapid succession. And there were various noises of objects being dragged about in the very room in which I was. I lifted my head every few moments, thinking each time that I would see some one, although I am accustomed to hearing noises of this sort. Several times, also, *I heard steps in the hallway*, as though some one were going into the dressing-room adjoining my room, and then going out again. Twice I ran to the door and opened it suddenly: there was absolutely no one either in the halls, or at the head of the stairs, or on the stairway. The door of the dressing-room giving on the hall was closed. There was no one anywhere.

After dinner, when my husband and I were in the drawing-room,

my chambermaid came to tell me that she had come back. She told me that the funeral had gone off very well, that the sisters in the hospital had been very kind, that they had put a pillow in the coffin and had wrapped the body in fine cloth. She left the drawing-room without adding any other details, and some moments later a young girl, a friend of ours, came to spend the evening with us. Shortly afterward, about half-past nine, *I saw, suddenly, a vague form* some distance away, on the other side of the drawing-room. At once I tried to draw my husband's and my friend's attention to it, but they saw nothing.

Little by little, the contours of this form grew more sharply defined, and soon I saw it clearly, distinctly. It was so opaque that the furniture behind it was completely hidden, as though by a body that was really material.

The form seemed to be that of *an old woman*, with very bright, very piercing eyes, a rather pointed nose, and gray hair, darker over her forehead. At first her dress seemed to be black, but I soon saw that it was turning to a dark blue. On her head she wore a handkerchief, apparently of silk; it was decorated with little squares, some of them red. Her first movement was to raise her hand to her head, and to throw her handkerchief back, letting it fall upon her neck, where it remained like a kerchief carelessly fastened.

My husband and I spoke to her in English, but apparently she did not understand us, though her glances seemed to question us anxiously. Then we spoke to her in French. This time she became greatly excited, and appeared to answer us volubly, but I was not able to hear the words. Though she was invisible to the two other witnesses of this scene, she appeared to see and hear them. My friend had a feeling of oppression or of suffocation, as though there were some disagreeable presence there. I spoke to the shade, but without being able to hear her reply; this seemed to irritate her. At length my friend suggested that it might be Madame M——, the chambermaid's mother-in-law. The shade nodded briskly, meaning "Yes." Then I could distinguish some sounds, and at last I understood the word "Clémence."—"Is that your name?" I asked. "Yes," she nodded. "Then," said my friend, "it can't be Madame M——, for I saw her name in the

death notices, in the newspaper, and the name was *Marthe M——*." (I had not seen the newspaper.) The shade inclined her head in affirmation. Questioning her, I learned that she had two names. Then I discovered that she had come to ask something of us, that she did not know that she was dead, though she realized that she had been at her own funeral that very afternoon. When I asked her if she regretted having been harsh to her daughter-in-law, she signified by a gesture that she did not. She answered all my questions with motions of her head; but then I heard the word "*plum*." Recalling that my chambermaid had told me she often took plums to her, I asked her if she wished some. With a movement of her head she told me, "*No*." Then my husband guessed, after several attempts, that she wished to say, "*A plum-colored dress*." She seemed very happy. Yes, that was it. I asked her if she wished to make a gift, to some one, of a plum-colored dress. She gave me to understand, by pointing to herself with her finger, and by repeated gestures, that she wished the dress for herself. We tried to explain her new state to her, but in vain. I wished to approach her, but the form grew vague and seemed to tremble violently. At last she disappeared, little by little, from my sight. During the whole of this scene the drawing-room was brilliantly lighted with electricity.

That very evening, when I went up to go to bed, I began to speak to my chambermaid about her mother-in-law. I told her that my friend had seen her name in the death notices—"*Marthe M——*" and I asked her if this were her only name. She answered, at once, that she had two, *Marthe* and *Clémence*, and that her mother-in-law herself had always preferred the name *Clémence*.

I then asked her if she had seen her after she had been dressed for the grave—how she looked, etc. She told me that she had arrived too late, but that her sister and her husband, the old woman's son, had told her that her mother-in-law had been very well attired; that the sisters in the hospital had put a dark-blue dress on her. She thought, too, that a cotton handkerchief with red squares had been put on her head, and that a rosary had been placed in her hand. It took me a long time to discover, among the mass of details of all sorts, the fact that the old woman was seventy-two, that her hair was gray but that she had had a habit of dyeing it

in front with cosmetics; that she had bright eyes; that she had left furniture which, naturally, belonged to her son, Julie's husband; but that her dresses were all very old and were really not worth the trouble of keeping, with the exception of two, one black and the other *plum-colored*. Both of these were almost new, and the old woman had set great store by them, particularly the last.

The next morning my husband questioned Julie closely on this subject, giving as a reason his interest in such minute details. He said that, as a doctor, he wished to know how things were conducted in such cases in the hospital. He got her to talk, in this way, until she had repeated to him all that she had told me.

DORA BLACKWELL.

Witnesses: Miss A. Bird; M.P.D. Wise; Lady Blackwell; Dr. A. Blackwell.<sup>1</sup>

While taking into account the caution which bids us make allowance for illusions, autosuggestion, and hallucinations, would it not seem to every impartial reader that the reality of the foregoing apparition is certain? The observer is a sensitive. But why these trivial matters? Why should a dead woman wish for her dress? Naturally, we attribute such things to the minds of those who tell these stories, but the narrator knew nothing about it. What then? The dead woman thought that she was still alive. Plainly, it would be simpler to deny the whole thing. But can we? Should we? And then, have we not accounts of other, similar happenings? Did we not see above (page 154) that "Mother Arondel" of Cherbourg thought she was not dead?

The following occurrence, too, concerns a dead person buried in garments which the observer of the phenomenon had never seen. An account of it was sent me from Vence, Alpes-Maritimes, in April, 1921, by a most scholarly man. He was seeking knowledge, but was little disposed to admit

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Etudes psychiques*, De Vesme, July, 1902.

that there is a future life, above all "because we can conceive of neither the form nor the duration of life beyond the grave." Nevertheless he was convinced that a dead woman was seen in the cemetery where she had been buried.

I was then living in Paris, in the rue Mazagran, in the same house with the Bilger family. Madame Bilger had lost her mother, who had been living, with her other children, in Saint-Rambert-sur-Rhône, and who had succumbed to a very short illness. Madame Bilger learned of the death and the illness simultaneously.

She went to Saint-Rambert some days afterward. Upon her arrival, she asked one of her sisters-in-law to go with her to the cemetery. When she arrived at the grave, what was her surprise to see her mother *before her*, in the garments she had been buried in! The garments were rather poor in quality, and were quite worn out. Madame Bilger protested against this to her sister-in-law, who said that her description was correct. She offered the excuse that it was useless to put new garments on some one dead.

COURTON,

Place Nationale, Vence.

(Letter 4479.)

The author expressed to me his conviction of Madame Bilger's absolute sincerity. It is impossible to concede that there was any illusion on her part, because she did not know what had happened. May we think that the dead woman's image was in the sister-in-law's mind, and showed itself to Madame Bilger? But this is only a supposition. Is it really logical to try always to rule out the direct explanation? Would it not seem that the dead woman herself caused the apparition? Let us investigate without prejudice. Out of all this a new science will be built.

Let us continue to record here the phenomena observed during the first week after death. The two which follow occurred two days after dissolution.

Princess de Montarcy gave me an account of the following personal experience (her letter was dated December 10, 1920):

(1) My grandmother had always said to me, "If you're not with me when I die, I'll let you know I'm dead." When I was in Monte Carlo in May, 1886, I received a telegram from my cousin informing me that my grandmother was ill, and asking me to come without delay. It was one o'clock, and I could not leave until six. At four o'clock another telegram informed me that she was better. I decided to take the train that left at eight o'clock the next morning. That same evening I went to bed at seven o'clock. At nine o'clock my little dog jumped up on my bed, howling as if he were being killed. I looked and saw (the lamp was lighted) at the foot of my bed, my grandmother, just as I had seen her last, but pale. She threw me a kiss, and disappeared. The following morning, at seven o'clock, I was brought a telegram announcing that she had died between eight and nine in the evening.

(2) At twenty I was engaged to a Hungarian count; we loved each other dearly. But my "mother," the Duchess of B—— (I was an adopted daughter), had other plans for me, and she took me to Rome, where some days later she told me that the count had broken off the engagement. I answered that I did not believe this. As a result of anxiety I fell ill in Rome, and, as soon as I was better, was taken to Spa. On September 30th, having been most unwell for two days, I was in bed, reading, when I heard my name spoken in a dying voice. I looked up involuntarily, and saw the count, dead and stretched out on the floor (he had on white trousers, a blue shirt, and was without a vest), with a small bottle in one hand and my photograph in the other. I uttered a cry. The chambermaid came in with the newspapers from Paris. I opened the "*Gil Blas*," a newspaper which I never read, and saw on the first page that the count had been found in his room, dead from morphine poisoning, on September 28th.

These two experiences made an impression which will last all my life.

(Letter 4342.)

PRINCESS DE MONTARCY.

It is not always easy to make inquiries as to the authenticity of the occurrences related. Plainly, we may remain incredulous as to many stories. What is there to prove that the writer of this narration is not deceiving me? Historical certainty is not like scientific certainty. If you tell a friend that you ate fish for your breakfast this morning, he is not compelled to believe you. But why would you tell him this if it were not true? Is lying universal? I do not believe it is. In any case, often it is inadmissible that lies have been told.

The following statements are bound up with the ingenuous impressions of childhood. They are full of such good faith and such complete conviction; they bear each other out so well and are told with such simplicity that they plead with especial emphasis on behalf of life after death. Here are some extracts from a long letter:

Ben-Danoun-Kouba, Algiers,  
July 20, 1899.

My husband, one of the best and most intelligent men who ever lived, had promised me that if he departed this life before I did he would certainly come and give me some positive sign as to his life beyond the grave, if it were possible. While in perfect health he had a sunstroke, which carried him off in a few days. He died on October 10, 1898. We were living in the country, in the house where we now are. The family consisted of my husband, myself, and my daughter, a very young widow, with three little children (boys), two years and a half, three, and five years old. In the course of the cruel days which ended in my husband's death, friends took charge of the children and took them away, and the fact that their grandfather had died was concealed from them. Guy, the youngest of the three, was at the table with our friends on the day of the burial, toward noon, when suddenly he stood up in his chair and said: "There's grandpa, there in the window. Look!" He wished to leave the table and go toward the window.

He was two years and six months old; not only did he *not know of his grandfather's death* but he had no conception of death.

The next morning I heard him, in the room adjoining mine, making happy sounds; jumping, laughing, calling: "*Grandpapa! Grandpapa!*" Annoyed, I went out to make him stop. But he kept on clapping his hands and laughing, and he said to me: "Look how pretty grandfather is! He's all white and he's making a light." My daughter-in-law and the servants who had come, brought by the noise, were astonished. They asked him if he really saw his grandfather. The child seemed not to understand that we did not see him. "*But there he is! He's there!*" he cried, and lifted his eyes to about the height at which a man's face would have been. Then, after a moment, he looked up and said, "Why, he's gone away!"

Eight months later, Guy, who was then three years and two months old, saw the same apparition for the third time. My husband had often told me of a beautiful spot, near La Motte-les-Bains, in the Alps of Dauphiné, and he wished very much to take me there.

In the month of June following his death I went to spend the summer in La Motte, with my daughter, her three children, and their nurse. In memory of my husband, I wished to visit the spot which had pleased him so, and one morning we all went there together. It is, indeed, an ideal mountain haunt, delightfully wooded, full of flowers, strawberries, and wild raspberries. Raymond, the eldest of the children, began to pick strawberries for his mother. Etienne brought me raspberries. Then little Guy said to me, "*I'm picking flowers for grandpapa.*" Raymond cried, "How can you give them to him, since he's dead!" Guy seemed very much surprised, and answered, "Why, he's there; I'm giving him my hand." After some moments he said sadly, "He's not there any longer; he's gone."

I can vouch, dear Master, for the perfect exactitude of this account. The three children were too young to remember the incidents, but they made an unforgettable impression on my daughter, the nurse, and me.

The question of the immortality of the soul is, as you say, very serious, and everything connected with it deserves to be considered earnestly and in good faith, without distortion or "stage-setting." If you and the other men of science, who spend your time in collecting and verifying these manifestations, succeed in establishing

the truth of them, incontestably and beyond all doubt, what a service you will render humanity! The absolute certainty of a future life and the persistence of a personal individuality would stop crime and lying, and those who are weeping for their beloved dead would cease to weep for them. The gratitude of those who are already convinced is due you, and you have it. Be so kind as to accept this sincere gratitude.

ANNE E. CARRIÈRE.

(Letter 750.)

The fact that this child, two and a half years old, saw his grandfather, would seem to me to plead effectively against the hypothesis of hallucinations. The little innocent knew nothing about anything, had no conception of death, and saw his grandfather as if he had been before him. We cannot disdain all this.

The following occurrence makes a similar impression on us. It was taken from the "Proceedings" of the English Society for Psychical Research (Volume XI, page 428) and was investigated by Bozzano as a case of auto-premonition on the part of a child two years and seven months old. His little brother, who had died when eight months old, appeared to him. In the following words the mother told of the apparitions<sup>1</sup>:

Is there a life beyond the grave? If I had doubted that there is, my doubts would have been banished by the "visions" of which I was a witness.

In 1883 I was the happy mother of two beautiful and vigorous children. The elder was two years and seven months old; the other was a little angel eight months old. I lost him on August 6, 1883, and was left with little Ray, who was then enjoying perfect health. Nevertheless, after the day on which his little brother died, he acquired a habit of saying to me several times a day, "Mamma, little brother's calling Ray." He would often interrupt his play and

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1912, p. 301.

run to me, calling out his habitual sentence, "Mamma, little brother keeps on calling Ray." And during the night, he would wake me up and repeat the same words: "Mamma, little brother's really calling Ray; he wants to have him with him. But you're crying! Why? You mustn't cry when Ray goes away with little brother, because little brother wants him to."

One day when I was having the drawing-room cleaned, he came running out of the dining-room, where the chair stood which had belonged to his little dead brother. I had never seen him so excited; he seized the hem of my skirt, and drew me toward the dining-room, crying: "Mamma, Mamma, come quickly and see little brother sitting in his chair." Just as he was opening the door to show him to me, he cried, "Oh, Mamma, you ought to have come faster. He isn't there any more! If you'd seen how he smiled at Ray when Ray passed near him! Ray's going away with him; but you mustn't cry, Mamma."

A short time afterward our little child fell seriously ill; our care and our tears were unavailing. On October 13, 1883, two months and seven days after his brother's death, he died also. His intelligence was developed far beyond his years.

As I read these accounts I admit that I am unable to understand how people can make fun of them and call them fabrications.

Dr. Hodgson wrote to the narrator and received the following confirmation:

I have only to guarantee the truth in every detail, of what Mr. Kingsbury published in the "Religio-Philosophical Journal." When the child came running to tell me that his little brother was sitting in the chair which had been his, there was no one else in the house but the maid-servant, to whom I said nothing. But when my husband came back for lunch, I told him what had happened. On that same day I related the episode to some women who were friends of mine. Little Ray could not have known what death was.

The last time I went with him to visit my little child's grave—that is to say, a short time before Ray fell ill—both of us sat down

beside the grave, and I thought, "Oh, if I could take my baby in my arms and see him for just one minute! How glad I'd be!" Simultaneously Ray cried, "Oh, Mamma, let's take little brother in our arms for just one minute; then we'd be happy." As we were getting ready to leave, he put several lumps of earth on the grave, and remarked, "Soon Ray will sleep here, near his little brother; but you must n't cry, Mamma."

He now sleeps on the spot which he pointed out.

The child's father wrote, in his turn, to Dr. Hodgson:

I certify that my wife told me of the incident (of the vision in the chair) on the very day on which it occurred, when I came back for lunch. I myself was present many a time when the child announced to his mother that his little brother was calling him insistently.

W. H.

Mrs. J. H. Shulsters, a friend of Mr. and Mrs. W. H., also confirmed all the statements previously made.

This episode is particularly interesting, as are all the super-normal manifestations told of by children, for their untouched minds are free from any influence which might induce in them any of the varied forms of sensory hallucinations. And every time there is a premonition of death with one of these visions, a premonition that is realized, this adds a further logical reason for believing in their reality.

The following experience, an account of which was taken from a letter sent me from Bordeaux in April, 1899, was similar in its nature:

I had just lost my son Gaston, aged sixteen (in February, 1884). Some days later his younger brother (aged five) was alone in a room set apart as a play-room for the children. He was amusing himself by harnessing a wooden horse, when he rushed into his mother's room and said to her: 'Mother, I've just seen Gaston [this was what he called his brother]; he was sitting down, watching

me play; he told me to be very good, and then he left without wanting to play with me." The child (he is now twenty) still remembers this.

N. V.

(Letter 259.)

The child had this vision several days after his elder brother's death. On page 85 of "At the Moment of Death" we read of a similar vision, seen one hour after death, on the very day of dissolution. Here is still another:

When my brother Henri Chambige (known to the world of letters as Marcel Lami) died, his youngest daughter, then aged three, insisted that she had seen him on several occasions. She would say, for example: "Why are you crying? My papa has n't gone; he's there, you can see." She would state that she saw him seated in an arm-chair or bent over her little bed, smiling at her. Other people could see nothing, and I have always thought that if the power of manifesting itself could have been given my brother's soul, he would have appeared to his smallest daughter. Since she had no conception of death, she could not have been surprised to see him. This happened in Cluny (Saône-et-Loire).

ANDRÉE-GERM. ROZE,  
Montélimar, Drôme.

(Letter 4322.)

Such experiences on the part of children are significant to me. They are as enlightening as any other experiences of the sort. Whether seen by children or by adults, the apparitions seem real.

What are these apparitions? When the persons are recognized, when they come to announce a death, when they offer consolation, we think we understand them. But there are some which are bafflingly incomprehensible. Such was the following. My friend Dr. Dariex received an account of it, sent by a person whose character and whose well-balanced

mind he esteems. This is what the narrator,<sup>1</sup> Madame E. M——, wrote to him:

In 1846 my mother, aged forty-six, gave birth to a son who seemed to us to have fallen from the skies; my elder sister was married and lived at a distance, and I was eighteen years old.

Since, in the country, I had nothing to entertain me, I welcomed this child with enthusiasm. I took care of him from morning till night; I was a second mother to him, and the child had a deep affection for me. We parted when he was eight; I got married, and he was sent to school. There he made such rapid progress that at fourteen and a half he was able (with special permission on account of his age) to take the examination for the degree of bachelor of arts. He passed with the mark "Good," and six months afterward had an equally brilliant success with his examination in the sciences. He entered his name for the first year of medical study, and came to Paris, when scarcely sixteen, to continue the studies to which he had given his mind completely.

As he always stood unusually well in his examinations, though working much less hard than his rivals, his prodigious facility left him too much free time. He was not able, on certain occasions, to resist the temptations incident to his age, and divided his time equally between study and pleasures. But he was too young, too delicately organized to indulge with impunity in even a slight overtaxing of his strength, and he took cold when he was leaving a ball. This cold grew worse, and he languished for fifteen months, kept alive only by our tender care.

Since my marriage I had been living thirty kilometers away from my parents' estate. Every week I went to spend three days with him. It would be impossible to tell how it grieved my heart to see this adored brother pine away day after day, impossible to express my bitter regrets at the blighting of such brilliant hopes. He himself still cherished chimerical hopes of being cured; he used to receive me with great joy.

The last week of his life I left him regretfully, as I had found him weaker, but nothing had made us foresee a fatal outcome. I had

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1902, p. 321.

a duty to my other family as well. On the following day I received a telegram, calling me back at once. I made haste, but could embrace only a dead body! The poor child had passed away, at scarcely nineteen, like a burnt-out candle that a breath extinguishes. My name had been on his lips several times!

My mother was crushed by sorrow; my father was sad and discouraged. I made preparations to stay with them for eight days, and tried to lighten what was irreparable, so far as lay in my power.

Was it two or three days after this lamentable event? I cannot state the exact time, but it was certainly not more than three days—I walked down the steps before the door one evening, wishing to get a breath of pure air before going to bed. It might have been about nine o'clock. A few steps away from me the road that crossed the estate stood out white beneath the feeble light of the quarter-moon, and vanished behind the dividing wall that joined, at an angle, the one against which I was leaning. I looked at the familiar panorama without, it seems to me, thinking of anything, when I saw, coming along the road, a tall man in a well-fitting frock-coat and a silk hat. With hurried steps, and without paying any attention to me, he went on his way across the open space before the house, which stretched out before my gaze, and disappeared behind the dividing wall.

"Well," I said to myself, astonished by his formal attire, "there's a gentleman who's very late!"

The next day, enticed by the mildness of the evening, I went out at the same hour and stood leaning against the half-open gate, with no feeling but that of relaxation as I gazed at the dark blue of the sky, pricked by a multitude of stars. I saw, suddenly, coming along the same road, the gentleman of the evening before, dressed in exactly the same way. With the same hurried gait he crossed the open space before the house, and took the road that passed behind the dividing wall.

"Who is it?" I asked myself, puzzled only by the elegance of his dress in this region where the frock-coat is reserved for formal occasions, for the short cut through our property is often taken by walkers from the two villages. "He's doubtless a wine-broker going to a meeting," I added mentally, and, fairly satisfied by my explanation, I went in again without thinking any more of it.

In the South the October evenings are exquisitely beautiful and transparent. A desire to enjoy the charm of one of them for a moment, or some other mysterious impelling force, drew me out of doors on the following day as well. Again I went out between eight and nine o'clock, at an hour when every one was accustomed to go to his room. I had been leaning against the large barred gate for scarcely a minute when the same gentleman, slender and erect, appeared on the road. In the pale light of the moon his features, as on the two preceding days, were invisible in the shadow cast by the brim of his hat. As on the day before, the skirts of his frock-coat, correctly buttoned, flapped against his black trousers as he walked rapidly. His white hands—as they had two days before—hung at his sides. He passed on, and disappeared behind the dividing wall.

This time I was astounded!

"But one would say," I thought, "that this gentleman chooses the exact moment when I am outside in which to pass through our estate every evening!" Yielding to an impulse of lively curiosity, I ran after him as far as the bend in the wall. I remained there, overwhelmed by an indescribable emotion. No one was there! The empty road stretched out like a long gray ribbon, without a shadow. Where could he have gone?

A victim of that unreasonable fear which grips our feeble understanding when we see an inexplicable phenomenon, I felt my knees give way in sudden weakness. A cold shiver ran over me, to my very finger-tips. I was struck by a mad idea which came at once into my confused mind; an idea that was incontrovertible, as plain as the ground on which I stood as though rooted. I thrust it back into the depths of my being with a sort of fear, and fled in haste to tell my mother what I had just seen.

I had scarcely gone in when words fell in floods from my trembling lips. The poor woman, in anguish, placed on the table the lamp she had been holding, to go up to her room. My eyes looked deep into hers: two flashes started from them—two tears.

"It was my son!" she cried, falling into a chair, almost unconscious. "It was my poor child! My beloved son! Did n't you recognize him by his height? Did n't you recognize him by the garments *in which we dressed him, for his coffin?* To-morrow we'll

go together," she went on, weeping inexhaustible tears, "to that same place where he appeared to you three times!"

We were there at the mysterious hour. Pressed one against the other, we heard the mad beating of our hearts. On that evening the crescent of the moon, which had grown larger, cast a more vivid light; the road was whiter beneath our hypnotized gaze. All remained deserted! On the following evenings we went down vainly at the same hour, and evoked the dear apparition with all the force of our will: there was nothing more.

He who had been my brother—a mind out of the common, a "radiant soul," as Victor Hugo would have said (he had expiated the few excesses of his youth by fifteen months of suffering)—had he, through some exceptional deviation from natural laws, been able to come, in visible form, and bid me a last and supreme farewell?

If this was the case, why did he not appear to me when, after I had been thinking of him, I summoned him with all the force of my spirit? Without a doubt the terrestrial bonds which, in the unfathomable and dizzy Beyond, still bound the son of my heart to my humble nature, to my gross being, had been broken forever!

Dr. Dariex adds the following remarks:

I have known Madame M—— for a very long time. She has an excellent memory, and the account of this experience is certainly exact. We are here concerned with a simple occurrence: an apparition was seen on three successive days, at the same hour; it is easy to remember a thing such as this. Madame M—— never had any other hallucination or vision. It is, therefore, most remarkable that an apparition, with the deceased man's silhouette, was seen on three successive days, by a person who was not expecting this, who knew nothing of these phenomena. And it is remarkable that, after thinking it was an apparition of her brother, neither she nor her mother saw anything more, and had no hallucination, though their imaginations were stimulated and they were under the best conditions for autosuggestion.

We cannot admit that so well-balanced an observer had *three hallucinations*. Nevertheless it is impossible for us to

concede, on the other hand, that the young man, who had been buried for some days, took a walk there, in a frock-coat and a high hat. What, then? Still more singular is the fact that he seemed to pay no attention at all to his sister, whom he had loved so dearly. All is paradoxical.

What mysterious world have we entered?

Can a dead person's thought produce an automatic replica?

We must observe everything, and investigate everything, that we may discover the truth of these abstruse problems.

Here is another manifestation on the part of some one dead, perceived three days after death. The following account was taken from a letter sent me on April 10, 1921:

In 1918, I was living in the Principality of Monaco, with my sister, and we were without news of a friend residing in Paris who ordinarily answered our letters at once. For three weeks we had been waiting impatiently for a reply to several letters expressing our uneasiness at the thought that he was unwell. One evening (I had just gone to bed; it was about ten o'clock) I heard in my dressing-room which adjoined my bedroom (the door of this dressing-room was open and there was a light in it the whole night long) a terrible uproar. It was as though all the mirrors in the room (there were a great many in it) had been broken, and the glass shattered to bits. It was even worse than this. I cannot describe the noise, which was more like a loud and very long peal of thunder, made up of the sound of breaking glass. While it was going on I cannot say that I was frightened; I was astonished, rather, and all sorts of ideas came into my mind, above all the idea of a bomb, in spite of the fact that the armistice had been signed. When this noise had stopped, I got up, thinking I should find that everything had been pulverized, and my astonishment was great when I saw that nothing was out of place except a picture which was on the floor. Its glass was barely cracked; its cord, new and very strong, looked as though it had been cut. When I saw the picture on the floor, knowing that this is often a presage of death, I thought at once, "Why, A—— must be dead!"

The loud noise was also heard by my sister, who was then seated

at the piano, at the other end of the large villa, but she thought that a wagon-load of broken glass was being emptied, and paid no attention to it. The servants heard it, too, and went out into the street to see if a rubbish-cart had turned over.

The next morning, at nine o'clock, I received a telegram informing me of our friend's death; it had occurred three days before.

There is nothing more extraordinary about this occurrence than about those you have related, but the astonishing circumstance is the fact that this friend did not cause the manifestation until three days after his death, and after the telegram which was to inform me of it had been sent and was to be given to me the next morning. Doubtless, he did not wish to leave me in anxiety by producing the phenomenon at the moment of his death, *since it would have been impossible for me to obtain any information*, and he awaited the moment when a certain person was *sure* to receive a letter in which the news was given and sure to let me know; this did, in fact, happen.

For me this occurrence is an absolute proof of immortality, for there were thought and *deliberate waiting*.

I am giving my name and address, but I shall ask you to reveal nothing of a personal nature. My sister and I are in a delicate position with regard to this friend's family. He is married, had lived with my sister for a long time, and had remained, in spite of his marriage, in most friendly relations with us. Discretion is necessary. But the experience is, in itself, something which may aid in your investigation, and I am giving it to you in entire confidence. As for supposing that I made it up, I do not see under what pretext I could be accused of this.

MADAME X.

(Letter 4431.)

It happens that I am correcting the proofs of these pages in Monte Carlo (in December, 1921), the place where this phenomenon occurred, and I can conjure up the scene approximately as it was. Nevertheless it seems to me that the interpretation is debatable.

I owe to General Berthaut my information as to the following occurrence. The account of it was in the form of an extract from a letter written by H. S. Olcott, and published in the "Spiritual Telegraph" of July 15, 1854.

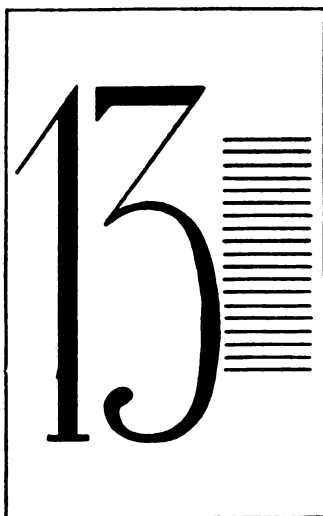
A pastor, who had been told that his father was ill, was going home, when he perceived the latter, standing in a fenced-in field of alfalfa. He went forward to shake hands with him. The old man leaped over the fence, led his son away, and told him many things which seemed most strange to the pastor. He noted that his father looked well, and he thought that he had been completely cured. When they drew near his house, the old man stopped and told his son to go on ahead and to speak to his mother. His mother received him in deep sadness. "My dear child," she said, "your father was buried day before yesterday." He assured her that it was indeed his father whom he had met, and that he had never seemed in better health. It took quite a long time to convince him that his father was really dead.

When he sent me the account, General Berthaut observed that he saw in it "a case of the telepathic influence of the dead man's mind upon his son and of psychic influence affecting his vision and hearing. It was not," he added, "an hallucination which corresponded to nothing. It was an appearance, an illusion occurring under certain given conditions, a real phenomenon produced by something the cause and mechanism of which remain to be explained." (Letter 4516.)

Yes, we are forced to acknowledge the fact that these varied occurrences are both real and inexplicable. Such was the following phenomenon.

A mother received, in a dream, information as to the spot where her son, killed in the war, was buried. This letter was sent me from Cherbourg on October 13, 1921, by Madame Deméantis, the principal of the primary school:

It was during the last days of May, 1915. I was suffering from the most intense grief which it is possible for a woman to experience. I had just learned of the death of my eldest son, Georges, a sergeant in the twenty-fifth Regiment of the line. He had fallen, on May 23d, in the attack on the Labyrinth. He was swallowed up at twenty-seven, leaving a young wife, twenty-four years old, and two babies. In the opinion of those who knew him, he was a serious, steady, most cultivated young man; his heart was tender



and good, and he was endowed with great energy. The grief of all of us was intense. Preyed upon all day long by the thought of the terrible truth, and above all, by the supposition, which was so cruel, that the dear boy had no coffin, my suffering was indescribable. At night I should not have been able to sleep without the bromide of potassium which my children had me take in the evening. I am giving these details to bring out the fact that on the night of which I shall speak, I was sleeping calmly and deeply. My slumbers could not well have been interrupted without cause, and have begun again almost immediately. Well, when I was sleeping in this way, I saw the little picture given here.

I saw it very distinctly, very clearly. At once, without having been awakened by any shock or any noise, I opened my eyes, fully awake, as one is in broad daylight. I told myself, "I've seen that; what can it be?" And without any effort I fell, once more, into the same sort of sleep. The next day I spoke to my family of what I had seen, and then we thought no more of it. This, I repeat, took place during the period immediately following the death.

It was at this same time that my son-in-law, Monsieur Tricard, an instructor in Cherbourg, left for the front, and for the same region north of Arras. He told me to have courage, and swore that he would do everything possible to find the grave of our Georges. He kept his promise, did my dear son whom we mourn (Lieutenant Tricard. He fell at Verdun, in September, 1916). On August 8, 1915, he sent me a touching letter, which I still have, with the map of the cemetery in which my poor child lay. This map had been given him by the chaplain of the regiment who had conducted the burial service; he had set down the details I wished for, on the second page of a book. I enclose this map [it is not given here]. On it the graves are represented by parallel lines, and one of these lines, longer than the others, has opposite it the words: "13th grave, G. Deméantis."

My emotion may be imagined! The above picture, which I had seen in my sleep, during one of the nights that followed my child's death, returned to my mind, and this disturbing association gave me not merely hope but conviction, apart from any religious dogma: the conviction that the best of us does not perish with the body; that the spirits of those we have lost still exist and go on living, apart from our little sphere. And from the bottom of my heart I give thanks to the great thinkers who, rising above skeptical, materialistic critics, laboriously seek to find scientific proofs of the immortality of the soul.

P. S.—When, in August, 1919, in the Roelincourt sector, the bodies of these poor unfortunates were exhumed, that of our dear Georges was found in the row indicated upon the map, and at the spot revealed in my dream. He was in a special grave, between two sheets of corrugated iron, buried twenty-five centimeters deeper than the twelve bodies beside him.

He now lies in the Roelincourt soldiers' graveyard.

L. DEMÉANTIS.

(Letter 4714.)

Apart from any question of sentiment, the incident is most interesting. In the first place, there can be no doubt as to the narrator's sincerity and intelligence. However, since I apply impartially my methods of investigation, I must state that I obtained confirmation of her high intelligence, from my learned friend Dr. Valleteau de Moulliac of Cherbourg. Now, what line can a critical investigation take in this case? By what hypotheses can the phenomenon be explained?

(1) The first hypothesis, namely, "It is not true; it is a story which the narrator made up," cannot apply in this case.

(2) We may assume that the number thirteen, seen in the dream, was meaningless, was evoked by the mental suffering of the afflicted mother, and that its coincidence with the location of the grave was purely accidental. But does this explanation satisfy us? The circumstances in which this vision occurred, the mother's desire to know whether her son had received proper burial—must not these things be taken into account when we pass judgment?

(3) We may assume that the dead son did not cause the vision, on the supposition that Madame Deméantis was gifted with clairvoyance and that she saw the row of graves mentally. Such a supposition would be confirmed by all the examples of vision at a distance which my readers know of. But such was not the case: she saw neither the cemetery nor the grave, and there was no number above the grave.

(4) The most direct explanation must be preferred to those *hypotheses*: that there was *thought-communication between the mother and the son*, telepathic waves which took the form of the number indicating the spot where this grave was. It seems to me that by reasoning logically we must

reach this conclusion. We know of other similar cases; for example, that which my readers will find farther on—among the manifestations observed more than three years after death—the case of an officer killed in the same circumstances. His mother had wished earnestly that she knew where he had been buried (Letter 4378, page 286.) She learned of the spot through the apparition of her son between a Russian and a German. These were examples of thought-transmission between a mother and son. We cannot guess how the transmission was accomplished but it is evidence of the fact that human beings survive in a state that is unknowable, so far as our earthly senses are concerned.

The following is a totally different sort of manifestation. Monsieur Armand Moulin, an employee of the State Railroads, in a position of importance, wrote me on August 28, 1921:

My dear Master, I must inform you that my grandmother has just told me, for the tenth time, perhaps, of the following occurrence. It took place in her husband's family—that of my grandfather.

She had a brother-in-law who died when he was about twenty-five. During his illness, when he wished to call his mother he struck three blows on a wooden chest near his bed. Before his last moments he expressed a desire that after his death prayers should be said for the repose of his soul. His father, who did not believe in the Catholic religion, did not have this done. A few nights after his death his mother felt a strange pressure, which frightened her greatly. Then she heard three blows similar, in loudness, to those which her son used to strike before his death. These blows came from the chest that was still near the deceased man's bed. The father, too, felt the pressure and heard the three blows.

This phenomenon occurred on several nights, and my grandmother was so agitated by it that she no longer went to bed. At last her husband consented to have the masses said, and all ceased immediately.

In spite of the fact that a great many years have gone by since

this happened, it will be very easy for you if you wish to make an investigation. My grandmother is still living, and her children, too. I can vouch for their perfect good faith, and I have heard them tell of it frequently.

If you wish to make use of the story in your works (I am an ardent admirer of them) I shall authorize this with pleasure, in the interests of the goal which you have set yourself.

MARCO MOULIN,  
Paris.

(Letter 4637.)

According to my usual method of following things up, I asked the author if there were still witnesses of the occurrence. His reply, sent from Bussière-Poitevin, on September 4, 1921, gave me confirmation of all details. The letter ended as follows:

In the opinion of my grandparents it was, without any doubt, the spirit of their son which demanded that the masses he had asked for be said. He had left the money necessary to have this done.

CATHERINE DUPONT (married name: COLIN).

I also consider it a duty to guarantee the authenticity of the incidents related above.

ROSE DUPONT (married name: DRODRIER).

(Letter 4681.)

This story, like so many others, raises more than one question. Would it not seem, in the first place, that the demand for masses was in the minds of those still living, and that consequently they themselves might have caused the noises, unconsciously? But how? This we cannot fathom.

If it was really the dead man who demanded the prayers, why did he do so? We see here the continuation of the Catholic belief in purgatory, in the Church suffering, the Church militant (living Christians), and the Church triumphant (those in heaven). But nothing is less fully proved, nothing less admissible. Where is this heaven? Where is this

purgatory? Are they states of the soul in space? This would, indeed, be a complete metamorphosis of the ancient Christian cosmography. We cannot fathom this, either.

We have already related above (page 176) the story of a demand for masses which was similar to the preceding one, and a request that prayers be said with a rosary (Chapter V, page 176). These requests for prayers surprise us. They are made frequently, and it is my duty to give them here. How shall we explain them? What part do the living play in the manifestations?

Cases of this sort occur in Catholic families, which believe in souls in purgatory, but not in Protestant families, which do not hold the belief.

We may think that there is autosuggestion. A man hears strange noises, tells himself, "I promised to have prayers said for him." He even hears a voice, demanding them.

How explain the fact that noises cease after masses have been said, and also in the case of certain haunted houses? It occurs to us, naturally, that these noises might be caused by the hearers themselves, just as certain responses, by spirit rapping, would seem to be dictated by those making the experiments. But how could the hearers cause them?

Only numerous and varied comparisons may enlighten us.

However it be, I must mention the fact that demands for prayers, requests that masses be said, date back, so far as tales of them go, to very early times. We may see in the Van Eyck Museum, in Bruges, a book consisting of two leaves that is significant. It shows a skeleton counting pieces of money with one hand, and with the other holding a written contract which, unfulfilled, had been found by a priest. At this very moment I have a photograph of the picture before my eyes. It would seem to represent a request of the sort we are discussing.

A woman who was visiting the museum wrote me, in this connection (Letter 4781), that she knew of an incident of

the kind which occurred in the Department of Mayenne. A farmer's wife, terrified by mysterious noises, went to the clergyman, who found the record of a donation for masses that had been given previously and later forgotten. The masses were said, and the uproar ceased.

We shall return to this enigma.

Among the arguments against the authenticity of apparitions of the dead which our powers of reasoning may suggest, is the supposition that they are subjective visions. But when the death is unknown to the person seeing the apparition, this explanation can no longer hold. The following account belongs in the latter class; it was sent me from Switzerland on May 29, 1899:

I am seventy-six years old, and do not remember seeing, personally, any supernatural apparition. But here is an incident of which I was a witness in my childhood.

I was in my uncle's living-room, in Winzenheim (Alsace). My aunt was busy piling up wood in the kitchen. Suddenly I heard her utter a terrible cry. Terrified, she came into the room, and said, weeping: "My sister Hannah is dead! She appeared to me behind the sticks of wood, dressed all in white!" As a matter of fact, this sister, who lived in Grussenheim, a village about twenty kilometers from ours, had died some days previously.

G. BLOCHE,

(Letter 420.)

Le Loch.

Such visions are not infrequent. A similar one will be found on page 210. The following one belongs in the same category. Lord Beresford sent an account of it to the English Society for Psychical Research.

It was in the spring of 1864; I was on board the frigate *Raccoon* on its way from Gibraltar to Marseilles. I had to go down into my cabin to get my pipe. Inside the cabin I saw a coffin in which my father was lying; I saw this as distinctly as if it had been real!

I was deeply impressed, and at once told my companions what had happened; they were seated near there, between the cannon, talking. I also told the ship's chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Onslow. In a few days we reached Marseilles, and there I learned of my father's death; he had been buried on the same day and at the same time at which he had appeared to me (half-past twelve). I must add that at the moment of the apparition there was splendid weather, and that I was feeling no uneasiness as to my father, having recently received reassuring news as to his improved health. Between my father and me there had always been a great bond of sympathy, one far stronger than is usual between a man of seventy-two and a young man of twenty—for such were our respective ages.

The investigation brought out the fact that the observer's father died in Kensington on April 29, 1864, and was buried on May 4th. The vision of the father in his coffin occurred on the day of the burial, five days after dissolution. Was it the dead man who manifested himself?—who thought of his son, when his body was already in the coffin? Was it the son who, suddenly clairvoyant, thought of his father, for no apparent reason? We may also suppose that there was telepathic transmission between a relative who was at the funeral and the dead man's son, but is this not even less probable? In any case, we see that all these occurrences, ignored until now, deserve our attention.

We know of Ernest Renan's love for his sister Henriette, and we know that a sudden, cruel malady came near to cutting short their days at the same time, on September 24, 1860, in Amschit, near Beirut. We read on one of the great writer's most touching pages:

Two or three times, in my feverish dreams, there came to me a terrible doubt; I thought I heard my name called from the vault from where her body lay! The presence of French physicians at the moment of her death disposes, doubtless, of this horrible supposition."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Ma sœur Henriette* (1895), p. 88.

The skeptical philosopher does not appear to have thought of the possibility of posthumous communication between his dearly loved sister and himself. Nevertheless we know of happenings of the sort. As for the survival after death of his sister's soul, he writes, farther on :

Was it not for souls like hers that immortality was decreed? Matter does not exist, since it is not one; the atom does not exist, since it is unconscious. It is the soul which exists, when it has really left its mark on the eternal history of the true and the good. The really eternal part of each of us is his connection with infinity. It is in God's memory that Man is immortal. It is there that our Henriette, forever radiant, forever blameless, lives a thousand times more truly than at the period when she was struggling, with her weak organs, to create her spiritual being; when, thrown upon the world, which could not understand her, she stubbornly sought perfection. All the logic of the system of our universe would be brought to nothing if such reasoning were but deception and illusion.

Despite these philosophical ideas, the author of the "Vie de Jesus" ("The Life of Jesus") did not believe in immortality. By his way of thinking, his sister Henriette no longer exists as an individual. Then what do the preceding lines mean? And what does his dedication of the book to his sister Henriette mean: "In God's bosom, where you are at rest"?

Renan's reminiscence is not given here as a posthumous manifestation on the part of his sister, but as a mere "possibility."

In closing this chapter, I shall make the same remark that I did at the end of the two preceding ones: not one of the accounts which we have read was borrowed from spiritistic experiments. These last will have a special chapter to themselves.

The foregoing manifestations were observed during the first week after death. Let us continue our investigation. Following this same chronological order, let us look at those which were observed from one week to one month after death.

## VII

### MANIFESTATIONS AND APPARITIONS FROM ONE WEEK TO ONE MONTH AFTER DEATH

If I heard people speak of returned spirits, of sorcery or other tales by which I was not deceived, I used to feel sorry for these poor, deceived mortals. I now find that I myself was at least as much to be pitied.

MONTAIGNE.

**I**F we wish exact, full, and rigorously authenticated information as to these extraordinary occurrences, we must not stop here. Perhaps as we go on they will seem to us more and more fantastic, more and more unbelievable. But we must remember that it is not a romance that we are reading, but accounts of visual observation—things seen, as Victor Hugo would say. The question is whether the old, standard hypothesis of hallucinations can still be accepted: whether so-called positive science has not until now, been on a wrong tack.

The following manifestation, eight days after death, was strange enough, but such phenomena are not very infrequent. I am taking the account from a letter sent me from Paris in August, 1900, by some one living near the house in which my brother's publishing business is conducted.

My wife's maternal grandfather, who died on February 13, 1880, was living in the home of his son-in-law, M. S—, librarian of the Polytechnic School. About eight days after his death the bell in M. S—'s room, on the ground floor, began to ring. This room had been closed since the burial. The whole family was then at table in the dining-room, also on the ground floor. The servant

was in the kitchen on the first floor. As soon as this noise was heard, every one ran into the room. There was nothing unusual about its appearance, but the bell-cord was still in motion. The same manifestation occurred again and again—three times, at intervals.

(Letter 1066.)

E. REBOUL,

Paris, 20 rue de Vaugirard.

My readers are already familiar with cases of bell-ringing, unexplained but authentic. This last one, like so many others, can leave no doubt in the minds of those who know and value the narrator's well-balanced judgment.

Manifestations of the sort are commonplace, so to speak. Cases of apparitions are rarer, and often more debatable.

We wish, here, to give accounts of neither illusions nor dreams nor imaginary visions, but phenomena precisely observed. Ghost-stories are usually not believed, and this is natural, since usually they are related with a blind and disconcerting credulity. I, for my part, have always shown little disposition to believe them; I have not accepted them until I have made as close a critical examination as possible. It is absolutely necessary that we seek to learn precisely what parts are true, and what that madcap, imagination, has added; this is always difficult to determine.

The best proof that I have never been in a hurry to take kindly to these stories is the fact that I have known of one since childhood, which I have never made public. I believe that I may give it now.

It happened in my family a very long time ago, under Louis XVI, in 1784. My maternal great-grandmother was a witness. I almost knew her, for when she died in 1844, aged nearly a hundred, I was two years old. She did not tell it to me; but my mother did so, herself.

It happened in Illoud, a little village in the County of Bar, which is to-day included in the Department of Haute-Marne,

not far from the region where I was born; it was my maternal grandfather's native district. During the whole of my childhood I spent my vacations there, on the vine-covered slopes opposite Bourmont, in the midst of a smiling country-side, in woods full of the songs of birds. The house in which the occurrence took place is still standing; it is at the entrance of the village, on the right, and is called "the château." (It now belongs to one of my cousins.) When in 1899 I was collecting documents for my investigation, my mother, who had gone back to her native region at that very time, after a long, laborious life in Paris, sent me the following account:

You would never take seriously the famous story of "our dead Rollet" which you so often heard Papa and Mama tell, but I am sending it to you, all the same. You may do what you like with it. As for me, I have never had reason to doubt it. This François Rollet was the brother of my grandmother's sister-in-law. They were farming people, and lived together. Some time after this worthy man's death my grandmother went to the kitchen which you know, on the ground floor, to see, like a good housekeeper, if the boiled beef and broth were cooking well. She saw her brother-in-law *seated at the corner of the great hearth*, as though he were alive. Astounded, she fled. A short time afterward the young men came back from the fields. One of them told her that he was very hungry. She sent him, it seems, not without curiosity but without telling him anything, to get a little bacon from the pot which was simmering on the fire, until supper time should come. The boy went away eagerly, but when he was putting the lid back on the pot he saw the phantom and began to shout: "Good God! Our dead Rollet!" I have heard it said, too, that at that instant a farm-boy began to swear, and that this oath coincided with the ghost's sudden disappearance.

Such is my mother's story; I heard it also from my grandmother's lips. There was no doubt as to this apparition, in

the minds of members of the family. "Our dead Rollet" was a legendary, though most unassuming person.

It was generally believed that this was an imaginary vision—an hallucination on the part of my great-grandmother, and then on the part of the young man who had returned from the fields. She stated definitely that she had said nothing to him, wishing the amusement of seeing his surprise, and desirous of knowing if he, too, would perceive the dead man. Neither was satisfied by this hypothesis of an hallucination, for they were both positive of having actually seen and recognized the man; he was calmly seated at the corner of the hearth.

What is true, in this story? What can we be sure of?

The most probable explanation, it would seem, is that my great-grandmother (then aged thirty-nine) was the victim of an illusion, which she described to those about her, without remembering afterward that she had done so. We may read in a most informative work by Brière de Boismont entitled "*Les Hallucinations*" of a great number of most interesting experiences of the sort. But when we have read this standard work, we have a strong impression that the word "hallucination" does not by any means explain all the cases.

That this worthy man, who had died and been duly buried, came to sit at the fireplace in his usual garments—this is what we are asked to believe and will not admit. Nevertheless, if he were seen,—what is called "seen,"—an explanation of the incident should be found, as in the case of so many others.

My mother, whose absolute sincerity and mental poise (despite her unshakable convictions as to Catholicism, in the face of which no reasoning could prevail) were valued by all those who knew her, held this story to be absolutely authentic. She was all the more ready to believe it because she knew of similar experiences in her family—the following

one, among others. I am taking an account of it from another letter, written in 1899:

Eugène Bichet, whom you knew when you were a child, (she was the first wife of our cousin Lomon de Bourmont, the watch-maker) lost her mother when she was not much more than fourteen or fifteen.<sup>1</sup> Twice, at nightfall, when she was going to the woodshed, a small structure in front of the house—on two separate occasions, I repeat—she saw, with her own eyes, her mother sitting on the woodpile. She was so frightened that she would not go back there. There are still persons who can remember her repeated affirmations, I among others.

As for me, I never saw anything, and I should have so liked to see your poor father!

Until now such visions have been regarded by almost every one as simple hallucinations. But in this work we wish to analyze the subject fully, in entire freedom of mind, and to compare observations. The preceding chapters show that we are justified in giving the subject our sustained attention, such as that given scientific research.

At the beginning of this chapter, we quote one of Montaigne's reflections. La Rouchefoucauld wrote, as his view:

True love is like the apparition of spirits: every one talks about it, but few have seen it. It is certain, indeed, that our personal sources of information on this question are much less numerous than our second-hand sources, and still less numerous than our third-hand sources, or those still further removed. But it could not be otherwise, since those who give us information are more or less numerous, while each of us is the only observer of those things which happen to him personally. This is an additional reason why we should carefully record what seems authentic to us.

Our age is no less rich in posthumous manifestations than that of La Rouchefoucauld or Montaigne. But only now are

<sup>1</sup> I am not omitting these rather intimate details, because the occurrence in question was known to my family.

we beginning to analyze them rigorously. I hope that this present work will definitely establish their reality.

In "L'Inconnu," page 552, there is an account of a remarkably precise premonitory dream which Monsieur Amédée Basset, had; he was a notary in Vitrac, Charente. Here is the story of an apparition seen by his father, a landowner in Upper Vienna. As a preface to it, I am giving a letter showing the great importance which the author himself attaches to this investigation:

Vitrac, April 27, 1899.

Although very much absorbed by my studies, I cannot resist a desire to express my great admiration for your research, published under a name which should captivate all those anxious to gain enlightenment, "L'Inconnu"! The problems, a scientific solution of which you hope for, are in truth those that every one should be familiar with, for in my opinion there is no question that is of greater importance to this poor human race of ours!

To catch a glimpse of—or, rather, to prove that Lavoisier's famous statement, "Nothing is created, nothing is lost, all is transformed," is applicable not only to what we agree to call matter but to all that makes up the world; to prove that all in nature is interconnected, and that everything that is was caused by something else, whether it be a question of *thought* or of *material energy*—is there a problem more captivating, the solution of which should lead to happier results?

When I was a member of the priesthood I took an intense interest in these questions, and I set down in a note-book (unfortunately, I lost it) the result of my investigations. But I remember that I had come to a realization of the fact that our ideas as to existence are contrary to reality, that time and space cannot be defined rationally and that an invisible but powerful bond joins all the worlds.

In my humble opinion, *absolute space* exists nowhere, and infinitude is peopled by beings, by forces, if you will. In order to come within the sphere of our senses—that is to say, in order that we should realize their existence—these need only an agent *ad hoc*, such as the vital fluid which causes them to materialize. I reached

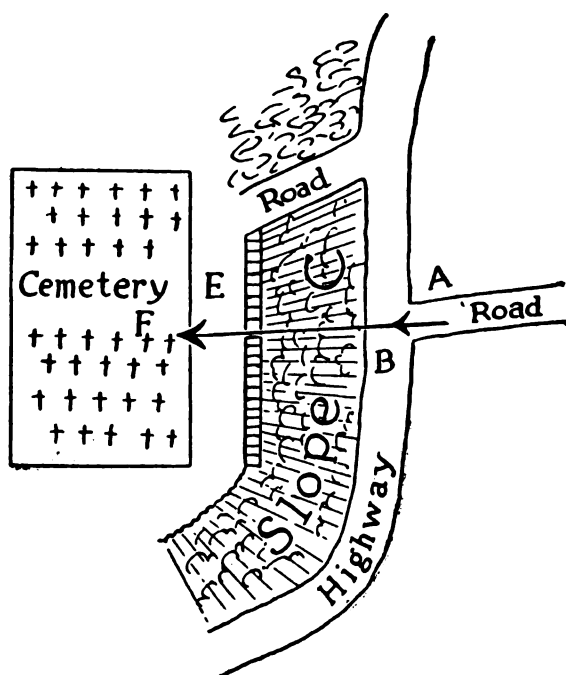
the conclusion that mediums have, to put it simply, the power to produce doubles of themselves, the power to lend their vital fluid to the energy, the spirit which is seeking to enter into communication with them.

(Letter 640.)

This letter shows us that the questions which we are investigating here are of interest to all social classes. It told of the dream given above, and then went on to describe the strange apparition of some one dead which we are about to give. This story is all the more worthy of attention from the fact that (1) we are concerned with a phantom seen in broad daylight; (2) the observer followed the shade for so long a time that the hypothesis of hallucination is not applicable, here. What was it? I do not know, but there the facts are. Monsieur Basset wrote:

My father saw on several occasions, and very distinctly, the phantom of a man who had been dead for a month. On one of these occasions he saw him under the following circumstances. He was dressed in holiday attire, probably the garments in which he had been buried. He was seen crossing the road which skirts the cemetery; then he climbed the slope beside this road, and went toward the gate of the cemetery, where he disappeared. It was about five o'clock in the afternoon.

In the evening, before sitting down to the table, my father was taking his daily walk, accompanied by one of his friends, when suddenly he saw, leaving the road A, opposite the cemetery (I am enclosing a sketch of the vicinity), a man who, in the most natural way, crossed the road B. This man climbed the slope C, a slope five to six meters high, with the greatest ease (I am quoting the passage in my father's letter word for word). He reached the point E, where there is a platform at the level of the cemetery, then, still walking straight before him, entered the cemetery by the gate F. Nothing can make us admit that my father was the victim of an hallucination, for, as he observes, it was only when he saw the phantom climb the slope so easily that he was surprised.



*Only then* did he remember that this man (named Boireau) was dead.

Unfortunately, my father does not remember whether the person who was with him saw the phantom, but he stated definitely that this person had been on very bad terms with the deceased. What is certain is that my father spoke of this that same evening and gave as an explanation of the apparition the mutual hatred of his friend and the dead man.

My father is prepared to give you such supplementary details as may seem helpful to you. I am giving you his address in Upper Vienna.

AMÉDÉE BASSET.

Monsieur Basset and his son do not admit that the hypoth-

esis of an hallucination explains this case. The occurrence was observed very coolly, very simply, very naturally, as though it had been any commonplace meeting.

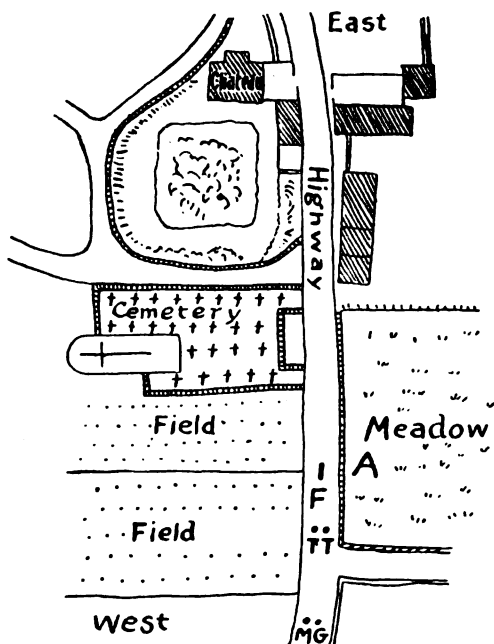
It is curious that among the hundreds—the thousands—of stories I have been collecting for fifty years, there is one which is absolutely like the preceding one. It was told by Dr. Fugairon, doctor of medicine and of sciences; he published it in his book "*La Survivance de l'âme*"—"The Immortality of the Soul"—(Paris, 1907). Here it is:

The accompanying sketch shows the west entrance to the little village of Savignac, situated in the high valley of the Ariège. The reader can see that, on the left, a road runs between the graveyard and the park before the château. The national highway skirts the whole length of the gardens and park of the château, as well as the cemetery.

At seven o'clock in the evening in the month of October, 1837, my grandmother and her two younger sisters were walking along the road. They were going back to the village and were at the points M and G, when they saw, almost in front of them, a gentleman dressed in gray, with a cane in his hand. His soft felt hat was gray and his trousers as well, but the latter were darker than his vest and frock-coat. My mother said to her mother: "If my uncle had n't died a month ago, you'd believe that was he; that man is dressed like him, and has the same walk." Since night was falling, they could not see his face very well.

My two aunts said, "Let's go and see who it is." And they began to run.

When they reached the points TT and the walker had arrived at the point F, thirty paces from them, he stopped short and strode from F to A, stepping over the wall, eighty centimeters high, which skirts the meadow and divides it from the highway. It is impossible to take this at one stride, for the distance from F to A is more than three meters. My two aunts cried out, "Oh, what a stride!" At that moment the phantom vanished into the air. They ran to the spot where he had disappeared, to see if he had not fallen from the wall. They walked this way and that over the



meadow (the grass on it was very short) but they saw no one.

This apparition was seen by four persons, in no way the victims of hallucinations. My younger aunt died in 1895, aged seventy-five. Some time before she died she told me of this apparition; her description corresponded to my mother's, who had given me an account of it several times.

I should like to ask the impartial reader, who has just had these lines before him, if it does not seem to him that the two independent occurrences bear each other out; that the old hypothesis of hallucination is most improbable as applied to these various experiences, and that in the two cases the dead man would seem really to have been wandering not far from his grave.

The following incident occurred in Haute-Marne, and one of my eminent compatriots told me of it:

Monsieur de Maricourt had made a journey to Brittany, to see several relatives. It was in the time of Napoleon III. On the trip, letters had not been reaching him regularly. As for telegrams, there were no offices in any of these out-of-the-way places. The railroad to Wassy was not yet built; people had to go to Saint-Dizier to take trains, and a little mail-coach went from one of these places to the other. Monsieur de Maricourt had taken this coach, to go back home. The road skirted the cemetery; about noon he saw his son at the gate, looking at him as he went by. The young man looked so natural that his father thought for a moment of having the coach stopped so that he could get off and go back with him. He thought that there had been a funeral and that his son was coming out, after having been present at the ceremony. When he reached home he learned of the death, more or less sudden, of his son. He had been buried several days before.

Long afterward, when telling of the occurrence, Monsieur de Maricourt used still to weep.

These three cases that were so alike (there are many others) would lead us to conclude that the dead wander at times in the neighborhood of their graves. But among the other difficulties that stand in the way of an admission of the objective reality of occurrences of the sort, is not the chief obstacle that of the clothing seen by witnesses?

May we attempt an explanation?

Yes.

If we grant that the dead person be there, near us,—as an invisible spirit, an immaterial shade, a being different from us, not perceptible through our physical senses,—we may grant, also, that the same person affects our mind psychically and that his influence is revealed to us in a perceptible form. So-and-so is there, and acts upon our brains through unknown psychic waves. His influence takes the form, in us, of an image of the person whom we have known. Witnesses see him in the shape in which they knew him. The ghost may be real and invisible, and become visible to us—may assume

a shape so far as our minds, our optic nerves, and our retinas are concerned. It may affect certain cerebral fibers, and remain invisible to brains not attuned to its vibrations.

Apparitions of doubles of the living are probably of this same sort. When Mrs. Wilmot went to see her husband aboard a ship, after a storm, and was seen by him and by the man with whom he shared his cabin (William Fait), her spirit alone had crossed the sea and was there before her husband. Nevertheless both of them saw her, in her night-dress. ("L'Inconnu," pages 488-492.) All the cases of doubles are similar. The phenomenon is both objective, outside the seer, real, and subjective, in so far as the seer interprets it.

However strange they be, ghost-stories are founded on observation, and they can be explained neither as hallucinations nor as illusions. It is not scientific to deny them, because of preconceived ideas, or to dismiss them without an investigation.

Adolphe d'Assier, an independent seeker and a positivist of the school of Auguste Comte, stated that he was writing a work on the subject of ghosts, and that the ideas in the book "are as far from the reveries of mysticism as they are from the hallucinations of the spiritualists." Things which seem impossible to us and which have been regarded as fictitious by the most serious-minded savants are nevertheless real. In this book<sup>1</sup> he related that he had seen all the natives of his canton agitated by the following episode:

The Abbé Peytoux, parish priest of Sentenac (Ariège) had just died. During the following days noises made themselves heard in the parsonage; they were so strange and so persistent that the officiating priest who had succeeded the Abbé Peytoux was on the point of leaving the house. The country people, as ignorant as they were superstitious, had no difficulty in explaining the prodigy.

<sup>1</sup> *Essai sur l'humanité posthume*, by a positivist (Paris, 1883).

They declared that the soul of the dead man was restless because he had not had time, before his death, to say all the masses for which he had received payment. Brought up to believe in the Christian dogma, they told themselves that the dead priest had definitely left this earth for one of these three posthumous abiding-places: heaven, hell, or purgatory. They supposed that the doors of the two abodes of correction were too firmly locked for him to be able to return.

But let us listen to the ghost-story. It is really the most curious one of that period, as much on account of the duration of the manifestations as because of the forms they took; a large number of natives of the region witnessed them.

Monsieur d'Assier addressed himself, in order to have a more or less exact report, to Monsieur Augé, the former school-teacher in Sentenac. The latter, after having questioned the old people of the village as to what they had seen or heard, sent in the following statement as to his investigation:

Sentenac-de-Serou, May 8, 1870.

(I) When, about forty-five years ago, Peytoux, the parish priest of Sentenac, died, every evening, as soon as night fell, some one was heard moving chairs in the rooms of the parsonage, walking about, and opening and closing a snuff-box; there was also the sound of a man taking a pinch of snuff. This phenomenon, which was repeated over a long period, was believed in by those most ingenuous and most given to fear. Those who—if I may be allowed the expression—were the strong-minded ones of the commune, put no faith in all this. They merely laughed at all those who believed that the dead priest was coming back. A man named Eycheinne (Antoine) who was mayor of the commune at that time (he has been dead for five years), and one named Galy (Baptiste), who is still living, were the only men in the region who had any education. They were the most incredulous of all, and they wished to ascertain for themselves if all the nocturnal noises said to be heard in the parsonage had some basis in fact, or were merely the product

of the over-impressionable imaginations of those easily frightened. One evening, armed, one of them with a gun and the other with an ax, they resolved to go and spend the night in the parsonage, thoroughly determined not to be duped if they heard anything. They sat down in the kitchen, near a good fire, and began to talk about the simple-mindedness of the natives, when, in a room above their heads, they heard a noise. Then they heard chairs being moved about, and some one walking. Next, the steps were heard coming downstairs and going toward the kitchen. They rose. Eychenne went to the kitchen door, holding his ax in one hand, ready to strike any one who should dare to enter. Galy brought his gun to his shoulder.

When the person who seemed to be walking about reached the kitchen door, he took a pinch of snuff; that is, the men heard the same sounds that a man taking a pinch of snuff makes. Then, instead of opening the kitchen door, the ghost went into the parlor, where he seemed to walk up and down. Eychenne and Galy, still armed, left the kitchen, entered the parlor, and saw absolutely nothing. They went up into the other rooms, went through the house from top to bottom, looked in all the corners, and found neither chairs nor anything else out of place. Eychenne, who had been the more incredulous of the two, then said to his companion: "My friend, those noises were n't made by living people. It's Monsieur Peytoux. What we heard was his walk and his way of taking snuff; we can sleep quietly."

(II) Marie Calvet was Monsieur Ferré's maid-servant; he was Monsieur Peytoux's successor. She was a brave woman, if there ever was one. She did not allow herself to be frightened by anything; she did not believe all the stories that were told, and she would have slept in a church without fear, as the common expression goes when one wishes to characterize a person who is not terrified by anything. This servant, as I was saying, was cleaning the kitchen utensils one evening, at nightfall, in the barn. Monsieur Ferré, her master, who had gone to call on his neighbor Desplas, a parish priest, was not due to return. While Marie Calvet was busy giving her utensils a good scrubbing, a priest passed before her, without speaking. "Oh, you can't scare me, Monsieur," she said. "I'm not so stupid as to believe that Monsieur Peytoux

has come back." Since the priest who had passed, and whom she had taken for her master, did not answer, she lifted her head, turned around, and saw no one. Then fear began to master her, and she went over to some neighbors, quickly, to tell them what had just happened and to ask Galy's wife to come and sleep with her.

(III) Anne Maurette, the wife of Ferran (she is still living) was going to the mountain, at daybreak, with her donkey, to get a load of wood. Passing by the parsonage garden, she saw a priest who, with a rosary in his hand, was walking along a path. Just as she was going to say to him, "Good-day, sir; you've got up early," the priest turned his back and went on saying his beads. The woman, not wishing to interrupt him in his prayers, continued on her way without any thought of a ghost coming into her mind. When she was returning from the mountain, with her donkey loaded with wood, she met the new priest of Sentenac before the church. "You got up early, sir," she said. "I thought that you were going on a trip when I passed by and saw you saying your prayers in the garden."—"No, my good woman," the priest answered, "I haven't been out of bed long; I've just said holy mass."—"Why, then," the woman answered, as though seized with fright, "who was the priest who was telling his beads in your garden at daybreak? He turned his back just as I was going to speak to him. I'd have been scared to death if I'd thought that it was the priest who's no longer alive. O Lord! O Lord! I won't have the courage to go by here again in the morning."

There, Monsieur, are three occurrences which were not fabricated by the morbid imaginations of frightened people. I doubt if science can explain them in any natural way. Was it a ghost? I shall not say that it was, but, all the same, it was something that was not natural.

J. AUGÉ.

Such is the story of the teacher in Sentenac. I think with d'Assier that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to reject the testimony, even if all this be inexplicable, as were meteorites in the seventeenth century. We may object that after forty-five years recollections may have lost their precision. But

the occurrences were so simple and of so commonplace a nature that time could not have caused much distortion. I should like to remark in this connection that I am writing these lines in 1921, and I remember, as though they had happened yesterday, certain details of the War of 1870. I took part in it as a captain in the Engineers, and it was my duty to keep the Prussians under observation; they were seeking to gain a footing on the slopes of Meudon. Shells were fired at this spot from the fortresses of Montrouge, Vanves, and Issy; these were connected telegraphically with our Muette observation-post. My recollections of this are absolutely precise. The teacher's story may be accepted as authentic.

That the worthy priest who had died came back to his parsonage, walked up and down there, used his snuff-box, and told his beads, at an early morning hour, in the path in which he had usually done so—all this seems a tale which our most elementary powers of reasoning must reject.

What then?

"Stones cannot fall from the sky," said Lavoisier.

"The earth cannot rotate," said Ptolemy.

"The sun cannot have spots," declared the followers of Aristotle in 1610, to Galileo and to Scheiner.

"It is impossible to send a telegram across the Atlantic Ocean," Babinet, a member of the Institute, maintained.

"The phonograph is a trick of ventriloquism!" cried Monsieur Bouillaud, to the members of the Academy of Sciences.

"Electricity does not cause contortions on the part of frogs," Galvani's adversaries stated.

"Vaccine cannot prevent smallpox," Jenner's colleagues declared.

"The fossilized bones of men will never be found," Elie de Beaumont told Boucher de Perthes. Et cetera.

The author of "*L'Humanité posthume*" declares that, according to the principles of the positive method, it is undeniable that there are ghosts; that it is impossible to doubt this.

He adds to the stories of apparitions on the part of the Sentenac priest a fairly large number of similar statements. His conclusion, based on doubles of the living as well, is that every man—and even every animal—has a double, a fluid body, and that this truth is recognizable by virtue of the fact that those who have had parts of the body amputated feel pain at the extremities of the limbs which they no longer have. By this way of thinking, every person bears in himself his fluid replica, which after death becomes his posthumous phantom. This ethereal being, when it leaves the body, undergoes merely a change of environment, and often keeps its habits, its ideas, its prejudices. It stays near the spot where it was buried, it remains in touch with the persons dear to it, and even with the things. But this continuation of ourselves does not last long. The phantom is formed of elements which are one day dispersed, and revert to the universe. These shades exist for a short time only, though a few of them do their utmost to maintain their life after death to the detriment of the living—vampires, for example.

I am giving d'Assier's beliefs without holding them myself, despite their ancient Egyptian origin. He does not believe in the soul, in the psychic world, and reduces everything to matter. What he says as to apparitions of the dead is none the less interesting.

Let us deny nothing. But let us not put forward any theory. The time has not yet come. Let us give facts, the foundations of a future science. Let us investigate all impartially.

The progress of psychic investigation is due to the work of a small number of men who are pushing ahead with a self-assured, firm step, without heeding the blows and the sarcasm of the opposed philosophic schools. In all periods of time the conservative majority of savants has yielded to progress only with repugnance and with a bad grace.

My readers know, absolutely, that a human being filled

with a desire to announce his death to some one to whom he is attached, may affect the mind of this person, at a distance, in such a way as to produce in him the desired impression. Official science long ago characterized by the word *hallucinations* the impressions thus created, but we should be clear as to just what this word means.

When reading Brière de Boismont's standard work, "*Les Hallucinations*," one feels that he falls far short of explaining everything, as he claims to do; he is in agreement with the usual teachings of physiologists. Hallucinations, as commonly regarded, take the place which the devil occupied for a thousand years. Professors of the old school explained everything by attributing it to his occult power, the existence of which had not been in the least proved. The existence of the demons and genii of the Greeks and Hebrews was no more fully demonstrated. People are too easily contented with hypotheses. Hallucinations play the rôle of the devil. It would even seem at times that they are "not worth the devil."

In our present work it is *scientifically observed occurrences* which are of interest to us. I repeat for the thousandth time that we cannot explain them on the score of hallucinations.

What hallucination can there have been in the following case? We are concerned with the apparition of some one dead, seen by *two independent witnesses*. I am taking the account from a letter sent me from Nantes on March 31, 1921.

There were two witnesses of the case which I am about to submit to you. One of them is now living in Nantes, in the same building and on the same floor with my aunt.

When this witness was a young girl, she had a position as nurse, in Paris, with a family which owned a little shop. At the table, when the conversation drifted to the general subject of the soul, and immortality, the husband said to his wife, "If I die first, and

can come back, I will come and see you." Years went by; the husband fell ill, and died. Some time afterward the nurse was sleeping in the kitchen on the ground floor, behind the shop. She heard a noise in the cupboard, as if dishes were breaking. She got up, thinking that the cat had caused this noise, but she could not find the reason for it. Moreover, not a plate or a glass had been broken. Astonished, she went back to bed. The noise began again. She had put out the light. She perceived at the foot of her bed a whitish form, which grew clearer in outline. In this apparition she recognized perfectly her former master. Terrified, she did not go to sleep again. When morning came she went up to the first floor, to her mistress's apartment, taking her her breakfast, as she did every morning. She was struck by her mistress's paleness. She questioned her, and got this reply: "Marie, just imagine—last night my husband appeared to me. I recognized him perfectly. He spoke to me, and said, 'You see, we don't die; I'm in need of prayers.'" The mistress said to the nurse, "Go and see if the children saw anything, for I'm uneasy." In an adjoining room the two little girls were resting quietly. Then the nurse told her mistress what she herself had seen.

This case seems an interesting one to me, for the apparition appeared a rather long time after death, and *on the same night, to two persons* sleeping, one of them on the ground floor, the other on the second floor. These persons had not told each other of their experiences. In this case, what becomes of the hypothesis of a collective hallucination?

G. NEBERRY.

(Letter 4407.)

My correspondent has no doubts as to the sincerity of either of the two narrators. May we suppose that one of them had an illusion which she transmitted, telepathically, to the other? But the manifestations were not alike. The servant heard the noise of breaking dishes, and the mistress a demand for prayers!

A remarkable case of a mother who appeared to her

children, to save them from danger, was told of by Leadbeater<sup>1</sup> :

Dr. John Mason Neale relates that a man who had just lost his wife was invited, together with his children, to spend a certain time at a friend's country house. It was a vast dwelling; in its basement there stretched out long, dark passages; the children took great pleasure in playing in them and in running through them. One day, however, they went up gravely to the floor where the older people were, and two of them explained that when they were running through one of the passages they had seen their mother. She had ordered them not to go any farther, but to turn back; when she had said this, she vanished immediately. An investigation brought out the fact that if the children had gone a little further along this hall, they would have fallen into an open well which lay in their path. Their mother, therefore, had saved them from certain death.

This case proves, Leadbeater writes, that the mother, "even on the astral plane," had kept her attitude of affectionate concern, and her intense desire to protect her children from imminent danger had given her, for a moment, as often happens, the power to make herself seen and heard by them, or to suggest to them merely that they saw and heard her. It is also possible, he adds, that aid was given by a different entity which had assumed the familiar form of the mother in order not to frighten the children. But the simplest and by far the most probable hypothesis is that this intervention was due to ever-vigilant maternal love, which persisted even beyond the portals of the grave.

Since the authenticity of the occurrences was verified, it would seem that this interpretation is logical and well founded. It is another case to add to those in Chapter III of our volume "At the Moment of Death": "Thought as a Generator of Images Projected to a Distance."

It would seem to me equally impossible to refuse to admit

<sup>1</sup> *The Other Side of Death.*

the authenticity of the following manifestation. It occurred fifteen days after death.<sup>1</sup> An account of it was sent me by my learned friend, Professor Charles Richet.

On September 3, 1916, during the attack on the "sunken road" (a region between Maurepas and Cléry, one of the most hotly contested points in the Department of the Somme), D——, a second lieutenant of the Thirteenth Battalion of Alpine chasseurs, was struck by a bullet in both arms, and left the front line to have the wounds dressed at the rear. That evening, and for fifteen days afterward, he was absent at roll-call. In vain they sought in all the ambulances. He was listed as missing.

On September 8th the Thirteenth Battalion went back to the same sector, where the front line had been carried forward about three kilometers, thanks to the victory of September 3d. Here, now, is the manifestation, an explanation of which must be sought.

During the night of September 18th–19th M. V—— (an intimate friend of D——, the second lieutenant), who was in charge of the cannon ("37s") of this same battalion, had a strange dream. He saw D—— at the bottom of a shell-hole, beside the "sunken road" in question, at the foot of a willow tree, dying. D—— reproached him bitterly for letting his best friend die in this way, without help.

M. V——, who is a cool, calm, almost skeptical officer, was obsessed by the dream. He confided it to the head of his battalion, Major S——, who did not take it too seriously, but who, in order to oblige him and to put an end to the thing, granted him a short leave of absence in which to make a search in the "sunken road."

M. V—— reached it. He found the same spot that he had seen in his dream. At the foot of the willow was a stake, with this inscription: "Here, two French soldiers." Nothing could have led him to suspect that there were in this spot the remains which he had seen in his dream. Lieutenant V—— had a search made. He found his friend's body there; it could be identified perfectly by various details of the uniform. It had been buried about fifteen days before.

<sup>1</sup> Charles Richet's investigation of metaphysical occurrences in the armies, *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1919, p. 23.

The following was a very different occurrence; it happened three weeks after death.

A grandmother was seen by her two granddaughters; each saw her separately, and there was no communication between them. This woman had preserved a noble beauty up to the advanced age of eighty-eight, the year of her death. She had an old clock, of which she was very fond. It had been a wedding present, and she was in the habit of saying that this companion of many years was connected with all her impressions—with her husband's absences, with her children's return from school, with the hour of waking, et cetera. Let us listen to the account. One of her granddaughters, Madame Judd, writes:

August 6, 1885.

One morning in October, three weeks after her death, I saw my grandmother distinctly—her face, as always, calm, and her big eyes looking at the old clock as usual. I closed my eyes for some seconds, then opened them again, and still saw her. I closed my eyes a second time, but when I opened them she was no longer there.

Since my family sometimes called me a dreamer, I took care not to breathe a word about this vision.

On the following evening my sister, who is not at all dreamy, but most practical, told me in confidence, before we got into bed (her bed was beside mine): "If you'll promise not to make fun of me, I've something to tell you."—"What?"—"Well, I saw my grandmother this morning." The details which she then gave me were in entire accord with what I had seen myself.

CAROLINE JUDD.

The narrator adds that although twenty long years have gone by since that double vision, the two sisters never speak of it without deep emotion.

A letter from her sister confirmed the authenticity of the account.

The hypothesis of two separate hallucinations would not seem to be admissible.

An account of the following collective apparition (it could not, any more than the last, be attributed to two separate hallucinations mutually in accord) was given by my hard-working friend of long standing, Gabriel Delanne. It was taken from Gurney's Memoirs concerning apparitions observed shortly after death, apparitions which possessed this characteristic in common: they affected three different senses, vision, hearing, and the sense of touch. A Miss Lister was the narrator. After the death of the husband of one of her friends, she had gone to live with this friend, and was a witness of the following phenomenon:

One evening, having been asked, just as she was about to take her bath, to go and look for a book that had been left in the drawing-room the day before, Miss Lister saw her friend's dead husband seated at the table in the drawing-room. His elbow was resting on the table, very near the book.

"The phantom," she related, "seemed to smile, as though he had known my thoughts. I took up the book, went to my friend, and gave it to her, *without telling her what had happened*. Then I went into the bath-room and thought no more about it. I had not been there more than twenty minutes when I heard my friend open the drawing-room door. I smiled to myself and listened; I wished to discover whether the apparition were still there. I heard my friend rush out of the room, go downstairs four steps at a time, and feverishly ring the bell in the dining-room. A servant came running. I dressed myself as quickly as possible, and went down to my friend; I found her pale and trembling. 'What's happened?' I asked. 'I've just seen my husband,' she answered. 'How foolish!' I replied. 'Oh, no, I saw him distinctly; he spoke to me twice. I ran out of the room, but he followed me, and put his icy hand on my shoulder.'"

Were there, here, two mutually unrelated hallucinations? We should find difficulty in conceding this. There is some-

thing at the bottom of it all. The two effects had a cause.

Here is another occurrence. An account of the apparition of a father to his children and to their mother was given me by a correspondent. There is every evidence that the writer's judgment is well balanced and that her sincerity is absolute. The communication was sent me from Mans, on July 25, 1921.

I had an account of this happening directly from the person who was a witness of it; her whole family witnessed it also. She is the daughter of a blacksmith; since she was a child she has been in the service of Countess Auguste de Las Cases. She has always had the esteem of every one.

When she was a child, she and her little brothers and sisters lived in the same room with their mother. The latter had been a widow for only a short time. On one occasion she was resting, her head turned toward the wall, and could not, therefore, see what was going on in the room, but she heard her children making a commotion and shouting: "There's Papa! There's Papa!"—"Keep still and go to sleep, children," she said to them. "You know very well that your papa has gone to heaven." But the children kept on shouting: "Papa's there! There's Papa!" One of the little girls clapped her hands in her joy at seeing her father come back.

The widow finally turned her face toward the room, and saw her husband, who spoke to her. He told her, among other things, that if he had believed in immortality he would have lived a very different life, and that he regretted not having believed in it with more conviction. He took her hand and pressed it very hard. I know no more details as to this particular case of reappearance, but it seems to me a very remarkable one, since several children and their mother witnessed it. The mother's hand was so wounded by the ghost's grip that it had to be bandaged for several days.

I must add that the narrator of this experience is a calm, steady, sincere person, and that all the details of it have been known since her childhood. I can therefore authorize you to publish this account. I can vouch for the fact that I had it direct from the phantom's

daughter. I authorize you to give my name and address if you think it would be helpful.

VISCOUNTESS DE BREUIL.

(Letter 4594.)

This experience, like all the preceding ones, demands an explanation. Was it an hallucination? In the course of my rigorous investigation (the estimable narrator was good enough to take an active part in it) there were no less than seven letters written. It appeared from all this correspondence that Countess de Las Cases commemorated in a little poem (I have it before me) the extraordinary apparition, and that the widow's hand had certainly to be bandaged for several days (Letter 4727). The incident occurred fifteen days after the death.

The student of our problems knows that, since the time of Cicero's story about Parmenides and Pliny the Younger's story about the ghost of Athens, the dead who have not been interred have often manifested a desire to be buried. Why? What difference can it make to them? Little, it would seem to us. So we retain an attachment for our bodies! We do not like to see them abandoned. In the following experience the same wish to be buried would seem to have predominated. An account of it was given us by Dr. Lee in his "Glimpses of the Supernatural" (Volume II, page 61<sup>1</sup>). He affirms that the account came from trustworthy persons, who gave a faithful and sincere report of a most striking occurrence.

Two cattle-raisers, who had entered into partnership, had left England and emigrated to Australia; it was not long before they owned a fairly large ranch in that country. Suddenly one of the partners disappeared; he could not be found.

One evening, about three weeks afterward, the surviving partner

<sup>1</sup> See Leadbeater, *The Other Side of Death*.

was returning to his hut by a path that skirted a stretch of deep water. Dusk was coming on and the sun was setting behind the large bushes, thick brush, and luxuriant grass which grows up so quickly in this country. Suddenly he perceived his companion's form, as real and as living as ever. He was seated on the ground beside the pool; his left arm was bent, and rested on one knee. The living man was about to rush over to his friend, to speak to him, but the form seemed to grow less clear, and the face, gray in color, took on an expression of sadness and melancholy which was not usual. So he stopped. Then the form grew more clearly visible; it lifted one arm, and, with the index finger of its right hand, pointed to a deep hole where the water was calm but black, under a tree the branches of which hung down over the surface. This gesture was repeated twice, deliberately, then the shade thinned out, little by little, and soon vanished utterly.

The next morning the hole was dragged, and the body of the partner who had disappeared was found in the very spot which the phantom had pointed out, and given a proper burial. A large stone had been tied to the body, and an ax was found (it had been hidden at the same spot), doubtless the weapon which the murderer had used to commit his crime. It was, moreover, recognized as belonging to a certain vagabond, who was accused and arrested. Since important documents belonging to the victim were found on him, he was obliged to confess his crime and was executed.

We seem to see, here, as in other cases, a desire for burial. Together with the desire there are indications of other intentions. We may think that the dead man wished to let his partner know what had happened to him. It is possible, too, that he was animated by a desire for vengeance on his murderer. This desire, moreover, has been the cause of a great number of apparitions.

Why should there be a wish for burial of the corpse? It is far from always being expressed, if we may draw conclusions from the innumerable men killed in the terrible German war. Perhaps, taken as a whole, they were not able

to manifest themselves. Perhaps only certain believers wish for burial. Perhaps those who are indifferent to it are the most numerous.

We might add to the foregoing occurrences the discovery of Edouard Boner's body ("Annales psychiques," 1910, page 191). He was an Italian poet who was buried among the ruins of Messina at the time of the earthquake in 1908. The discovery was due to the apparition of the poet, in a dream, to a little girl, a friend of his family. This chapter might be twice, three times its length. But we must hasten on to the following manifestations.

Let us note that, as in Chapters IV, V, VI, we have remained outside the sphere of spiritistic experiments.

## VIII

### MANIFESTATIONS AND APPARITIONS, FROM ONE MONTH TO ONE YEAR AFTER DEATH

Do not believe anything merely because it is hallowed by tradition. Do not believe anything merely on the authority of your elders or your instructors. But what you yourselves have tried and found to be true—this you may accept as real.

THE SAYINGS OF BUDDHA.

**T**HE four chapters just read have presented accounts of a certain number of manifestations and apparitions of the dead which occurred anywhere from the time of dissolution up to a month from the extinction of terrestrial life. We shall continue our independent investigations in the same chronological order. The following occurrences took place from one month to one year after death.

I received, a long time ago, before my investigations of 1899 (in December, 1896), the following odd communication. It was sent me by a learned member of the Institute, Charles Naudin the botanist, head of the Laboratory of Higher Education in Antibes, Villa Thuret. It concerned the apparition of some one dead, an apparition the authenticity of which it is difficult to doubt. Moreover, my duty as a scientist is to seek to explain it. I had had occasion, during my stay at the Observatory in Nice, some years before, to spend a day at Antibes, with the head of this observatory, my friend Perrotin, and with Victorien Sardou, my colleague in a psychic investigation many years before (1858-64), who had wished to go with us. We had talked of these problems and the questions connected with them. Here is Monsieur Naudin's letter:

Antibes, December 26, 1896.

MY DEAR COLLEAGUE:

Since the kind visit you made us some years ago, such painful things have happened at the Villa Thuret that I have not the courage to dwell upon them. I wish to tell you of a strange occurrence, that cannot fail to interest you. It concerns a subject with which you have long busied yourself, and in which I am as interested as you.

It was on the twenty-sixth of last June that the occurrence took place, in Denain (Nord). A nun belonging to the Order of Dames de la Sainte-Union (the seat of the mother superior is in Douai, and there is a branch in Denain) had been sent to the main convent to help the sister in charge of the kitchen, who was then swamped with work. Before she left, the mother superior, who was very ill of cancer of the stomach and felt her end approaching, had asked the nun in question to promise to pray for her, and the nun had made the promise. The sick woman died sometime during the first days in May.

Five or six weeks afterward—that is to say on the twenty-sixth of the following June—this same nun, who was assisting in the washing of clothes, and who had her sleeves rolled up to the elbow, was sent down to the cellar to draw some beer. There, without her having become aware of the presence through any other sense, she saw another nun beside her, and recognized in her the mother superior who had died some weeks before. The apparition gave her bare arm a hard pinch, causing her intense pain, and said to her, "Pray, for I'm suffering." All this had taken place in less time than it takes to tell it. The poor sister, terrified, climbed the cellar stairs precipitately and dropped down on a near-by bench more dead than alive.

Those who were washing, finding that she did not return with the beer, went to see what had become of her. They found her on the bench, so agitated that she could barely tell them that she had been cruelly pinched. She showed them her arm, on which, to the stupefaction of those present, there were discovered five red marks, such as burns make. There were four on one side, and a fifth, on the other side of her arm, which was broader and deeper. This was

the place where the dead woman's thumb had pressed. It was as if an iron hand, heated in the fire until it was red, had seized the sister's arm. It was not long before blisters appeared on the parts affected.

They summoned Dr. Toison, the physician of the order, to take care of the wounded woman. After having taken a photograph of the burns, he gave directions as to what must be done to effect a cure. The places healed, leaving, however, five scars which bear witness to the reality of the accident. Dr. Toison, a distinguished practising physician, is a professor of the faculty of the Lille Charity Clinic. He is also the physician of the order in Denain.

The veracity of the persons who witnessed the occurrence cannot be doubted. Was the sister's vision subjective? But the burn was only too objective.

I submit all this to your judgment. Please allow me, dear colleague, to express my esteem, together with my best wishes for the new year.

CHARLES NAUDIN,  
Member of the Institute.

The learned botanist went on to request me to ask readers of the "Petit Marseillais," to which I was sending articles on popular science from time to time, if there were those among them who had observed phenomena of the same sort which proved indubitably that a dead person may manifest himself in some way. "This," he added, "is a problem which has been asked for thousands of years, and it is truly regrettable that, in spite of so many authentic stories, there is no answer to it."

I published his letter in the "Petit Marseillais," but not until May 25, 1899, since I was swamped by too much work, and I added the following comments:

This occurrence, however strange it be, and granting that the account is absolutely true, does not lead to any *certainty*.

(1) The apparition of the dead sister may have been an hallucina-

tion. Delusive images, optical illusions occur in certain cases. Books on hallucinations are full of such cases; it would be superfluous to give any of them here.

(2) The case of the stigmata of the five fingers on the nun's bare arm is a rarer phenomenon. But autosuggestion gives rise, at times, to results of this sort, and by a recent experiment a blister was produced on a certain person's arm simply through suggestion.

This story, therefore, *does not prove* the reality of the mother superior's apparition. We do not say that the apparition did not manifest itself; we know nothing about this. There are but two possible hypotheses; the reality of the apparition on the one hand, and, on the other, hallucination and autosuggestion. As between the two hypotheses, we choose the second through preference, because it is more "scientific" and seems more natural to us.

The doubt I expressed in 1899 would seem to me, to-day, to be partially cleared away by the numerous occurrences which I have been comparing for the twenty-two years since then.<sup>1</sup> The probability in favor of the objective reality of these phenomena has gradually increased, in my mind; it even amounts to a certainty in absolutely characteristic cases.

More than one experience similar to that of the nun is known. There is even one other account having to do with an apparition in a cellar, appearing to some one going to get some beer. Here it is:

An old woman, now dead, had long been in service with my family. She had ended by filling the position of concierge on our estate. We had absolute confidence in her; she was a sensible woman. This is what she related. One day, when a comrade had called on her husband, the latter had sent her to the cellar to

<sup>1</sup> There have been cases of impressions made by phantoms on inanimate objects—tables, cloth, furniture—which cannot be attributed to autosuggestion. I have no space in which to give them here, and can only hold them in reserve for another book. Some remarkable examples will be found in *Luce e Ombra* (Dec. 1910).

get beer. When she was going upstairs she thought that she saw her dead father, most distinctly; he was going downstairs. Full of fear, she pressed back against the wall, to let this phantom pass; he did not seem to see her.<sup>1</sup>

These impressions and spontaneous experiences which resemble one another are, assuredly, most bizarre. But, we cannot refrain from remarking, once more, that *things behave as if* the dead manifested themselves, either intentionally or for an unknown reason.

Let us record the occurrences. It is our duty.

One of the oldest and most venerable members of the Astronomical Society of France, Monsieur Louis Crémère, wrote me from Bordeaux, on March 30, 1899:

I am one of the twelve members of long standing whom you mentioned last May in your speech at the General Assembly; your books are my constant companions. Three years ago I lost a wife who had made me happy for fifty-five years. Since my misfortune I have been living in her room, surrounded by all the things which remind me of her. One evening last winter I was reading; the room was lighted by an oil lamp, with a white paper shade, which allowed a softened light to illuminate all the objects about. Suddenly, by the lateral vision well known to astronomers, I saw my dear wife in the corner that was least brightly lighted. It was a curious thing that when I looked at the vision directly, it disappeared, to my great unhappiness. I made this experiment three times. What explanation can there be?

(Letter 350.)

The writer of the letter is a scientist, possessed of perfect coolness. He did not doubt the reality of the occurrence; he simply asked himself why the apparition could be seen by oblique refraction through the crystalline, and not by di-

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1894, p. 272.

rect vision. In studying astronomy—when we look at the stars—we explain this peculiarity on the supposition that the retina is more fatigued and less sensitive in the center. All astronomical observers have grown aware of this peculiarity of vision.

I shall give some of the numerous accounts I received during this period. The following letter was sent me from Montbéliard, on March 26, 1899:

It was sixteen years ago, one month after my husband's death, which occurred in August, 1883. One night, when I had awakened, I heard the door of my room open; then I heard steps and saw my dead husband draw near my bed. He pressed my right side to him, very hard, without saying a single word. Astounded, I did not speak. Then he went away, and I leaned out of my bed to watch him go (this proves, absolutely that I was awake.) I heard steps again, and heard the door close once more.

Long afterward, I still felt pain in my side. I shall ask you to give only my initials in case you publish this.

C. H.

(Letter 210.)

The happenings would seem to have been noted coolly: (1) The door was opened. (2) Steps were heard. (3) The husband was seen. (4) A pain began in the wife's side. (5) The husband left. (6) The door was closed. (7) The pain in the wife's side persisted. It is difficult to suppose that there was an hallucination in this case.

The following is another account, sent me at that same period. It was mailed on April 5, 1899. I was asked to give it anonymously.

My mother and my sister—about a month after my mother's brother-in-law, our uncle, had died—were witnesses of an apparition of him. They saw this on different dates—my mother about a month after the death, and my sister fifteen days later still.

My mother saw it spontaneously, without previous warning. As for my sister, she was on this occasion alone in a room. She was astonished to hear some one walking in a hall near my mother's room. She went into the hall and found herself in the presence of the apparition, which vanished immediately. I must add that my sister had learned of the apparition seen by my mother.

L. B.

(Letter 532.)

Was this a double hallucination? We are seeking truth. Let us continue to compare examples. It seems to me that my readers will, like me, attain to certainty, if they have not already attained to it by reason of the cases given in the preceding chapters. We have already learned how varied these happenings are, and how difficult it is to interpret them.

Here is one of them, that is both indubitable and inexplicable. Dr. L. Arnoux of Guadeloupe, related it, stating that it was an experience of one of his patients, about one month after the death of the latter's wife. He wrote me:

Marie Galante, Guadeloupe,

June 18, 1899.

I was called in to render professional services to the wife; she was carried off, in forty-eight hours, by a violent fever. The husband and wife, who already had three children, had a happy home life; they were united by bonds of deep affection. Here is the husband's authentic story:

"It was about four o'clock in the morning. I was lying on a mattress about a meter away from my bed, on which I had not slept since my wife's death. I had been awake for some moments, and was smoking a cigarette which I had just lighted, when I heard the noise of steps on the stairway which ends at my room. I listened; the noise grew louder and louder; I looked in the direction from which it seemed to come. I saw my wife enter, pass rapidly between the bed and the mattress, cross the room, and kneel down before a little altar in a corner. She rose almost im-

mediately and retraced her steps, going in the direction of the stairway. As she was passing near me I stretched out my arms toward her instinctively, as if to catch her dress, and cried out, 'Louloute!' the given name by which I usually called her. But, passing me rapidly, she avoided me. 'Peace, Fernand!' she said, in imperative tones, and at once she reached the stairs, where she disappeared.

"Then I rose abruptly, went down to the ground floor by this same stairway, and went through all the rooms carefully. I found them all locked."

L. ARNOUX.

(Letter 673.)

The husband did not understand the apparition in the least, and we do not understand it any better than he. It is always easy to escape from the dilemma by using the oracular word *hallucination*. But is that an explanation of occurrences so varied? In this case, the observer was wide awake, smoking a cigarette, listening and looking closely.

Let us continue to inspect our panorama, in chronological order. The following narration concerns a reflected form, seen six weeks after death by six persons.

Mr. Charles A. W. Lett, a member of the London Military and Royal Naval Club, wrote on December 3, 1885<sup>1</sup>:

On April 5, 1873, my wife's father, Captain Towns, died at his home in Cranbrook Rosebay, near Sydney, New South Wales. About six weeks after his death my wife went into one of the bedrooms of the house at about nine o'clock in the evening. She was accompanied by a young woman, a Miss Berthon. As they entered the room (the gas was lighted) they were surprised to see Captain Towns's image reflected on the polished surface of the cupboard. They could see half his body: his head, his shoulders, and his arms. It was not unlike a life-sized portrait. His face was pale and thin, as it had been before his death, and he

<sup>1</sup> *Phantasms of the Living*, II, 213. *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 359.

had on a gray flannel jacket in which he had been in the habit of going to bed. Surprised and half afraid, they thought at first that they were looking at the reflection of a portrait in the room; but there was nothing of the sort there.

While they were gazing at it, my wife's sister, Miss Towns, came in. Before the others had spoken to her, she cried, "Good Heavens! Look at Papa!" One of the chambermaids was passing on the stairs at that moment. She was called, and they asked her if she saw anything; her reply was, "Oh, Miss!—the master!" They sent for Graham, the captain's orderly, and he cried at once, "God preserve us, Mrs. Lett! it's the captain!" The steward was called, then Mrs. Crane, my wife's nurse, and both of them said they saw him. At length they asked Mrs. Towns to come. When she saw the apparition she went forward, her arms outstretched as though to touch it, but as she advanced, holding out her hand toward the panel in the cupboard, the likeness gradually disappeared. It was never seen afterward, though the room was often occupied.

Such were the actual circumstances; it is impossible to doubt them.

The undersigned, after having read the above account, guarantee its authenticity. Both of us witnessed the apparition.

SARA LETT.

SIBBIE SMITH (née TOWNS).

Mrs. Lett assures us that neither she nor her sister had ever had any other hallucinations. She is certain that the witnesses recognized the apparition independently, and that this recognition was due to no suggestion on the part of the persons who were in the room.

But why was there a portrait on the cupboard, and not a bodily replica? How was the image produced? What was this momentary, transcendental photography, seen by six persons? Was it a collective hallucination? A case of thought-transmission? What are these expressions but mere words?

The following account of an apparition of a dead woman, a month and a half after dissolution, was sent me from Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe, in a letter dated April 15, 1921, by Monsieur Gilbert de Chambertrand:

About 1896 my wife and my sister-in-law were living with their father, in Saint-François (Guadeloupe). A lady, a friend of the family, had been dead for about a month and a half; she was the godmother of one of the young girls; they called her "Aunt Armande." The two sisters were going to the first mass; it was about half-past five in the morning. They were going downstairs, the elder in front, when they saw a form standing at the bottom of the stairs. The elder said to her sister, "There's some one there!" They went on down to the strange form, and the younger, looking attentively, cried out, "Aunt Armande!" They collapsed from fright. A cry brought their father, but nothing more was to be seen. The lady's replica *had been seen very distinctly by the two sisters*. Her arms were crossed, her eyes bright; a veil covered her head and fell down on one side.

The apparition had remained motionless and dumb.

(Letter 4623.)

It is more and more questionable, always to attribute everything to causeless illusions. There are too many cases, without ascertainable causes.

An account of a manifestation on the part of some one dead, two months after dissolution, was given, with reservations, in that chapter of Volume II of the present work that deals with cases in which deaths were announced by physical phenomena: a brother was seen by his sister in a dream; he told her that a ring she had entrusted to him had been taken from his finger at the moment of his death. We let it be understood that the manifestation might be attributed not to the dead man but to a living person's subconscious mind. Nevertheless it cannot be proved that the man who had died had nothing to do with the dream. The

incident (page 256) should be read once more, and compared with the one just given.

As we see, these were manifestations two months after death. Here is an account of another, sent me in a letter dated May 25, 1899:

Last year, in the month of April, an uncle of my father died in Marseilles. At that period we were all living there; when we came to live here, in Luc (Var), we left my sister with her aunt, the dead man's niece. My sister had dearly loved this uncle, and, during the hours when his remains were being watched, she had made a vow to pray for him.

At this point I shall let her continue the story:

"One day (he had been dead for about two months) I was alone in the house, sewing, and my cat was lying on a chair before me. Suddenly I saw it get up, look to one side of me and spit—*pfiff!*—as it does when it is angry or when it sees strangers. At the same time I heard a barely perceptible voice say to me, '*Marie!*' I felt on my shoulder the weight and sensation of a hand pressing down hard.

"My sewing fell from my hands. I wished to get up, but the hand still gripped my shoulder. Then I thought: 'Good Heavens, it's my poor godfather who's come back to ask me to pray for him! For several days I've forgotten my usual prayer.'

"The pressure ceased as I thought this. Nevertheless, to find out whether or not the cat had spat at some one, I opened the door of the little adjoining room. There was nothing there; there was no one in the hallway. Since then I have always said a prayer for my uncle, and have felt nothing more."

I believe neither in phantoms nor in ghosts, for I know that our imagination makes us see things that do not exist. But in this case? And the cat's behavior?

MADAME H. PONTET, JR.,

Luc, Var.

This occurrence is equally inexplicable. Why are these frequent demands for prayers made?

We can see how all these phenomena concerning the dead, pile up. Here is another one, that is very strange. A doctor's mother, who had been dead for three months, made a very useful little revelation to him, in unexpected circumstances.

In 1896 the "Revue Spirite" published a letter signed "Manfred Meyer," giving a case in which a spirit's identity was established. The experiment took place at St. Paul (Brazil); hypnotism was used. The case seemed to Dr. Hodgson sufficiently worthy of notice to justify his making an investigation, the results of which were, in the main, confirmative. Here is the story as told in the "Journal of the Psychical Society," for 1898 (pages 281-295).

Dr. O. Vidigal lives in the Allée du Triomphe, with his family, consisting of his wife, his two sons, and his old father. His mother died three years ago. Since he needed a young maid-servant, he went to the bureau of immigration. There he took into his service a young Spanish girl, twelve years old. She had arrived that same day, and did not know a word of Portuguese.

The child's father had died. The same evening on which she entered Dr. Vidigal's service, the latter had a visit from Monsieur Edouard Silva, who had been born in Gibraltar, and who spoke Spanish fluently.

Monsieur Silva asked for a glass of water, and the child brought it to him. Since he was a good hypnotist, he asked her, moved by a remarkable intuition, if she would let herself be hypnotized. She consented, and, a few moments afterward, fell into a trance.

Suddenly, opening her eyes, she said that she saw exceedingly beautiful things, and asked them not to interrupt her vision. After some moments of silent contemplation she declared that she saw her own father, speaking to her, and she lifted her hand to her ear, as an ear-trumpet, to listen. Her father told her that an old lady, then present, had a communication to make to Dr. Vidigal, and she gave such an exact description of this old lady that intimates of the family recognized, in her, the doctor's dead mother. Then the lady's spirit, through the little girl as a medium, ordered

her son to go into the room in which she had lived; no one had gone into it since her death. There he would find, she said, a black silk garment hanging on the wall, and in this garment a pocket with the sum of 75,000 reis (about five hundred francs) sewed up in it; *she wished this sum to be given to her husband.*

Those who were present did not attach any great importance to this revelation, but the intimates of the family, taking into consideration the fact that the child had been with them only one day, and could not have found out what she had told them, decided to verify the thing. Dr. Vidigal had a great deal of trouble in opening the door, for the lock was rusty. He went into the room, accompanied by Dr. Silva and three persons desirous of knowing the result of the investigation. A garment of black silk was hanging on the wall, and they found in it a sewn-up pocket which contained exactly the sum indicated.

It appeared from the investigation made by Dr. Hodgson and Professor Alexander that neither the seer nor the hypnotist could have known how the dead woman looked, or anything about her clothing, and that Monsieur Silva had known Dr. Vidigal only after the latter's mother had died. They learned, too, that at the time of the old lady's death Dr. Vidigal was in financial difficulties, and that he had barely been able to meet the funeral expenses. This is an important point, for one may well imagine that if he had known of the existence of this money, he would not have left it where it was.

Here are Dr. Hodgson's conclusions:

"We could admit that there was thought-transmission on Dr. Vidigal's part had Françoise (the seer) merely confined herself to descriptions of things of a physical nature, such as the dead woman's person and the clothes which she had worn on her death-bed. But in the case of the designated sum, sewed into a pocket, we are obliged to admit that the dead woman alone knew of this, and that the revelation came, at least in part, from this disembodied entity."

Can we accuse a child less than two years old of imagining things that have no real existence, and concede that there

was an hallucination, without external cause, in the following visual impression? We are concerned with the spontaneous apparition of the child's grandmother, who had been dead for three months. The account given was sent in by Monsieur Gabard, parish priest of Saint-Aubin.<sup>1</sup> The parents are speaking:

On Sunday, January 12, 1891, about six o'clock in the evening, Ernest, our little boy, aged twenty-three months and twelve days, was on his father's knee in the chimney-corner, in the kitchen. He began to wriggle, and cried: "Lady! Up there! Lady!" He got down and climbed the stairs which led to the upper room, above the kitchen. We followed him with a candle, greatly puzzled. As soon as he reached the second floor, he ran to the bed in which his grandmother had died three months and a half before, on September 26, 1890. Since he did not see her, he went all around the room looking for her. At last he saw her at the window and ran to her, crying: "Lady! Grandmamma! Oh, pretty lady!"—smiling, stretching out his little arms to take her in them. When he reached the window, the vision, it would seem, moved to the corner of the room, where he followed it, but without being able to seize it. Finally it moved to the window, where it vanished. There he made signs to it; spoke to it: "Good-by. Oh, pretty Grandmamma . . . Gone . . . Don't see any more; let's go away"—all this in his childish language, so easily understood.

The next day he went up again several times without seeing anything. In the afternoon of the day following that, he went up, carried by his mother. He looked about for some time; at length he saw her, for about five minutes, and greeted her once more: "How d' y' do, Grandmamma! Oh, pretty Grandmamma!"

Ernest was nineteen and a half months old when his grandmother died. He loved her dearly. He had never seen her except in the bed in which she died after eight months of a long and very cruel illness. Ernest is neither more nervous nor more intelligent than other children of his age. When he was asked where his grandmother was, he used to answer that she had gone

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1894, p. 7.

to heaven, without knowing what that meant. She had not been mentioned for several days before the manifestation.

BRÉMOND (JOSEPH).

MADAME BRÉMOND.

Monsieur Gabard adds that, according to the factory records, Ernest Brémond was born on February 8, 1889, and that the widow Chardonneau, his grandmother, died on September 26, 1890. He obtained the above information from the Brémonds' own lips; they signed the account. "I declare," he states, "on my honor, that I believe them incapable (knowing them well) of distorting in any way what they believe to be the truth. The husband is a hired farm laborer; the wife is a dealer in groceries, with a family of children. Both are little given to flights of the imagination."

Here is another occurrence; this, too, took place during the first year after death. The following communication was sent me from Algiers on April 27, 1921:

DEAR MASTER:

Since I was twenty I have been an assiduous reader of your books! I am now sixty. I had not felt that I dared write you, but I have been assured that you will read my letter.

My husband died five years ago. I left my apartment, sold everything, and went to the home of one of my sons. Three months after my husband's death I had returned from the country, where I had spent a day; there I had hardly thought of my husband at all. I went to bed; it was dark in the room. With my eyes open, I saw my husband before me, in a suit of clothes which he had worn out a long time before. His expression was mild and calm; it was as though his face were lighted up. His features were not bright, but were clear and distinct and seemed unsubstantial. I asked myself if it were really he. He bent over and kissed me. "This is an illusion," I told myself. I also perceived an odor of menthol (when he was alive, he always had a stick of it with him, because he suffered from headaches). Again I thought that this could not be possible. Mechanically I passed my tongue over

my lips and tasted something slightly bitter; I did not know whether or not it was the taste of the menthol. "Is that really you?" I asked. Slowly he vanished. I have not seen him since, and have rarely dreamed about him.

Was this an illusion? I have never had any others.

V. SCHWARTZ.

(Letter 4472.)

It would seem that if these were hallucinations, people would have more than one of them in their lives. This inexplicable occurrence took place three months after dissolution.

We may suppose that the dead husband thought of his wife with intensity, and that his thought was transmitted in the simplest and most direct way possible. The following transmission, also several months after death, took quite another form; that of sound. The account was sent me from Crest, Drôme, on August 26, 1921.

My grandfather, Monsieur Vertupier (former Assistant Paris Postmaster, in retirement in Crest (Drôme) had been dead for some months.

I was about eight years old at the time. After his retirement my grandfather had been accustomed—in order that he might remain active and keep his limbs in condition—to taking a simple sort of gymnastic exercise, when he got out of bed. This consisted of walking to and fro in his room, stretching out his arms and drawing them in as he inhaled and exhaled. I had seen him, more than twenty times, taking this exercise, and had very often heard the sound of his Turkish slippers sliding over the floor, dragging a little.

Some months after his death (I could give you the date, if it would interest you) I was in his suite of rooms, in which we had lived ever since he died. It was six o'clock on a winter evening. I was in the dining-room; it was divided off from my grandfather's bedroom by an open door, before which curtains hung. I was reading a book for children, "Les belles images."

I was reading this, and thinking of nothing else, when I heard *very distinctly*, in the adjoining room, the slippers treading the floor rhythmically, just as my grandfather used to do. A mad terror came over me, and I wished to call my mother, but could not; the steps drew near the curtain which divided the rooms. My mother came up at that moment, and I fled away with her, but without daring to tell her what had happened. It was only the next morning, in broad daylight, that I told her of it, weeping, but she thought it merely a childish story, and paid no attention to it.

Since reaching an age of reflection (I am now thirty) I have gone over that evening, in memory, and I *am absolutely certain* that I again heard this noise, which had so often reached my ears.

R. MARCELLIN,

(Letter 4632.)

Crest.

Always to attribute these impressions to ingenuous illusions leads to no satisfactory hypothesis. The narrator heard the noises. Where did they come from? Was it a continuation of the grandfather's habits in his apartment? What an odd idea! Happenings of the same sort have been observed for centuries—among others, that concerning the parish priest in Sentenac (page 218). Here is another experience, which reminds us of several similar ones, equally incomprehensible:

A member of the K— family, living in the village of Bischheim, near Strasburg, had been drafted into the German Army and was killed by a bursting shell, at Verdun. About six months after his death, his body was brought to Bischheim, to be buried in the cemetery. At two o'clock the corpse, which was at the railway station, was taken from the baggage-car and put into the hearse. A certain number of relatives had gathered, to be with the young widow, in the deceased man's house. Suddenly, just when the body was being placed in the hearse, a decorative plate which the dead man had hung on the wall several years before, when he and his wife were setting up housekeeping, was thrown violently and obliquely; it fell to the floor. Those present were

deeply agitated, for they had the impression that an invisible hand had seized the plate and hurled it.

(Letter 4100.)

This may have been mere chance. But, confronted with the simple incident, we may also think that the poor dead soldier's soul was the cause of it. When the worthy workman had arranged the decorations in his home, he had been interested in ornamenting his dining-room with a row of plates. He set great store by those plates, it seems. His body was brought back; it was about to be carried to the graveyard. He took up one of the plates and threw it to the floor. This was a strange idea, we think. Why this expression of discontent? Perhaps we understand it only too well. It was commonplace, it was vulgar, it was all that we like to say of it. But that is what happened. Doubtless the dead man had in the other world the same mentality as in this life. That must be more or less the case with every one.

On May 25, 1899, I received the following letter from Marseilles:

Allow me to tell you, for your instructive investigations, of something that happened to me personally.

I am forty-two years old. I was brought up in a religious atmosphere; unfortunately for me, I lost my faith as a result of the misfortunes without number which have afflicted me for many years—and are still afflicting me without truce or mercy. I scarcely believe any longer. But I am bringing up my child as I myself was brought up, happy to see in him the faith and the religious feeling which were the joy of my youth.

I have, therefore, no prejudices; I suggest no explanation; on the contrary, I shall analyze, coldly, what follows:

Ten years ago, at two o'clock in the morning, my father died, suddenly, in my arms. All the proper religious observances were complied with, and masses—though not in sufficient numbers, perhaps—were said for him.

One night, at two o'clock, six months afterward, my wife and I were awakened by a lively scratching in the bed-curtains.

Then every night, at the same hour, the scratching began again, each time in a different place in the room.

Every night I would get up and light the gas, but I could find nothing.

I had the upholsterer come. The bed was taken to pieces,—both the hangings and the top covering,—for I thought mice might be in it. But not a trace of anything was found.

On those same nights, at the same hour, my mother, who was living on our estate, was awakened by the beating of wings in her room.

It goes without saying that there was no trace of anything there, either.

We thought of my father, and had masses said, and since then we have never heard anything more.

I must add this detail: whenever I was awakened, it was always at two o'clock in the morning.

I must add, too, that on the second or third night on which we were awakened, my wife thought of my father and confided her thoughts to me. Immediately, without the slightest fear, I said aloud, "Papa, if that's you, speak or appear to us." The noise ceased at once.

So far as I am concerned (my coolness is said to be extraordinary), I have no doubts as to this manifestation. I am very sure that there was no autosuggestion on my part, for I analyzed my impressions at the moment when I had them.

This took place in Bordeaux, in 1889.

My name is for you alone.

A. T.

(Letter 702.)

This strange manifestation, which took two forms, leads us to admit:

- (1) That the narrator's father survived after death.
- (2) That his Catholic beliefs persisted after his death.
- (3) That he grew quiet when these beliefs were respected.

It is our duty to record such happenings in all frankness. We shall explain them later—if we can.

The following communication, of the same sort, was sent me from Russia, on June 12, 1899:

In 1847 I had gone with my husband to the home of my cousin, who had just bought a farm. And since a great many of his relatives had gone that day to felicitate him, and there was not enough room, beds for my husband and me had been placed in the parlor. About three o'clock in the morning I awakened, gradually, and saw a gentleman in the middle of the room. That happened more than forty years ago, and I can still see his face clearly! The gentleman—who was unknown to me—said: "I died in this room; I need your prayers; pray to the Holy Virgin for the repose of my soul. My name is Jean."

It is astonishing that I was not in the least afraid. I got down on my knees at once, to pray. My husband, who was sleeping in the same room, saw nothing and heard nothing, but he saw me praying. After the prayer I fell asleep again, quietly.

The next day when I questioned my cousin, he told me that a gentleman named Jean (I forget his family name) had died there.

Two days afterward the deceased man's widow, who lived twelve versts away, came to tell us that on the same night on which I had prayed she had dreamed that her dead husband asked her to come and thank me for my prayer. I must add that the lady was unknown to me.

I am, sir, seventy-three years old; at my age people tell only the simple truth. I should not dare to write you if the occurrence were not authentic and if it had not remained in my memory during my whole life.

(Letter 668.)

HELENE DANITOVITCH,  
Tyraspol, Russia.

It is indeed difficult to deny that the deceased man (unknown to the narrator) appeared in the death-chamber.

These demands for prayers continue to surprise me. But it is only honest to tell of them here.

Monsieur Moreillon, an architect (102 rue Réaumur), gave Monsieur Vetter the following account:

A young man had been brought up in Alsace by his grandmother (his parents had died young), whom he had lost when he was anywhere from twenty to twenty-five years old. From that time on, he lived in his grandmother's room; it contained, among other pieces of furniture, an arm-chair in which she had loved to sit. One night, several months afterward, she appeared to him, seated in this arm-chair. He rubbed his eyes, struck a light, and saw her for a moment more. Then he noticed that his dog, whose favorite bed the arm-chair was, was not in it. He ended by discovering him hidden under the bed, and trembling all over. Never again did the dog jump up into the arm-chair.

The story given below is still stranger.

An estimable correspondent had told me that a nun—the head of a Home for Aged Men—had, personally, both seen and heard an apparition of some one dead, under conditions indicative of authenticity, which rendered the case worthy of special attention. As a result I went to this Home, that I might speak directly to the nun, and be able to judge, as exactly as possible, of the impressions which she might have had. Here is what she told me, asking me not to give her name, or that of her order:

I only told it to the priest, and I'm astonished that the story of it has spread. It didn't happen here, but in a convent in the North, where I was several years ago.

It was half-past nine in the morning. I had taken charge of the children, and had just left them. When I drew near the iron fence surrounding the convent I noticed that the entrance gate was open. I went to close it, and, reaching it, I saw a priest leaning against it. He was poorly dressed; in his hand he held a stick, made of the branch of a tree, and a little bag, like a

beggar. He also had in his hand a large yellow checked handkerchief. Surprised by this costume, I asked him what he wished.

"I'd like a mass," he answered.

"There are no more masses at the convent at this hour," I replied, "but if you go to the church, you might perhaps hear one."

Then I went with him down the three steps at the entrance, and, leading him along the iron fence, I pointed out the most direct road to the church. While talking, there in the bright light, I looked at his garments more closely. He did not wear any band, but a little collar, and had on glasses; he was gazing at me from beneath them. Suddenly his features, the glasses, the collar, and the checked handkerchief reminded me of the father superior of our order, who had died six months before. Then I pointed to the road he must take, looking in that direction. When I turned toward him again I did not see him: he had disappeared!

We still think of hallucinations; hallucinations of the eyes, the ears—or, rather, of the brain. But the witness assured me that she was absolutely cool, in very good health, not imaginative, and that she had *seen clearly*.

"The idea that our dead father superior had stood before me struck me with such force," she said, "that I scarcely had the strength to stand erect. The sisters asked me, when I reached them, if I were ill. I am convinced that it was he whom I saw."

"Have you ever had *any other hallucination?*"

"Never. Besides, you can see that I'm a healthy woman, with normal mental balance. That I was the dupe of an illusion—it's a most fantastic theory. This presence lasted for about three minutes. I was thinking neither of our dead father superior nor of anything that might have affected my imagination. And at first this priest seemed to me like a beggar, and that astonished me. I didn't lose my presence of mind for a single instant. I was as calm as I am now.

It was only afterward that I realized he did n't want to go to a mass, but to have one said for him."

"Did you have one said?"

"The next morning—and more than one. His was a soul from purgatory, in need of prayers."

Such was the nun's story. It seems to me that her position would justify us in considering it perfectly sincere. These apparitions seem to us more and more clearly defined, as we examine a succession of them. Nevertheless the dead man was not there, with glasses, with his checked handkerchief and his garments.

The occurrence challenges explanation. Here is another.

The protective visit of a dead mother to her little boy is described in the following story, which has all the earmarks of indubitable authenticity. The mother manifested herself six months after her death. The account was furnished by the Rev. C. Jupp, head of the Alberlour Orphan-Asylum in Craigellachie.<sup>1</sup>

In 1875 a man died, leaving a wife and six children. The three eldest were taken into the orphan-asylum. Three years afterward the widow died also, and friends raised the money to send the other children there. The youngest was four years old. Rather late one evening, six months after these children had been admitted to the asylum, some visitors arrived suddenly. The superintendent consented to sleep on a bed placed in the children's dormitory: it contained ten beds, nine of which were occupied.

At breakfast one morning the superintendent told the following story: "So far as I can remember, I fell asleep about eleven o'clock, and slept soundly for a time. Suddenly I awakened, without any apparent reason; I felt an urge to turn toward the children. Lifting my eyes, I saw a soft light in the room. The gas in the hallway had been turned low, and as the door to the

<sup>1</sup> This account first appeared in June, 1883, in the orphan-asylum's annual report, and was published in *Hallucinations télépathiques*, p. 360. It is absolutely authentic.

dormitory was open, I thought that the light was coming from there, but such was not at all the case. I turned, and saw something surprising.

"Above the second bed, against the wall, and on the same side of the room on which I was, there was floating a small cloud of light, forming a halo as bright as the moon on an ordinary moonlight night.

"I sat up in bed, to examine the strange apparition. I took up my watch, and noted that the hands stood at five minutes to one. All was still, and all the children were sleeping soundly. In the bed above which the light seemed to float was sleeping the youngest of the children previously mentioned.

"I asked myself, 'Am I dreaming?' No, I was wide awake. I thought I would get up and touch the substance, or whatever it was (for, taking it as a whole, it was five feet high), but something held me back. I heard nothing, but I felt and understood, perfectly, these words: 'Stay in bed; no harm will come to you.' It was not long before I went to sleep, and I got up at half-past five, as was my habit.

"About six o'clock I began to dress the children, commencing with the bed farthest from mine. I reached the bed over which I had seen the light floating. I lifted the little boy up, put him on my knee, and drew his clothes on. The child had just been talking with the others; suddenly he grew silent. Then, looking me full in the face, with an extraordinary expression, he said: 'Oh, Mr. Jupp, my mother came to me last night. Did you see her?' For a moment, I could not answer him. I thought that it was better not to speak at all of that, and said: 'Come! Let's hurry, or we'll be late for breakfast.'"

Never again did the child speak of this vision, we were assured, and neither did any one speak of it to him. The superintendent of the orphanage acknowledges, simply, that there is a mystery in it, to him. He has recorded the occurrence, and there the thing stands. He is virtually certain of having given, without a single mistake, an account of what he still remembers very exactly.

In short, we have here two wholly separate experiences: that of the head of the institution, and that of the child.

How can we doubt the reality of the phenomenon? Does it not offer us testimony concerning a mother's love for her child, six months after her death?

The head of the orphan-asylum had told the story to his wife, who made this reply on the occasion of the Psychical Society's investigation: "I certify that this account is exact; that it was given me on the morning after the incident." The story was then told to the bishop, and to other persons.

I am classifying the occurrence among the "Manifestations" rather than among the "Apparitions." But, although it is a trifle indefinite, it must be recorded and its value determined.

Frank Podmore, too, published it in his book "Apparitions and Thought-Transference"; he regarded it as a telepathic hallucination. Nevertheless one cannot see, at all, that there was any thought-transmission in the manifestation. Thought-transmission on whose part? On the part of the head of the orphanage? Nothing would indicate this. Of the sleeping child? He may have dreamed of his mother, but the light irradiating the room? "There was floating a small cloud of light forming a halo as bright as the moon on an ordinary moonlight night." No, this is not an explanation; let us not try to push classification so far.

In the course of a lecture made before the London Spiritual Alliance, General Dryson told of the following experience:

It happened many years ago. One morning I received a telegram announcing the death of an excellent friend of mine, a clergyman from the North of England. On that same day I made a visit to a lady who claimed to possess the faculty of seeing spirits and talking with them! When I reached her home I was given over to thoughts of my reverend friend. After some moments of conversation with the lady, I asked her if she did not see a spirit near me who had just left this world. She answered that she did see one, who had died very recently. I thought it

must be the clergyman. But the lady told me that the apparition was in military uniform, and had told her that he had died a violent death. She gave me his Christian name and his family name, and, besides these, a nickname by which not I alone, but also several other of his brothers in arms, had been accustomed to call him. I questioned her, wishing for fuller details as to his death. She replied that his head had been cut off, and his body thrown into a canal; that this had happened in the Orient, but not in India. Now, I had not seen this officer for three years, and the last news that I had had of him was that he was in Hindustan.

After this visit I went to Woolwich for information. I learned, in this way, that the officer in question had really been in India, but that he had left for China. Some weeks later the news arrived that he had been taken prisoner by the Chinese.

A large sum was offered as a ransom; but he was never found.

Long years afterward I met, in India, this officer's brother. I asked him if anything had ever been learned as to his brother's death. He told me that his father had gone to China, and that he had, in that country, come upon proof that a Tartar chief, furious at the loss of one of his friends, had ordered the officer's head cut off, on the banks of a canal into which his body had been thrown.

I agree with Metzger that in this case suggestion must be, of necessity, eliminated, as well as thought-transmission. The general was not thinking of the officer, and knew nothing of what had happened. It is equally plain that the subconscious had nothing to do with the case.

Manifestations of the dead are not so rare as people believe. My fellow-countryman Count A. de M—— (he asked me not to give his name) told me of a certain number of cases which occurred in his family. He guaranteed their authenticity. I shall select only the following one, since it belongs in this chapter, holding the others in reserve for a later book:

My cousin Baroness de M—— was living in Paris. Some months after the death of her son René she was coming home, after visiting friends. It was broad daylight. She entered the drawing-room, her mind perfectly calm, and saw her son seated in an arm-chair before the fireplace. She fled, and never again entered that drawing-room.

Let us end this chapter with the following experience, a manifestation one year after death. It was published in the "Revista de Ciencias Psíquicas" of Caracas, in November, 1913.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Cabral, head of "El Atheneu Brasileiro," relates that he had taken care of a poor, deserted girl named Déolinda, who had died of consumption. Some time afterward the doctor had accepted the hospitality of his friend, Monsieur Barbosa de Andrade, who lived in a rather out-of-the-way place. Monsieur Andrade's sister had just fallen so seriously ill that it was necessary to look after her during the night.

This is the doctor's story:

One night, when I had finished my rounds, I was so tired that I went to bed. Two sisters, Mesdames Ana and Felicia Diaz, took my place at the invalid's bedside.

I had scarcely stretched myself out on my bed when I was pervaded by an intense feeling of well-being. I could not account for this sensation. Soon I had an impression that some object was touching my head, as though some one were wrapping me up in something. Astonished at this feeling, I called to the two ladies who were on duty in the next room. Madame Felicia Diaz said to me: "I see a young girl, dressed in white, at the head of your bed; she's putting a wreath of roses on your forehead. She says that her name is Déolinda, and that she has come to show her gratitude for the generosity with which you cared for her."

I was greatly astonished by this statement. I recalled the fact that it was the anniversary of Déolinda's death; neither I nor any

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1909, p. 166, and 1914, p. 125.

one else had thought of this. I had never spoken to any one in that house of what I had done for Déolinda.

DR. CABRAL.

This account is hereby confirmed by the following signatures: Manuel Barbosa de Andrade, Madame Emilia Barbosa de Andrade, Madame Ana Inês Diaz Fortes.

How shall we explain this manifestation of a dead woman? Was it a waking dream? But, if we accept this hypothesis, why the shade, the wreath of roses? Did the deceased woman transmit her thoughts?

Professor Alexander, the recorder of the occurrence, states that, according to the declarations of members of the Barbosa family, no one knew of the story concerning Déolinda. He adds that Madame Felicia was endowed with very pronounced mediumistic faculties. (Proceedings of the Society for Psychological Research, Volume X, page 385.)

This case was taken from Professor Sidgwick's "Inquiry as to Hallucinations." Myers, Frank Podmore, Mrs. Sidgwick, and Miss Alice Johnson were his collaborators. Here are the deductions of this committee:

If one wishes to exclude the possibility of any real intervention on Déolinda's part, one must assume: (1) that Dr. Cabral remembered subconsciously that that day was the anniversary of the young girl's death; (2) that the memory gave rise in him, through association, to his feeling of happiness and his tactile sensations, without, however, influencing his conscious memory; (3) that the subconscious recollection was transmitted, telepathically, to the lady who saw the deceased. Let us acknowledge that this triple hypothesis seems forced and artificial beyond all measure, and that a small number of similar cases, as precisely substantiated as this, lead us to grant the reality of manifestations after death.

Such are the posthumous manifestations observed during the first year after death. They have been selected from a

large number of others. Let us also read of those still farther removed from the date of dissolution. They grow more and more infrequent.

## IX

### MANIFESTATIONS AND APPARITIONS DURING THE SECOND THIRD, AND FOURTH YEARS AFTER DEATH

The great discoveries are born of the precise observation of unexpected phenomena.

**A**S we draw farther away from the hour of death, manifestations and apparitions grow rarer. In all the preceding chapters I have been obliged to eliminate a great many accounts, in order that I might not further increase the number of pages, a number already large. From this point on we shall not be so swamped. I shall bring, in the same order, the principal occurrences to my readers' attention, still without prejudice and with but one object: our enlightenment. I shall give the accounts exactly as I received or came upon them, without explanatory hypotheses. The hypotheses will come afterward. The manifestations which follow occurred from one to three years after death.

The first, observed one year after dissolution, was accompanied by an analytical statement which substantiated it, a statement which would seem to eliminate any possibility of hallucination or illusion. The account was sent me from Paris, on April 7, 1921.

My maternal grandfather, a devout and loyal man, adored his wife. He was extremely jealous where she was concerned.

He died in 1895.

About one year afterward my parents, who had gone to call on my grandmother, found her in tears. They asked her the rea-

son. "Yesterday evening," she told them, "I was sitting in my arm-chair. Lifting my eyes to the glass door, I saw my poor Henri [this was her husband's name]. He gazed at me fixedly, then passed on, smoking a cigarette; I could see its glow distinctly. Terrified by the vision, I sat motionless. Then, suddenly, he went by again, in the opposite direction, and always at the same gait, as though he were walking. I rushed after him, calling to him: the hallway was empty, though brightly lighted, and the door to it was locked."

In vain my parents tried to persuade her that she had been the victim of an hallucination; she would not admit this. "I *saw* him," she said, "as distinctly as I see you."

It had been my grandfather's habit in the evening to walk up and down in the hallway which ran the length of the apartment, while his wife was busy with household duties. When he left his study he usually wore a work-jacket and a skullcap. It was in this costume that he appeared to her.

On another occasion my grandmother saw her dead husband in a dream; he spoke to her roughly, and gripped her arm with force. The pain awakened her: she wept, and suffered as before. The pain in her arm persisted; in the morning an extremely large bruise could be seen upon it, *as though something solid really had gripped it*.

According to my parents, my grandmother did not have strength enough to make such a serious bruise; moreover, there was no trace of finger-marks. They would have been there in the normal course of things if she herself had pinched her arm while asleep. On the other hand, the hypothesis of a blow received accidentally must be ruled out.

I must add that before this experience my grandmother, although of a nervous temperament, was in no way inclined to a belief in the supernatural, and would never have admitted that occurrences of this sort could take place.

As regards the first case, the phenomenon would seem to have been only visual. No one thought of asking her if it had been auditory as well (the sound of steps) and olfactory (the odor of tobacco). It would appear, however, that in this case my grandmother would not have omitted to mention such a thing. She died

in 1918; this is, therefore, a point which cannot be cleared up.

As to the second case, the objection may be raised that a nervous invalid, during an attack, has a strength incomparably greater than this same invalid's strength in a normal state. My grandmother never had any nervous disorder.

However that may be, there was no question, in the first case, of a vaporous apparition in the darkness; we are concerned with an opaque, material presence, occupying a given space and seen in perspective, and *in a bright light*.

I cannot end this letter, dear Master, without telling you how much we venerate you and your work, in our home, and how many times we have found in it interest, courage, and consolation.

For twenty years my father has been buying your books; they have the place of honor in his library. This is enough to show you that I have been brought up under your mental guidance, and have spent nights reading your books. I wish to express my gratitude.

What I have said will also serve to give you assurance of the authenticity of the occurrences here related. I authorize you to make unrestricted use of them.

Allow me to express, etc.

HENRI LABOUR.

(Letter 4426.)

This letter was accompanied by the parents' attestation:

We certify that the preceding account is exact, and we share our son's feelings.

L. LABOUR.

JEANNE LABOUR (née DELPEUCH).

There is no need for me to remark, for my readers' benefit, that if I gave the end of this letter, it was simply, as in similar cases, to bring out the fact that these accounts are absolutely sincere, and do not warrant our doubting the reality of the occurrences. We must concern ourselves merely with their interpretation. We must ask ourselves, at the outset, if the first vision were not a sort of waking dream.

But all that the narrator saw was seen in a bright light, and she ran after the phantom. The stigma which followed the dream in which she saw her husband and felt the pressure of his hand would indicate that, in this case, an extremely violent pressure was exerted. It would seem admissible to me that the deceased was the real cause of the pressure. Not that he came back, either the first time, smoking a cigarette and with a skullcap on (this would have no meaning) or the second time, when he grasped her arm, but that he projected his thoughts toward her; thoughts which gave rise to images, through psychic energy. This manifestation was less sharply defined than those figuring in the photographs of phantoms which we shall have occasion to discuss, but it too was caused by the deceased communicating, in thought, with his wife.

The hypothesis of an hallucination is easy to put forward, but it has not in the least been proved satisfactory. In the following case this hypothesis would not seem even admissible, since the witness was totally unprepared.

An account of the apparition of a young girl who had been dead for a year, was sent me from Sestri Ponente, Italy, in a letter dated July 22, 1899, by Monsieur Giuseppe Cavagnaro; he took an oath that it was true. This young girl, who had died at eighteen, was seen crossing certain rooms, not only by the narrator but by other occupants of the house. The observer was calm; there are no grounds for the hypothesis of an hallucination.

Here is the letter:

I was eighteen years old and was a student in Genoa, where I was living in my father's home. One morning, about seven o'clock, while I was turning the pages of a Greek book, I heard a noise like that of a door being opened. I looked up and saw a young girl, in her chemise, coming out of the kitchen. She was tall, white-skinned, and beautiful, with long dark-brown hair which fell in curls down her back. She passed me, looking at me and almost smiling, then

entered my father's room, opening the door and closing it noisily. I was astounded, and said to myself, "I'd like to find out who she is and why she's here."

About ten minutes afterward my father came out of this same room and, as was his custom, went into the kitchen to wash his face and hands. At once I ran into the room which he had just left, but found no one there. I looked everywhere: under the cupboard, where, as a matter of fact, no one could have hidden because the shelves were so low; under the bed, which was very low—not even a child could have got beneath it. I also opened the drawers! I looked behind the chairs and in all the corners; in a word, I sought everywhere. It would have been impossible for the young girl to escape by the window, for we were living on the fifth floor, in an isolated street, 4 Via Edera.

When my father came back, after washing his face and hands, I told him what had happened. At once we ran to the stairway, to search it carefully, and could find nothing. My father was obliged to unbolt the street door, which was still locked. The concierge assured us that no one had either entered or gone out. Then we went to a neighbor who lived opposite us, Manzini, a lawyer, and told him of the occurrence. To our great surprise, he was not at all astonished by our story, recognizing, from my description of her, a *young girl* of eighteen, *who had died a year before* in my father's room, which I had seen her enter. He added that I was not the only one who had seen her, and that a whole family, which had lived in the house before us, *had been obliged to give up that apartment* because of these apparitions, which had frightened all those who had witnessed them.

I affirm under oath that what I have told you is the exact truth.

C. CAVAGNARO.

(Letter 767.)

The investigation made for me on the spot proved to me the authenticity of this account. It was proved as indubitably as the fact that Madame Brentano threw herself from a window in a Milan Street, as Prince Troubetzkoy related to me ("At the Moment of Death," page 236).

I confess that, after making every allowance, I am more

and more astonished by the denials of those who contradict everything.

Has the testimony of persons belonging to the lower classes of society the same value as that of cultivated persons? This is the question which the narrator of the following observation put to me. The story was told her by her charwoman.

One midsummer day, about three or four o'clock in the afternoon, this woman was sewing. She states that she saw her father, who had been dead for about a year, pass before her. He went into an adjoining room, where the store of wood for the winter was kept. She ran after him. Although she knew he was dead, she was so sure of having seen him that she looked into the little room into which he had gone, but saw no one there. She was not thinking of her father at the moment of this apparition, and affirmed positively that she had seen him as distinctly as one sees a person of flesh and blood, when that person stands before one. She even remembers that he carried a cane in his hand, and had on a brown suit.

BERTHE LIEBMANN,  
Paris.

(Letter 308.)

When we see dead persons in our dreams and talk with them, this mental illusion proves nothing. The most incongruous and absurd situations arise in the course of dreams. But our normal waking state is different. Why should not this observation on the part of a charwoman be as valuable as that of a savant, of a scholar, of an artist, if this person has a calm disposition and good sense that is proof against illusions? Moreover, why are observations of this sort so numerous?

The foregoing narrations would lead us to think that dead persons return to their former abodes. They may think of these abodes without really coming back. We may, on the other hand, see in such cases only mental images or hallucinations, but we must beware of solutions that are too easy.

Thus we might see in the following impression an optical and auditory illusion. But the percipient was a child five or six years old, who did not, probably, at the time of this experience, have much imagination. On the other hand, we know of rather a large number of similar manifestations on the part of dead persons who continued their former habits. An account of the following phenomenon was sent me by Mademoiselle Eve Cabot, from Montpellier, on April 27, 1920. It bears the number 4134, on my records of psychic occurrences.

When I was five or six years old, I was living in the country, with my grandmother. We slept in the same bed. One morning, when I waked up, I saw my grandfather, who had been dead for a year. He was sighing as he walked from one window to another. I was not in the least frightened. In this same way my grandfather came back several times. My grandmother used to say to me, again and again, that what I had told her was meaningless, but I heard my mother tell her that my visions corresponded to my grandfather's former habits. He had almost ruined himself by building the house in which we were living, and he used often to go from one window to another, sighing.

As we said a short time ago, a large number of happenings of this sort would lead us to think that the dead continue the habits peculiar to them when they were alive. Is this strange and inexplicable circumstance enough to make us reject these happenings? Would it not be better to try to explain them?

We shall read now of a posthumous anniversary. I received the following letter from Port-Louis, Ile Maurice, on May 4, 1899:

When I was twenty I celebrated my birthday with my brother-in-law, who was passing through this city; his age was exactly double mine. It was on December 13, 1874. Ever since that time

we have continued to celebrate our birthday together. My brother-in-law died in October, 1897, about two months before his sixty-third birthday. I did not celebrate that birthday alone, for I was very sad. At the close of 1898, I did not think of our birthday. This is all the stranger from the fact that I cannot remember forgetting this date on any other occasion in my life. In the course of the night of December 12th-13th—I do not know at what hour—I saw my brother-in-law distinctly, while asleep. His features were clearly defined. I did not see him as though in a dream, but as though it were broad daylight. He seemed a little older, as he might well have, after one or two years. When I awakened in the morning, this experience seemed very odd to me. It was only in the course of the day that I thought of the date and remembered that it was my forty-fourth anniversary. I must add that there was a very close intimacy between us.

I had never had any vision such as that since my brother-in-law's death.

RÉGIS DE CHAZAL,  
Manufacturing Engineer.

(Letter 654.)

We are free to seek every possible explanation. Could the narrator's subconscious mind have perceived what his conscious mind did not? But have we a right to deny the influence of the deceased brother-in-law? It was a year and a half after his death. If we wished to interpret the dream in a literal spirit, we should conclude that the dead man's soul was not free to manifest itself two months after death, but was able to do so fourteen months afterward.

We read in Volume II (page 122) of a mother who manifested herself one year after her death, and asked her daughter to go, despite her fatigue, to the religious ceremonies at the anniversary of her death. Was this not a mere reflection of the daughter's thought? She had been particularly busy in preparing for the ceremony. Let us never lose sight of the fact that we are far from knowing the whole extent of human faculties. It was on account of consideration such as this that

the occurrence just mentioned was given in Volume II, and not here.

The following is an account of a ghost, distinctly seen and closely scrutinized by the observer. The witness himself wrote out the story of it.<sup>1</sup>

In 1880 I succeeded my predecessor as librarian. I had never seen him, nor any photograph or portrait of him. People may have spoken to me about him and about his appearance, but that was all. One evening in March, 1884, I had remained in the library until rather late, and was working, alone. Suddenly I realized that I should miss my train if I did not hurry. It was then fifty-five minutes past ten, and the last train left at five minutes past eleven. I rose hastily, took up some books in one hand and the lamp in the other, then went out through a hallway. As my lamp lighted up this hallway I perceived a man at the other end, and it occurred to me at once that a burglar had broken in—a thing that was not impossible. Instantly I went back to the room I had just left, put down the books, took up a revolver, held my lamp behind me and again went along the hallway to a corner where it seemed to me that the burglar might have hidden himself, in order to make his way, from that point, into the main room. But I could find no one, and saw only the room, lined with shelves of books. Several times I shouted to the intruder to show himself, hoping that my call would be heard by a policeman. Then I saw him again. I noted that he seemed to be examining the shelves of books. His head was bald, colorless; his eye-sockets were very sunken. I went toward him. He was an old man with high shoulders. He swayed from side to side as he gazed at the books; he continued to look at them, turning his back to me. With a dragging step he left the shelves and made his way silently toward the door of a little lavatory opening on the room in which the books were, a lavatory which had no other door. I followed the man into it, and, to my great surprise, found no one. I examined the window (it measured about fourteen by eighteen inches), and found it securely locked. I opened it and looked out. Outside was a pit ten feet deep; no one could have got out of it unaided. He could not have escaped.

<sup>1</sup> Frank Podmore, *Apparitions and Thought-Transference*, p. 427.

Deeply mystified, I admit that I began to have, for the first time, what might be called "a feeling of supernatural fear." I left the library and found that I had missed my train.

The next morning I told my story to a clergyman of that region, who, when he heard my description, replied, "Why, that's the old librarian!" Soon afterward I was shown a portrait of my predecessor; the resemblance was very striking. The deceased had lost all his hair, his eyebrows, and his eyelashes; he had, if I remember rightly, been the victim of an explosion. He had high shoulders, and walked with a waddling gait.

Later inquiry proved he had died at about the time of year at which I saw the figure.

After telling this story, Mr. Podmore admits quite frankly that to account for it by the hypothesis of thought-transmission "has seemed to some extravagant." But, all the same, he will not abandon this theory. In the course of the discussion he cites Gurney's reflections in the second volume of "Phantasms of the Living" (Volume II, pages 267-269), "where the telepathic bond between the agent and the percipient would seem to be of a local, rather than a personal character." We can guess, after a fashion, what the author is driving at, but his meaning is not dazzlingly clear. Podmore adds:

In the case of the most usual apparitions—for example, that of a dying mother to her son—the manifestations are not of the same sort as in the case of casual acquaintances, since people who have lived together a part of their lives have sentiments in common.

In the case given here, the bond of union which led to such common sentiments may be found in the fact that the witness had the same occupation as the deceased.

This interpretation would lead us to conclude that the witness saw the librarian's form in his habitual environment because *a friend of the deceased, may at this precise moment* have remembered the former librarian and mentally recalled his image.

All of us feel that this "explanation" is no explanation at all. Thought-transmission is no universal panacea. To go so far as to suppose that some unknown person thought, at that very moment, of the former librarian, and that the thought produced the vision seen by his successor, who followed the shade which was walking in the library, and which disappeared into the lavatory—this supposition forces us to put forward a hypothesis so audacious in its temerity that it would seem further removed from truth than the admission that the phantom actually existed. If it did actually exist, as an image projected by the dead man's thought, it was distinct and substantial enough in appearance to have been taken for a burglar and followed by the observer, armed with a revolver.

To see in these phenomena only hallucinations is really not possible; this would mean finding madmen and mentally unbalanced persons everywhere. The observer did not know the former librarian, and the apparition corresponded to the portrait which he saw afterward and the description given him later. The librarian was bald, with high shoulders, and he walked with a waddling gait. It was really he whom his successor met, scrutinized, and followed; the witness had no nervous disorder, moreover. What was the phantom doing there? Was it a harking back to his life, his habits? These ghosts are, most assuredly, bizarre. There are numerous analogous cases. Though we have no preconceived ideas, we are forced to admit their authenticity. What had this old librarian come to look for? Why was the Sentenac priest seen walking up and down and telling his beads? How do impalpable beings grow visible? All these occurrences have been denied, disdained, and accounts of them suppressed; plainly, this was the simplest course. But would it not be better to learn from them?

The exact date of dissolution was not given, but it would seem that the apparition was observed one year after death.

Whether the phenomenon was subjective or objective, it had a cause. After all, there may be nothing unpleasant in meeting a ghost; the thing may resolve itself into a problem in optics demanding an explanation. We shall read later of the ghost of Maupertuis in a room of the Berlin Academy.

The apparition of which I am about to give an account—that of a horseman, a year after his death—was actually seen by a man known and esteemed for his physical and moral qualities, General R. Barter, of the British Army. The account is particularly fantastic and unbelievable, and nevertheless it cannot be doubted! Here is the picture<sup>1</sup>:

The general was campaigning in the Punjab. One night, when the moon was full (there was that splendid tropical moonlight), he was alone, some distance from his camp. He was calmly smoking a cigar, when, on his left, he heard the sound of a trotting horse. About a hundred meters away, above the sunken road, he first saw a moving hat appear—evidently the horseman's hat, he thought. Soon afterward a group emerged full into the open; there was a European in civilian dress, on a horse, accompanied by two native servants. The group approached at a good rate of speed. General Barter cried, "Who goes there?" There was no answer. The rider still came on, with his followers. He was not more than four paces away when, upon a last commanding challenge, he stopped short and turned his face toward Barter. At once the general recognized in him a lieutenant whom he knew to have been dead for a year. With a quick glance he took in the whole picture. The lieutenant was in full dress—a high hat, a white vest, et cetera—but, though he had been clean-shaven, the general saw that he now had whiskers under his chin. Besides this, he noted that he was much more corpulent than when he had known him. The lieutenant's mount also drew his attention; it was a vigorous mountain pony, brown, with a black tail and mane. General Barter restrained himself no longer; he wished to banish all doubt as to this adventure, and he threw himself toward the fantastic horseman, across an inter-

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, November, 1891.

vening slope. But the earth gave way beneath his feet, he fell forward on his hands, and rose instantly. All had vanished! The subsequent inquiry brought out the fact that the lieutenant had let his whiskers grow a short time before his death, and that he had become much stouter in his latter days. General Barter learned, at the same time, that he had owned a horse, bred in the Punjab. This horse corresponded, point by point, to his description of the horse of his vision. This horse was also dead, having been killed through the imprudence of his master, who was known as a break-neck rider. General Barter, who had lost sight of the lieutenant for some years, was completely ignorant of all these details. His memory, therefore, could not have aided his imagination to create the apparition, with all its special characteristics. Nor could the apparition have taken form in the mind of any telepathist, and have been reconstructed in every detail, without any error or omission.

In citing this case of the apparition of an officer who had been dead for a year, and of his horse, Durand de Gros admits that the initial thought would seem to have resided in the phantom himself, "as in the case of the apparitions of those in a trance; as in Alfonso of Liguori's visit to the pope" ("Le Merveilleux scientifique," page 68). But his theory seems to me extremely vague.

It is, certainly, most difficult to explain such a phenomenon. We may think that there was no real phantom there, either of man or horse. But may we not admit the visioning of a real scene which actually occurred? Through double vision, through clairvoyance, people sometimes perceive a future scene. Why should they not witness a scene in the past? Time has no real existence. And could not this image have been caused by the deceased himself, thinking of his friend?

Into what world have we set sail, dear readers? But let us not be disturbed. Let us calmly continue to give occurrences carefully observed. Let us not imitate the writers who suppose that all must be explained by the natural

sciences in their present state of development and who are inexcusably fatuous enough to throw doubt and suspicion on the best efforts of those who seek in good faith.

If we must be convinced of any one thing, it is that *we know nothing*.

The preceding occurrences took place during the first and second years after death. We shall now read of those which happened after the second year.

I take occasion to state here that since 1899 I have been keeping the following note separate from the letters I was receiving:

In the course of the night of January 1 and 2, 1898, I saw my mother in a dream; she had been dead for two years and a half. She came toward my bed gravely, kissed me on the forehead, and went out without saying anything to me. The next day I received a letter telling me of *the sudden death of my sister* at ten o'clock on the evening of January 1st. Since I did not awaken, it was impossible for me to know if there was an exact coincidence between the *time* of the dream and that of my sister's death.

M. RAZOUS,

Instructor in Trélons, Haute-Garonne.

(Letter 360.)

The correspondence between the mother's manifestation, in a dream, and the unforeseen death of her daughter, is indubitable. The theory of chance really will not suffice; we need an explanation. Our interpretation is that the mother thought of her son in this supreme hour, and that there was telepathic communication between her and him.

This account was taken from "L'Inconnu." When I was preparing that work for the press, I received the following communication. I did not publish it at the time, my intention being to give accounts relative to the dying before considering the dead.

I can guarantee the absolute authenticity of the following occurrence. My mother had this experience some years ago:

An aunt, of whom she was very fond, had died two years previously, leaving a son with whom my mother, for special reasons, had practically broken off all relations. One night she was awakened by a very clear perception of this aunt's presence; she had seen her open the door of the room, draw near her bed, and stand, erect and motionless, at her bedside.

The phenomenon was repeated again after two days. This time my mother was most agitated; she told my father about it, and asked him to find out if any misfortune had happened to her cousin; she had no doubt that the apparition's intention had been to commend him particularly to her.

The presentiment was a true one, for on the following day my parents were informed that a member of the family, who was dying, had asked to see them. The cousin—since it was he—wished for a reconciliation with my mother; she regarded it as a double duty to take care of him until the last. He lived on for some days.

Even to-day, although several years have gone by since this happened, my mother never speaks of it without emotion, and is convinced that her aunt came to tell her of her son's illness.

For family reasons this note must remain anonymous.

(Letter 48.)

A. J.

How can we deny the reality of this apparition?—its object and its result?

A mother's voice was heard two years after her death. I received the following letter from Siorac de Belvis, Dordogne, on May 14, 1899:

I think it my duty to bring to your knowledge a happening in the commune of Bosset, in the canton of Laforce.

A lady named X— died in 1895, leaving a little daughter, four months old, who was taken care of by her uncle, a worthy farmer. Two years afterward the latter was gathering in the harvest, with his daughter and his wife. The child, then about three years old, had followed them into the field. This field was so situ-

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ated that no one could approach the harvesters without being perceived.

Suddenly these harvesters heard the word "Good-day" spoken near them, slowly, in a sad tone. The three of them, who had known the deceased woman well, recognized her voice immediately. The little girl, who could not remember it, having been orphaned at too early an age, asked her aunt, whom she called mother: "Mamma, who's saying good-day to us? There's no one here."

They did not answer her, but began to weep, believing, according to the superstition of their region, that the dead woman was demanding her daughter, and that the latter would die very soon.

All these persons are trustworthy, and almost completely illiterate. They never spoke of this incident without tears in their eyes.

If you wish more exact information as to these people (I know them slightly, and all of them are still living), and as to the day and hour of the hallucination, I shall take advantage of the Easter holidays and shall go and question them myself.

REBEYROL.

(Letter 117.)

The investigation confirmed the authenticity of the curious account. It showed me, once again, that it is unreasonable to deny everything. We are concerned in this case with an auditory perception: there were three adult hearers and a child.

The following occurrence took place during that same period (1899):

Something quite strange happened to my mother and me.

We lived in Seine-et-Marne for a long time. Through a change in the government my father was called to Chalon-sur-Saône. One evening, when my mother and I were going to the post-office and were passing under a gas-light, at a corner we saw a lady some paces in front of us, coming from the opposite direction. Both of us cried, "Madame Seigneur!" (She was an old lady we had known, who had lived near us formerly, and had been dead for about two years.) After a moment's thought we added, "That is

she!" We turned to follow her—. Nothing! We have never been able to explain this apparition. My mother and I often speak of it. *We are sure* of having seen her; we can describe what she was wearing, to the smallest detail. If it had been I alone, I should distrust my nervous and impressionable temperament, but my mother is very calm. We used to care a great deal for that old friend, and often used to speak of her. Did she wish to show us that she had not forgotten us?

Here is another manifestation. In the religious school where I finished my education, my schoolmistress grew dangerously ill. A young girl about twenty years old came from Paris to take her place. She lived in one of the little rooms called *chambrettes*, with an assistant mistress, a young girl preparing to take her diploma, and a woman in charge of the linen. Every morning all these went to mass at half-past six, with the exception of Mademoiselle Adrienne. One morning, when all the sisters were leaving the chapel, Mademoiselle Adrienne was seen in the kitchen. She said that she did not wish to live in her room any longer, that a sister had frightened her. They proved to her that all the sisters—that every one except herself was at mass. "I know that," she said. "It was a sister whom we don't know. She's tall, slender, and very pale. She came up to my bed, and looked at me. I spoke to her and she did not answer, but I shall never forget her gaze. She walked all around the room, slowly, then went away."

There was no sister who corresponded to Mademoiselle Adrienne's description, and they spent the whole day discussing this phenomenon. Then one of the nuns thought of showing her a photograph of Sister Bouchez, who had died two months before Mademoiselle Adrienne entered the school. She recognized her at once. Sister Bouchez had been accustomed to working in these small rooms, where she gathered together all sorts of things for the sick.

L. DELVERT.

(Letter 223.)

I repeat for the hundredth time that we cannot always see in these cases mere hallucinations—that this explanation of occurrences so numerous and varied is absolutely unsatisfactory.

The following incident would lead us to admit that a dead person may manifest himself, in exceptional circumstances, three years after he has passed away. The communication which I am about to give was sent me from Intra, Italy, on August 31, 1899, by the learned Dr. Perossi.

The Italian newspapers, my dear Master, give us assurance that you are still patiently questioning the Unknown, and that it will please you to be kept informed as to manifestations touching on the problems which you study, as well as the sky. I seize this opportunity to tell you of a personal, technical observation.

A young girl, Marie Bottini, aged thirteen (she is a peasant from Boregio), fell over a precipice and struck her head against a stone which made a wound on her right temple. It fractured her skull and a piece of bone was driven into it. It was 6 x 7—that is to say, 42 centimeters square. The fragment of bone, completely detached from the skull, buried itself in the gray matter of the brain, where it still is. A great deal of the gray matter issued from her head; in order to sew up the flesh wound I had to take out about fifty grams of it. The little girl was brought to me thirty-six hours after the accident; I found her able to give clear answers to all my questions, and up to the present time she has not been afflicted with any nervous disorder, either of her intellectual faculties, her muscular control or her sensibility.

In spite of the effects of the wound on her system, she suffered no mental disturbance, and was able to give, and can still give, minute explanations of what happened to her. Having fallen into a ravine hollowed out by water, she took refuge in it and remained there until the following day. When she was asked if she had not been afraid during the night, she answered that she had not, and stated that toward the close of the day *her father had appeared to her* and had given her courage, telling her to wait patiently for her relatives, who would surely come to look for her the next day and would take very good care of her. Her father had been dead for three years. I told her that a person who had been dead for so long could not come back, but she stated with conviction that her father had come, and had protected her during the whole night. This child still sticks to what she said.

There, my dear Professor, is the authentic account of the occurrence. It is for you to study. Was it an illusion or reality? We physicians see in it an hallucination.

Allow me, dear Professor, etc.

DR. PEROSI.

(Letter 771.)

May we, logically, deny all these occurrences? Then, how could all these numerous and consistent apparitions of the dead—fathers, mothers, children, relatives—manifest themselves, if there is no truth at the bottom of it all? Could these be varied, *mutually unconnected* hallucinations, in agreement one with the other? Each of my readers must honestly and sincerely ask himself this same question.

We shall now read of the mysterious voice of a dead father, who saved the life of his son and the lives of a ship's crew. The "Filosofia della Scienza" of Palermo published the following letter, sent from Civita Vecchia on February 27, 1911, to the editor of this review:

All my ancestors were seamen. My father came into his own when he took command of the brig *Notre-Dame de Grâce*, in Marseilles. This was in 1837. He left Marseilles for Brindisi with a cargo of grain. Navigation was at that time much more difficult than it is to-day, because of pirates on the one hand, and, on the other, because the coasts had no lighthouses. There were only a few lanterns here and there.

When they neared Brindisi it was black night, and a tempest was raging. The brig was sailing to windward. My father was at the stern of the vessel, trying to discover some vague light which would show him where the port was. The wind was blowing tempestuously; the waves, with a noise like hell, shook the vessel at intervals, covered it with foam, and pounded its sides. Peals of thunder followed the flashes of lightning. The fury of the tempest increased steadily; it was a critical moment.

Suddenly a loud voice cried: "Captain, Captain, come here!

Come here at once!" Not knowing what had happened, my father rushed to the poop, whence the calls were coming.

"What is it?" he asked the helmsman. The latter, dazed and trembling, stammered:

"Don't you hear it? Did n't you hear the voice that's been repeating, '*Puggia! puggia!*'<sup>1</sup> for the last few minutes?"

"The voice? What voice? The rain's making you hear imaginary voices, or it's the whistling of the wind that's fooling you. I don't hear anything."

But he had not finished speaking when a voice from the steering-apparatus (at least that is where it seemed to come from) repeated in a commanding tone: "*Puggia! puggia! puggia!*"

Astounded, hardly believing his ears, my father approached the spot from which this cry had seemed to come. He went all around it; he examined all the nooks of the poop, but since he discovered nothing and thought that he, too, must be the victim of a sensory hallucination, he said to the helmsman: "But there's no one there. All the crew are at the bow." Then the voice, clearer and more vibrant, repeated the command. This time my father not only heard it distinctly, but recognized in it the quality, the cadence, and the very tones of *his father's voice*—a voice that was most familiar to him, since he had made trips with his father from the age of nine.

Fascinated, moved, in his turn, by an irresistible and incomprehensible force, he shouted out the order to haul taut. Taking the tiller from the helmsman's hands, he himself exerted the necessary strength. The crew then loosened the sheets and the yards on the leeward side.

The brig, catching the wind, swung over to the right, and parting the raging waves, pushed forward swiftly, like a runaway horse when the reins are released. Almost at the same time a flash of lightning irradiated the quarter from which the wind was coming—that is to say the larboard side—which was precisely the direction in which the vessel was previously moving. By the light of this

<sup>1</sup> This word (it is Neapolitan dialect) may be translated, "Haul taut!"—which here means to steer the ship in the direction opposite to that from which the wind was blowing.

fleeting gleam the frightened eyes of the crew beheld the foamy whiteness of raging waves beating the rocks of the coast.

If the vessel had continued her original course for a few more minutes all would have been over for both ship and crew.<sup>1</sup>

F. SCOTTI,  
Ship's captain.

To suppose that this was an hallucination seems to me pure madness.

People may always say that the story was merely made up, that Captain Scotti lied. All the preceding narrations might be met with this same special answer. Some people are deaf, blind, idiotic. Let us continue, in all freedom, to seek self-enlightenment.

The remarkable, symbolic manifestation which we shall now read of took place three years and eight months after death.

In general we can eliminate only with great difficulty the possibility of influence exerted by living persons' minds. Our efforts to attain to truth lead to no precise results comparable to those achieved in the solution of algebraic equations. With these equations we proceed by elimination, until we are left with an absolutely definitive quantity. In the following case, as in so many others, we can really see no other course but to admit the personal influence of the deceased. I thank the observer for having been kind enough to allow me to set forth, for the benefit of all those anxious to solve the greatest of problems, the graphic account which follows. I owe my knowledge of it to her.

Her letter was sent me from Paris. It was dated February 7, 1921.

In order that you may have one more document for use in the important investigation which you are making, allow me to tell you

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1911, p. 126.

of the two following experiences. I was concerned in them personally.

On September 2, 1916, between ten and eleven o'clock in the morning, I was dressing in my room when, suddenly, I was seized by a terrible, stifling anguish. What I felt was so painful that I rushed, scarcely dressed at all, into my daughter's room, making my way along the walls so that I might not fall. I cried out to her, "I don't know what's the matter: I'm suffering, I'm stifling!" Then, when my daughter's kind words had calmed me a little, I said: "Good Heavens! A great misfortune's happened to René!"

Two days afterward, on September 4, Major Duseigneur, commander of Squadron 57, informed me that my beloved son, a pilot in the aviation service, had disappeared behind the German lines, after an aerial battle above Verdun, on the very day and at the very time when I had been so agitated.

Only after the armistice did the Germans inform us that my son had been brought down within their lines on September 2d, at Dieppe, near Verdun, and that he had been buried in the Dieppe soldiers' graveyard, in grave 56. We made four trips and searched innumerable times in this cemetery, without finding anything. The graveyard had been torn up by bombs, and most of the crosses were broken. Since we could not find our dear child's remains, we addressed ourselves to the officer in command of that sector, whose duty it was to see to the exhumation of the bodies, that he might let us know the day on which the corpses in this graveyard were to be exhumed. Several persons in high positions had communicated with him on our behalf, and my husband wrote to him continually in order that he might not forget us. This took place last spring.

At half-past eight on May 25th I was pervaded by a feeling of great sadness; I was even sadder than usual, without reason. That I might shake off this deep depression, I went to the window, and my gaze wandered to the rue Ribéra, which runs up a slope directly opposite. There are trees there, and a little blue sky. Suddenly, in a group of trees, I saw my son René appear! His handsome face was pale and sad; he seemed to be depicted on a great circular medallion. At his sides were two young men, one on his right, the other on his left. I did not know them, and had

never seen them. Terrified by this vision, I left the window, put my hands to my head, and asked myself if I were going mad, but walked up and down the room several times, then went back to the window; the vision was still there. There could be no doubt to that it was René. His head was tilted to the left, as usual. "But who can these young men be?" I asked myself. "The one on the right seems to be a Russian, and the one on the left, a German. But that means that my son is n't dead: he must be a prisoner somewhere." Still overwhelmed by terror, I left the window once more and ran to tell my husband. But when I reached the door of his room I got myself in hand and said to myself: "No, I must n't speak to him; he'd think me mad; it would be too painful for him. What shall I do?" I went back to the window: the vision was still there. This time I sat down on the window-sill, determined to stay there to the end, near him. What happened? I came to myself. Had I been asleep? Or had I lost consciousness? I no longer saw my son. I rose painfully, left the window, looked to see what time it was. It was half-past ten o'clock. All this had lasted for two hours. I went to bed, much agitated, shaken by emotion, but could not sleep and dared not say anything to my husband. What could the vision mean? I never ceased asking myself this question.

Some days afterward I told three of my women friends all that had happened to me; they can vouch for this, if you like.

Three months went by. Then, at the close of August, the officer in command of the sector, in reply to a further demand on my husband's part, more pressing than the others, informed us that the bodies in the cemetery in Dieppe had been exhumed, and that *our child had not been found there*. We were deeply grieved. How could we ever know, now, what had become of our poor son? I, for my part, felt hopeless. After some days of extreme depression I took courage again, and wished to return to the Dieppe cemetery.

It was a fixed idea on my part. My husband opposed it, telling me, very reasonably, that since we had found nothing when there were bodies there, we could not, now, hope to find anything whatsoever. Nothing could convince me. Since my decision was final, my husband was good enough to accompany me, and we left in the course of the first days of September.

We went directly to the Eix sector. I asked on what date the bodies in this cemetery had been exhumed. The officer consulted the records and told us, "It took five days (there were one hundred and ten bodies), from the twentieth to the twenty-fifth of *May*." This last date was precisely *that of my vision!* I looked at my husband, for, most fortunately, I had decided to tell him everything. This coincidence in dates disturbed both of us. We set out. The cemetery was five kilometers away.

As we were going there, I reflected that my husband was right: what were we to look for, since there was nothing left?

When we reached our destination, I ordered the men to dig in a great shell-hole; I thought that, most certainly, no one could have looked in it. In this hole they found a pair of aviator's goggles. I took courage once more: without any doubt, an aviator had been buried there. They made a further search. Nothing—absolutely nothing. At last a little soldier who was most intelligent took charge of things. Under his guidance we reached an empty ditch where we found a large piece of fur—which I recognized—gloves, some pieces of a pair of violet silk suspenders. There was no longer the shadow of a doubt: my son had lain there. "Where did you put him?"—"In the German cemetery. We wrote the word 'Unknown' above him, and put up a black cross." The cross of those accursed men! My grief and indignation may well be imagined! I wanted to hurry to the other graveyard; I did not wish my son to remain there. But the officer refused my request. He could not undertake to have bodies in coffins unearthed. Besides, how could we find the particular coffin which we were looking for? There were more than two thousand graves in this German cemetery. But my mind was made up. We went back to Verdun, eighteen kilometers away. We found the officer in charge of the graveyards. After a long discussion, and influenced by our determined, threatening attitude, he yielded, and authorized us to have a search made.

The next day, at five o'clock in the morning, we were in the cemetery, with nine men and several soldiers. By noon they had opened twenty coffins without any result. The men went to lunch. My husband and I remained there, deeply distressed, for we were beginning to lose hope. We were in despair at the idea of leaving

our child among his accursed enemies, when, suddenly, *I thought of my vision*. As though a gleam of light had irradiated my mind, "Why, yes!" I said; "we'll find him; he's between a Russian and a German. There was a Russian in the Dieppe cemetery; let's look for him." The men came back and took up the work once more. As for us, we looked for the Russian. We had to interrupt our search again and again, to inspect each newly opened coffin; this delayed us greatly. At last, at four o'clock, I found the Russian. On his left was an unknown man; on the latter's left was a German. I felt, I was sure that—beyond a doubt—the unknown man was my son. They dug up the coffin; it was he! His poor skeleton was enveloped in his fur coat. More bits of suspenders. But, above all, I recognized his teeth. They had opened forty-two coffins. One hundred and ten of them had come from the Dieppe cemetery, and in all there were more than two thousand, that had been sent from various regions! Except for my vision we should have had to give up our search.

Wasn't this marvelous? My poor child did not wish me to leave him in this graveyard; he did not wish me to have this added, cruel suffering. He came to my assistance; he gave me the will power to push on to the end, to overcome all difficulties, all obstacles. Now that I am calm, I feel that he lives, that he sees me. But I find the portraits of the two young men the most extraordinary thing about my vision; it must have been their very features. Oh, how happy I should be if you would tell me how this could happen. I think of my vision constantly, and each time that I do I am most disturbed.

My husband and my women friends will certainly vouch for the scrupulous exactitude of this account. It is, doubtless, too long, but I thought that every detail would have its own importance in your eyes.

A. CLARINVAL.

(Letter 4378.)

It will be readily understood that, after reading this story that is so touching, so sincere, so remarkable, I wished to render it complete through the investigation which I

usually make when the subjects of inquiry warrant my doing so. Accepting the kind invitation of the narrator herself, I asked her husband, Monsieur Clarinval, a retired officer of high rank, to be good enough to write me directly, and *to give his own personal recollections*. His reply was a detailed account; it set forth, in different terms, the incidents just related; it seems to me superfluous to give it here. It ends as follows:

This discovery was absolutely providential. I hereby state that without my wife's vision it would have been altogether impossible to find our poor child again. He is now lying in the Montparnasse Cemetery, where we had him taken on November 22, 1920.

The bodies in the Dieppe cemetery were exhumed during the period from May 20th to May 25th, 1920. Now, it was precisely on May 25th that my wife had the vision. After the circumstances were verified, it appeared that it was precisely on this date—May 25th—that our son's remains were transferred from the Dieppe cemetery to the German cemetery.

I can therefore vouch for the veracity of this account. I must add that my wife has a clear, well-balanced mind. Her judgment is always so sound that I admit I was impressed by her account of the apparition, which lasted two whole hours. The occurrence was all the more important because of the fact that she is not subject to hallucinations, and in all her life—that is to say for sixty-three years—*she never had any other vision*.

CLARINVAL,  
Retired Major.

This statement by Major Clarinval was, certainly, all that was required for my investigation. Nevertheless the three persons whom Madame Clarinval had told of her vision were good enough to add their attestations; I shall place these, too, before my readers' eyes. But I shall first give another statement, of equal significance in our investigation: that of Dr. Vercoutre, the distinguished physician.

## ATTESTATIONS

## A

I the undersigned, Doctor of Medicine of the Paris Faculty, hereby certify that Madame Anna Clarinval, despite the severe test that she was put to when she lost her son René, an aviator killed at the front, has never suffered the slightest mental trouble. On the contrary, it was due to the perfect clearness of her mind that she was able to bring to a successful conclusion the extremely difficult search for the remains of her dear dead son.

DOCTOR VERCOUTRE,<sup>1</sup>

Member of the Association of French  
Physicians; officer of the  
Legion of Honor.

Paris, February 14, 1921.

## B

It is with all my heart that I am sending you these lines, certifying that my friend Madame Clarinval had told me *all* that she wrote you. She did so several days after she saw the vision of her son. Allow me to add that this did not astonish me in the least, and that, wishing to calm her, I advised her to hope, in spite of what I thought of it all.

I must add that my friend Madame Clarinval, before the vision, did not believe in spiritism in the least,<sup>2</sup> and would not even allow people to speak of it in her presence.

BARONESS DE BOURNAT.

## C

I am very happy to be able to certify that Madame Clarinval, during the first days in June of last year, told me that on May 25th she had seen her son appear to her in a group of trees in the rue Ribéra, which is directly in front of her home; that on each side of her son there was a young man whom she did not know;

<sup>1</sup> It seems indiscreet to me to give addresses (they are now before me) of the signers of these four bits of testimony.

<sup>2</sup> To identify this vision with spiritistic experiments would be a mistake.

these men appeared to be a Russian and a German. She was greatly preoccupied by this apparition and spoke of it often.

It was only when she made a trip to Verdun, in September, that she understood what the extraordinary vision meant.

J. DUMAILLET.

## D

I am happy to attest the authenticity of the communication which you received from Madame Clarinval; I had read it before she sent it.

The account is scrupulously exact in every detail. Madame Clarinval had told me of her vision eight days after she had it.

M. BARBIER.

Such was this occurrence. It is unquestionable; the account of it was based on observations mutually in agreement. The manifestation came long after death: from September 2, 1916, to May 25, 1920, there are three years and two hundred and sixty-six days—that is, three years, eight months, and twenty-six days.

What conclusion may we draw, in the interests of our own personal convictions?

Monsieur and Madame Clarinval came, themselves, to talk to me about their experiences. My investigation was made as methodically as in the case of an astronomical, a meteorological, a geological phenomenon, or a historical fact. It was a real scientific inquiry. No doubt can remain as to the authenticity of the vision, and its connection with the discovery of the young aviator's body. We all of us feel how great was the resultant consolation, to the grief-stricken mother, to the hopeless father: their dear child's body is now here, in the city of Paris, where they are living. Nothing is left of it, or almost nothing. But the body was only the garment of the soul, and they know that the soul survived the catastrophe of death, that it manifested itself, that it guided them in their energetic and persevering inquiry.

We are, doubtless, not yet entirely satisfied. We should like to know more, and we ask ourselves why there was this symbolism in the vision, why this enigmatical apparition, between the Russian and the German. It would seem that it would have been simpler for René Clarinval to inform his mother, directly, that he had been killed on September 2d, and buried in such and such a place.

We might suppose, perhaps, that since Madame Clarinval was thinking constantly of her son, she was endowed for a moment with the faculty of seeing at a distance, or, to phrase it more precisely, with the faculty of feeling what was taking place. And we might suppose, too, that the feeling took the concrete form, to her eyes, of a living scene: the apparition of her son between a Russian and a German. But, in this case, why should she not have seen the reality? I have published so many examples of precise visioning at a distance that this interpretation seems very debatable and less probable than that of psychic influence on the part of the deceased.

We must not, we cannot judge things from our commonplace point of view. The whole of the invisible world is still to be discovered; we know neither its conditions nor its laws. Let us be grateful for the rudimentary knowledge that has been vouchsafed us, with which to begin our investigation. Christopher Columbus discovered America, believing that he had reached the East Indies: it was a new world, on the opposite side of the globe from the East Indies. The spiritual world is still less known to us than America, in 1492, was to the people living at that time, although it concerns us more deeply and is all about us.

What shall we think of the following case? A person gifted with the faculty of foreseeing the deaths of certain people proved to be endowed with this same faculty after death. Let us read the account of it; it is given word for word:

DEAR MASTER:

I must tell you of the following personal experiences. In 1891 I was not yet married. I knew in Paris a most intelligent woman, fifty years old, who took a great liking to me. She had this peculiarity: she always dreamed of the misfortunes which were to happen to her friends and acquaintances. How many times was I not a witness of the veracity of her dreams! One day, when she saw that I had been rather frightened by her power of prevision, she said to me, laughing: "Don't be afraid; I'll never foretell your death to you, for that would make you suffer—only the deaths of others."

She herself died that same year (1891), after having foreseen her own death, as she had the deaths of other people, in her dreams.

My regret was sincere, but having left Paris, and even left France, I was no longer thinking of her, when, one night in December, 1892, she appeared to me in a dream. She was dressed in black. Gazing at me sadly, she said to me, "All is over." I suffered terribly, without knowing what she meant. My father was ill at the time, but I had had a letter from him on that very day—a happier letter than usual, for he was better. Three days after this dream he died. It was the first and the greatest sorrow of my life.

In November, 1895, she appeared to me again, still dressed in black, but this time she did not speak to me. Three days later my beloved mother was dead.

At length, in October, 1898, I saw her, still in black, for the third time. "Whose turn is it now?" I asked myself. Alas! it was my best friend, who was living in Wiesbaden, and whom I loved with all my heart. The next day I received a letter from her; she was unwell, but she wrote gayly and cleverly, as she always did. Three days afterward, however, through a telegram from her husband, I learned of her death.

These were, certainly, three very strange dreams; in them my woman friend still had the habits peculiar to her while she was alive. You alone, dear Master, may be able to explain them. This woman in black had, until her death, denied the existence of the soul. We often discussed this subject, for at that time I was certain that the soul exists, as I am now.

Why is it she who appears to me to predict the deaths of those whom I love? To prove to me, doubtless, that she was mistaken when she was alive, and that my belief was the true one.

I have no other religion save a great love for the Creator of life in His all-powerful grandeur, and for everything here below that reflects His image.

IDA CAIL,  
Paris.

(Letter 803.)

Walter Scott, who wrote a book on spirits, apparitions, and sorcery,<sup>1</sup> showed himself a radical skeptic. He denied these occurrences utterly, thinking them only hallucinations, nightmares caused by indigestion, visual or auditory illusions, and even, most of the time, symptoms of mental derangement. He gives, moreover, examples of temporary insanity, such as the visions of Nicolaï and of Gregory, well known to historians. To him all apparitions were mental impressions on the part of people who were ill.

I shall borrow the following narration from him. Despite his opinion it seems to me worthy of attention, seen in the light of present-day knowledge. We are concerned with Maupertuis, a member of the Paris and Berlin Academy of Sciences; he was its president, in fact. Here is Walter Scott's account:

A short time after Maupertuis's death, Monsieur Gladisch was obliged to cross the room in which the Academy held its meetings. He had some work to do in the Natural History room, which came within his province, and he wished, furthermore, to prepare himself for Thursday, before the hour of meeting. When he entered the room, he perceived Monsieur de Maupertuis's shade, erect and motionless, in the first corner on his left; the apparition's eyes were fixed on him. It was three o'clock in the after-

<sup>1</sup> *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, translated into French by Albert Montémont (Paris, 1838) p. 36.

noon. The professor of philosophy knew too much about physics to suppose that his president, who had died in Bâle, with Monsieur Bernoulli's family, had come back in person to Berlin. He regarded the thing only as an illusion caused by some derangement of his organs. He went on about his business without being stopped any longer by this object. But he told his colleagues of the vision, assuring them that he had seen a shape as well formed and as perfect as Monsieur de Maupertuis himself.

When we remember that Maupertuis died far from Berlin, formerly the scene of his triumph, crushed by the merciless ridicule of Voltaire and out of favor with Frederick, in whose eyes to be ridiculous was to be guilty, we can hardly be astonished by this spell which fell upon a physicist who thought he saw Maupertuis's phantom in the room which had witnessed his early grandeur.

Walter Scott refused to admit the possibility of the reality of this apparition. Nevertheless he believed firmly in the story of the fallen angels, in Adam and Eve's fall, in the deluge, in the Chosen People, in diabolical powers, in the eternal damnation of children who died without being baptized, and in other legends devoid of all experimental proof.

Schopenhauer considered, with his usual critical acumen—which was sternly analytical but a trifle obscure—this question of apparitions of the dead.<sup>1</sup> He reached the conclusion that apparitions of the dying and the dead are subjective, in the mind of the seer; that the first are of frequent occurrence, the second exceedingly rare. He gives a great many examples, and takes up in particular the case of the Seer of Prévorst. The reader can pronounce upon Schopenhauer's ideas better if I give the final conclusions of his dissertation:

Apparitions are, like dreams, mere appearances, and, like them, exist only in the consciousness which perceives them; but the

<sup>1</sup> *Parerga und Paralipomena* (Berlin, 1851; second ed., published by Frauenstadt, 1862). A good French translation was published under the title *Mémoires sur les sciences occultes, Magnétisme et Apparitions* (Paris, Leymarie, 1912).

same may be said of our real, external world. Our immediate perception of this world is a mere appearance; it is a mere mental phenomenon caused by nervous excitation, and governed by the laws of our subjective functions (forms of pure sensibility and reason). Could we have any other sort of reality? The question which arises is that of *the thing in itself*. This problem, discussed by Locke and solved too hastily, was taken up by Kant, who saw all its perplexities: Finally I found its solution, although with a certain limitation. But, in any case, no matter in what way the thing in itself (which shows itself in our perception of an exterior world) is distinguished from this world, as in the case of apparitions of spirits, there is in this, perhaps, only manifestations of *will*. In the matter of the objective reality of the apparitions of spirits, as with the physical world, there are four different systems of thought: realism, idealism, skepticism, and, finally, the critical philosophy, the metaphysical system which I have adopted.

It appears from his rather fine-spun dissertation that to Schopenhauer it is our inner vision—what he calls “the organs of dreaming”—which perceives apparitions; that apparitions of the living are rather numerous and those of the dead extremely rare; and that the thing in us which survives the destruction of the body is not the soul, “for Man is not made up of a body and a soul,” but *the will*. He declares that spiritualism is in error; that it is idealism which is true; that our vision of the exterior world is not merely *sensuous* but above all *intellectual*, and that it is the same with the visioning of spirits.

The theories of the German philosopher have, with good reason, been widely discussed. But we cannot pass them by in silence.

The following remarks, which he made on the subject of the apparition of spirits and of souls in purgatory, are strange:

To deny, *a priori*, the possibility of apparitions and to ridicule this possibility, as is ordinarily done—such a procedure can only

be based on the conviction that death is the absolute end of Man, unless such a conviction were founded on the beliefs of the Protestant Church. By the Protestant way of thinking, spirits cannot appear, because, according as human beings believed or did not believe during their few years of earthly life, they will as soon as they are dead go to eternal joys in heaven, or suffer torments equally eternal in hell, and they can never leave either of these places. As a consequence, according to the Protestant belief, all apparitions of this sort come from the devil, or from the angels, but are never caused by the souls of men. This was explained at length by Lavater (*"De Spectris,"* Geneva, 1580, Part II, Chapters 3 and 4). The Catholic Church, on the contrary, even in the sixth century, owed it to Pope Gregory the Great, in particular, that this absurd and revolting dogma was, fortunately, ameliorated through a belief in purgatory. This middle state was interpolated between the two extremes of these desperate alternatives. The Catholic Church admits that it is possible for souls that are in purgatory, for a short time, to appear. It even admits that other souls may appear, under exceptional circumstances, as is explained at length in Petrus Thyracus's book (*"De Locis infestis,"* Part I, Chapter 3, and following chapters). The Protestants believed themselves forced to maintain that the devil existed, for the simple reason that they could not get along without him in explaining apparitions of spirits that were impossible to deny. Apart from such mythological views, the possibility of the real apparition of the dead cannot be rejected save on the conviction that when Man dies he is utterly annihilated. Aside from this conviction, one cannot see why a being which still exists somewhere, might not manifest itself and even influence another being, though the latter were in an altogether different state.

If we wish to admit the possibility of the dead really acting upon the world of the living, we must also admit that this influence is exerted with difficulty and is rare and exceptional.

I have given Schopenhauer's dissertation at greater length in my book (still unpublished) *"Les Apparitions."* In giving a resumé of it here, I wish to remind my readers that while he admits the possibility of apparitions, the German philosopher does not explain them very clearly to himself,

since these visual phenomena seem to him both subjective and objective. Be that as it may, he does not doubt manifestations of the dead.

Let us continue our experimental survey, a survey that is independent of all theories. It is progressing gradually.

## X

### MANIFESTATIONS AND APPARITIONS FROM FOUR TO THIRTY YEARS AFTER DEATH

Are there any scientific observations  
which permit us to doubt the *total disappearance*  
of the individual, after he is  
dead?

LE DANTEC.

THE accounts which we have just read differ in value. All of them present testimony as to survival, but certain of them are pervaded by such a human quality that we may well ask ourselves whether future anthropological science may not, one day, discover an explanation. Some, however, seem to be unquestionable posthumous manifestations, definitely and rigorously proved, such as, for example, the manifestation of the sailor Scotti, saving his son and the son's vessel (page 280); the young girl, dead for a year, seen in Monsieur Cavagnaro's apartment (page 265); General Dryson's friend who was murdered in China (page 258); a mother's visit to her child in the Alberlour Orphanage (page 255); the Sentenac parish priest (page 218); Count Beni of Lucera, who announced to his wife and his mother that he had been murdered (page 170); the astronomer Tweedale's grandmother, who appeared to him as well as to his father (page 134); Mademoiselle Stella's friend (page 127); Robert Mackenzie (page 26), and a certain number of other manifestations as plain as sunlight at noon. Nevertheless a very well-known contemporary writer, Félix Le Dantec, who is esteemed for his honest-mindedness (he is a convinced materialist and atheist) wrote me in 1914: "I shall soon be forty-five years old, and I have never per-

ceived anything that justified me in believing in extraphysical intervention. If souls could manifest themselves, it would be most astonishing that I had never found a single one of them in evidence when I made my observations.”<sup>1</sup> And he wrote with entire conviction the sentence given at the beginning of this chapter.

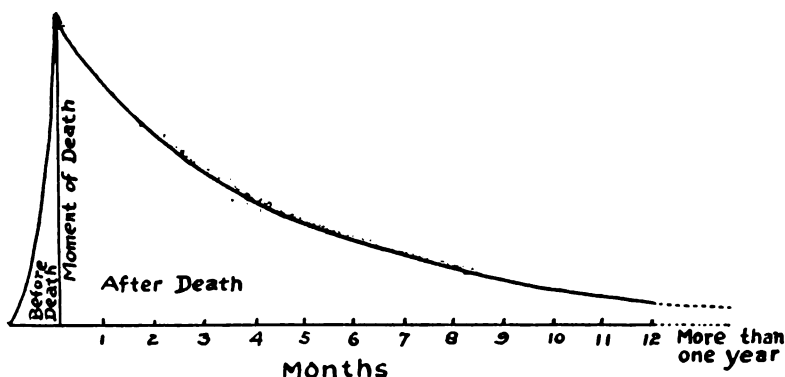
I do not think that a single one of my readers can be of this same negative opinion.

Our classification of posthumous occurrences has shown us that manifestations may occur a very long time after death. We now reach those which took place some time after dissolution: five, ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty, forty, sixty years and more. I have not enough space to set all of them before my readers' eyes. All of them are, moreover, open to discussion. We shall examine the principal ones. Readers will be struck, in these cases also, by clear and unquestionable examples—among others, that of Palladia, who appeared recurrently during a number of years (page 302) as well as that of Monsieur Coccozza's father, ten years after his death (page 310). We shall investigate these posthumous manifestations so long after death.

Apparitions of the dead have already been classified by Frederic Myers, in a very detailed statistical study (“Human Personality,” 1903, Volume II, page 14), in the order of their relative frequency after the day of dissolution. His statistics show that the maximum number occur at the moment of death. I have come to virtually the same conclusion in classifying the accounts sent me. The manifestations begin before death—several hours, even several days before it—when the subject is in a state of coma or weakness, and we set them down under the heading of telepathic manifestations of the dying. (See “L’Inconnu,” pages 59 to 215 and 411 to 457, and “At the Moment of Death,” chapters IV, V, XI, and XII.) These occurrences suggested the pos-

<sup>1</sup> Le Dantec, *Le problème de la mort et la conscience universelle*, p. 69.

sibility that certain manifestations of the *dead* might be delayed manifestations of the *living*, which had remained latent in the percipients' brains for some physiological reason. The case of Hélène Noell was of this particular kind (Volume II, page 320). But this theory is applicable only to a small number of cases. Certain apparitions did not manifest themselves for several months, or even several years after dissolution. We saw, from our own classification, that the greatest number were observed during the first days, the first weeks, the first months. By the end of the first year the phenomena diminished in number: this may be represented graphically by a very sharply dipping curve. It does not seem to me, however, as it does to Myers, that the curve could be lowered to zero, and instead of his diagram in which it touched the bottom line, at its right extremity, I should like to propose the diagram shown below. It is based on



thousands of comparisons which I have made, and takes into consideration apparitions more than one year after death, for there are certain apparitions of this sort, though they are rare. And we cannot omit all consideration of haunted houses.

The accounts in the preceding chapter have already included phenomena occurring several years after death. We

shall push on. If all these scientific observations were false, illusory, this would be entirely useless. Each of my careful readers can judge for himself, as I do. Though many of the accounts make us entirely certain as to the authenticity of the facts related and the resultant proofs of survival after death, it is not to be doubted that others appear to warrant the theory of autosuggestion, illusion, hallucination. What are we seeking, in all freedom of conscience? The truth. Now, there are two alternatives: either the stories that we have read are all false, or there are true ones among them. Were but a single one of them true, incontestable, unquestionable, its reality would suffice to prove survival after death. Well, I ask every honest-minded reader to which side the balance leans. Does not the heavy side of positive occurrences outweigh, decisively, the light side of debatable or uncertain cases? In every human work, mistakes may occur. We are not dealing with mathematical theorems. Let us, above all, be fair; let us judge things as they must be judged. A grain of oats lost in a bushel of wheat does not lessen the value of the grains of wheat. If, therefore, we take things as a whole, we are led to think that those readers who are not yet convinced will never be convinced by any proof. I know perfectly honest-minded men who think, sincerely, that the rotation of the earth has not been proved!

From among the posthumous manifestations which belong, chronologically, after the preceding ones, I shall first submit the following one to my readers. It took place as late as the third year.

Dr. Martin, of the Paris Faculty, who lived in Penne, Lot-et-Garonne, wrote me in March, 1899:

Two most respectable ladies, who are still alive and can furnish attestations, were living in a house in the open country in which, three years before, an infirm old man had died. He had lived on

the second floor and had tyrannized over the servants by continually ringing the bell. The bell was in the vestibule, on the ground floor, high up near the ceiling, and the wires had been removed after his death. Now, one fine day, these ladies and their servants heard a diabolical peal; they rushed into the vestibule, where they saw the bell ringing madly. Terrified, the witnesses of this went through every part of the house. There were no practical jokers about, and they ascertained that the wires were still missing. The ringing lasted a certain number of minutes, and then stopped. They always supposed that the old fellow had fallen back into a former habit of his. This took place at the home of Mesdames Daubèze, in Castel-Sarrasin.

There is no need for me to add that the attempts to discover a natural explanation ended in nothing.

DR. MARTIN.

(Letter 148.)

My investigation (it was, however, superfluous) confirmed the authenticity of this account. It cannot have surprised my readers. They will remember, in particular, the account on page 244 of our first volume, with its accompanying sketch. They know that these odd manifestations—so incomprehensible, so inexplicable—were witnessed by observers as well balanced as you and I.

People object, sometimes, that these are most commonplace things. I am the first to acknowledge the truth of this—above all, when we regard the problems to be cleared up from the philosophical point of view. But what can I do about it? Rain is commonplace, too, and so is the birth of a child (eighty-six thousand, four hundred babies a day are born on our diminutive planet.)

In general, the dwellers on our globe are not philosophers, thinkers, or savants. On the day after death they must be the same as the day before.

The time to put forward theories has not yet come. This work has only one object: to prove a certain *fact*—that the

dead manifest themselves. Even this is a great deal, and I shall be satisfied if I succeed in convincing my readers of that much.

We shall now consider an apparition that occurred repeatedly. It was seen not only by two persons but by several, and it was perceived by a dog. It is particularly interesting. I am taking it from Myers's "Human Personality" (Volume II, page 21). It was described in the following terms by a Russian magistrate, Monsieur Mamtchitch:

St. Petersburg, April 29, 1891.

Palladia was the daughter of a rich Russian landowner, who died one month before she was born. Her mother, in despair, dedicated her unborn child to life in a convent. The girl's name owed its origin to this circumstance; it was what the nuns called her. Two years afterward her mother died, and the orphan was brought up, until the age of fourteen, in a Moscow convent, by her aunt, who was the mother superior.

In 1870, when I was still a student in the University of Moscow, I made the acquaintance of Palladia's brother, a student like myself, and we often talked of giving back to the world this girl who was a nun, though not by her own choice. But our plan was not realized until 1872. I had gone to Moscow in the summer, to see the exposition, and I met Palladia's brother there, by chance. I learned that he was preparing to send her to the Crimea for her health, and I seconded this project as earnestly as I could. It was then that I saw Palladia for the first time. She was fourteen; though tall, she was very timid, and she already had tuberculosis. On her brother's request, I accompanied her and her sister to the Crimea, where they spent the winter.

In the summer of 1873 I happened to meet Palladia and her sister in Odessa, where they had gone to consult physicians. On August 27th, while I was reading to the two sisters, Palladia died, suddenly, of an aneurism. She was fifteen years old.

Two years afterward, in 1875, when I was in Kieff, I happened, one December evening, to be at a spiritistic séance for the first time. I heard blows inside the table, but this did not astonish me

in the least, for I was convinced that it was a joke. When I got back home, I wished to see if I could produce any rapping; I assumed the same position, with my hands on the table. Soon I heard blows. Imitating the procedure which I had witnessed, I began to recite the alphabet. Palladia's name was dictated. I was astonished and almost frightened. Not being able to calm myself, I again took up my position near the table, and asked Palladia what she had to say to me. The reply was, "*Set the angel up; it is falling down.*" I did not understand what she was talking about.

She is buried in Kieff, and I had heard it said that they wished to put up a monument on her grave, but had never been to the spot where she was buried and did not know what sort of tombstone it was.

I did not go back to bed, and as soon as dawn came I went to the cemetery. With the superintendent's assistance, and not without difficulty, I discovered the grave, buried under the snow. I halted, astounded: the marble statue of the angel, with a cross, was tilted, markedly, to one side.

From this I concluded that there is another world, with which we can enter into relations.

In October, 1876, I was moving into my new dwelling (rue Droresnaya) with Potolof, my colleague in the Department of Justice. I was in a very good humor, and was playing on a small, upright piano; it was about eight o'clock in the evening. On one side of me was my study; it, too, was lighted by a lamp. My comrade was busy at his desk, at the other end of these adjoining rooms. All the doors were open, and from where he sat he could see the study very distinctly, and the room in which I was. Suddenly I saw Palladia! She was standing in the middle of the doorway, her form turned a little to one side. Her face was toward me; she was looking at me calmly. She had on the same dark dress which she had worn when she died in my presence. Her right hand hung free. I saw her shoulders and her waist distinctly. I was looking into her eyes the whole time, queerly enough, without thinking that a dead person stood before me. She was lighted up on both sides, and my eyesight is very good. But I admit that at once I felt a shiver run down my spine, and was as though petrified! It was not fear, it was something else, such as the feeling I have when

I look down from a great height; at such times I experience a terrible, giddy qualm. I could not say how long Palladia remained there before me, but I remember that she moved to the right and vanished behind the door of the study. I rushed toward her. Only then did I remember that she was dead.

At that moment my comrade came up to me and asked me what was the matter. I told him what had just happened; then we went into the study, where we found no one. My comrade, who had heard me suddenly stop playing, had lifted his head and, so far as I can remember, he told me that he, too, had seen some one pass before the door. Because of my excitement he told me, to calm me, that it was probably my servant, who had come to attend to the lamp. But this servant was downstairs, in the kitchen. That was how I saw Palladia for the first time, three years after her death.

I have often seen her since. Sometimes she appears to me three times in a week or twice on the same day; or even a month may go by without my seeing her.

Palladia always appears unexpectedly, taking me by surprise at a time when I am least anticipating it.

Never do I see her in my dreams.

I see her both when I am alone and with a great many people.

She always appears to me with the same serene expression in her eyes; sometimes with a slight smile.

I always see her in the dark dress which she wore when she died before my eyes. I see, distinctly, her face, her head, her shoulders, and her arms, but I do not see her feet, or, rather, do not think of looking at them.

On these occasions, when I see Palladia unexpectedly, I grow dumb, I have a feeling of coldness in my back, I turn pale, I utter a feeble cry, and my breathing stops (this is what I am told by those who have by chance seen me at such moments).

The apparitions of Palladia last one, two, or three minutes, then gradually vanish and dissolve.

These manifestations bear a great resemblance to the best-known types of hallucinations, with the exception, however, of the first one: the revelation concerning the grave in the

cemetery. The following experiences do not bear out this analogy:

In 1879, at the end of November, I was in Kieff, seated at my desk, writing out an indictment. It was eight o'clock in the evening; my watch was before me on the table. I was hurrying to finish my work, for at nine o'clock I was to go to an evening party. Suddenly I saw Palladia seated in an arm-chair before me; her right elbow was on a table and her head was in her hand. When I had recovered from the shock, I looked at my watch, following with my eyes the movement of the second-hand. Then I lifted my gaze to Palladia. I saw that she had not changed her position, and I could see her elbow, clearly, on the table. Her eyes gazed at me with joy and serenity. Then, for the first time, I decided to speak to her. "How do you feel, now?" I asked. Her face remained impassive; her lips, so far as I can remember, did not move, but I distinctly heard her voice utter the word "Calm."—"I understand," I answered. And, as a matter of fact, I understood at that moment all the meaning she had put into the word. That I might be still more certain that I was not dreaming, I looked at the watch again, and the second-hand. When I looked at Palladia once more I noted that she had begun to melt away and vanish.

In 1885 I was living with my parents on an estate in the Province of Poltava. One day, when I woke up at dawn, I saw Palladia. She was standing before me, about five paces away, gazing at me with a joyful smile. Drawing near me, she spoke these words: "I have been, I have seen," and, still smiling, she disappeared. What did these words mean? I could not understand them. In my room my dog was sleeping near me. As soon as I saw Palladia, the dog's hair bristled. With a yelp, he jumped up on my bed, pressed against me, and looked in the direction in which I was gazing. He did not bark, though ordinarily he let no one enter my room without barking and growling. Whenever my dog saw Palladia he pressed against me, as though seeking a refuge. I spoke to no one about the incident. The evening of that same day, a young girl who was stopping with us told me that something strange had happened to her that morning. "When I waked up early this morning," she said, "I had a feeling that some one was standing at

the head of my bed, and I heard a voice saying to me, distinctly, 'Don't be afraid of me; I'm good and loving.' I turned my head, but saw nothing."

A year later, I was engaged to this girl. I must add that on the previous occasion I had met the young lady for the first time, and was not thinking in the least of a future marriage.

Five years afterward, in 1890, I was with my wife and my son, aged two. We were staying with my old friends the Strijewskys, on their estate in the Province of Woronèje. One day, about seven o'clock in the evening, I was returning from a hunting expedition. I went into the wing in which we were living, in order to change my clothes. I was seated in a room lighted by a large lamp. The door opened and my son Olég hurried to where I sat in an arm-chair. Then, suddenly, Palladia appeared before me. I noticed that he did not take his eyes from her. He turned to me; pointing at her, he spoke these two words: "My aunt." I took him on my knee and glanced toward Palladia, but she had vanished. Olég's face was absolutely calm and joyful; he was only beginning to speak; this explains his words concerning the apparition.

This detailed statement was supplemented by the substantiating declarations of the other witnesses. This is important, for the first explanation which occurs to us, in every case, is that of a possible hallucination. Among others, Madame Mamtchitch wrote:

I remember very well that on July 10, 1885, when we were visiting Monsieur C. Mamtchitch's relatives, I waked up at daybreak, for my sister and I had agreed that we would take an early morning walk. I sat up in bed and saw that Mama and my sister were asleep. At that moment I had a feeling that some one was standing at the head of my bed. I half turned around, for I was, so to speak, afraid to look, but saw no one. When I had lain down again I heard at once, behind me and above my head, a woman's voice saying in a low tone, but distinctly, "Don't be afraid of me; I'm good and loving," and a whole sentence more, which I forgot as soon as she had spoken it. Immediately afterward I dressed and went out for a walk. It is strange that I was n't frightened in

the least. I said nothing about it to my mother and my sister, for they did not like such things, and did not believe in them; but on the evening of that same day, when the conversation turned on problems of the unknown, I told Monsieur Mamtchitch what had happened to me that morning.

Such is the story of this odd psychic manifestation. Plainly, if we should persist in seeing here only an hallucination, we should be in error, for we should have to admit that (1) the narrator (2) his wife, who was at that time a stranger to him (3) his child, two years old, (4) his dog—we should have to admit, I say, that all these were the victims of hallucinations. We should still have to explain the first warning, regarding the cemetery. Everything, in this case, would lead us to decide in favor of real manifestations on the part of the deceased Palladia (who died at the age of fifteen) in the years 1873, 1875, 1876, 1879, 1885, and 1890—that is to say, two, three, six, twelve, and seventeen years after her death. The only way to avoid reaching this conclusion would be to accuse the narrator of having made up a whole series of lies. That is a most serious accusation. And the magistrate has some one to vouch for his honesty: Aksakof.

That there were hallucinations may be granted in the cases of certain visual and auditory phenomena; but this hypothesis is far from explaining everything, as is generally imagined. Even if hallucinations played the chief rôle, people about whom the narrators were thinking would show themselves, rather than spontaneous apparitions of unknown people. And it would be nervous, sensitive people who would have these visions, rather than those who are calm, well poised, and often skeptical. Out of five thousand accounts sent me from various social classes in various countries, there were, perhaps, only a hundred sent by men or women (women, above all) whose mental poise might have been doubted—in whom light-headedness dominated reason.

Generally these observations are as positive as an astronomical, meteorological, physical, or chemical observation made, on some one occasion, by chance, and under unexpected conditions. There is nothing pathological about them.

It cannot be doubted that (at times) we receive warnings in dreams. In general these warnings would seem to come from ourselves, from our own consciousness, from our subconscious minds. But they are (at times) connected with communications from dead relatives. This connection may be only an apparent one, and have no basis in fact. Nevertheless we know, on the other hand ("Before Death," page 308), that there are voices from outside ourselves—voices that are unreal, but of psychic origin. Besides, it happens not infrequently that we see dead persons in dreams, as though they were still alive, and they do not count for nothing in these illusions. When, therefore, a warning is given by a friend beyond the grave, the question arises as to whether or not this deceased person was really the sender of the warning.

The following letter presents this problem. It was sent me from Baltimore, Maryland, by an interested reader.

When I was young—nineteen years old—I lost a mother whom I adored. Her memory is sacred to me and I often used to take counsel of it, mentally. Several years later—five or six years—I had to go through great struggles, and was, *without knowing it*, in much danger.

One night I was sleeping deeply, without dreaming. I saw no one; no scene rose before me, but my mother's voice said to me distinctly, "*Take care, Fanny!*" I cannot tell you if I woke up when I heard the voice, or after hearing it. I know that I still heard, distinctly, the sound of this dear, familiar voice when I was fully awake—a voice the sound of which remained engraved upon my heart. The next day, at a certain moment, I understood suddenly why my mother's voice had put me on my guard.

Several of my dreams have come true. They are what I might

call parable-dreams, and when I awaken I know their meaning intuitively; not after a time, but at once.

Now that I am older, and perhaps stronger, less nervous, and less impressionable, such things have almost ceased to happen to me.

It seems to me—if I may express my opinion—that we can more or less put ourselves in touch with psychic forces, or cut ourselves off from them.

I have never seen an apparition, and the very thought of one frightens me, but, in order to reach a scientific conclusion, no research seems too arduous to me; for, dominating all my inner struggles, came this voice from beyond the grave, clear and distinct: a mother's warning to her child whom she saw in danger because of her ignorance.

Why my mother's voice rather than any other? Whence came this voice? Why did not the presentiment of danger come to me precisely at the crucial moment? I often have presentiments, I feel things, and I believe in these presentiments; but my mother's voice was as clear and distinct as if she had spoken to me, in her earnest tone. And she did speak to me; therefore she is not dead.

F. TH. MEYLAU,

Bryn Mawr School, Baltimore.

(Letter 653.)

It seems to me that this voice belongs in the category of exterior causes, and came from the dead mother. It is anti-philosophical to deny because of preconceived convictions. The narrator's perception may not have been one that could be ascribed merely to sentiment.

The following occurrence is a clear case of posthumous intervention.

A man who had been dead for ten years appeared to his children in a dream. He reproached them for having left his bones—unearthed by grave-diggers—abandoned in the snow, and the prey of wolves. They could not in the least have suspected that this was the case. This example is particularly remarkable in that it would seem to show with certainty the influence of the dead man, and because

it led to legal action and the sentencing of the grave-diggers.<sup>1</sup>

Castel di Sangro, Italy,  
May, 1905.

In the pretty little town of Castel di Sangro—lost in the midst of the high Abruzzi-Aquilen Mountains and until a few days ago almost buried under the snow—something happened which has excited and held the attention, these last few days, of the local authorities and the whole population.

On the night of the third of last March, Signore Pascal Coccozza, a worthy man—Baron Raphaël Corrado's game-warden—saw, in a dream, his father, who had been dead for ten years. His father reproached him, as well as his brothers, for having forgotten him, and—something still more serious—for having left his poor bones, unearthed by grave-diggers, behind the tower in the cemetery, in the snow, the prey of wolves!

Signore Coccozza, greatly affected by this gruesome dream, related it to his sister the next day. To his great surprise, his sister declared that *she had had precisely the same dream*. Then the worthy warden, without further delay, and in spite of a snow-storm, took his rifle and went to the cemetery, situated on a hill above the town. There, behind the tower, among the brambles and on the snow, *on which there were wolves' footprints*, he saw human bones! The dream had, therefore, been veridical.

Naturally, Signore Coccozza sent an accusation of the superintendent of the cemetery, François Mannarelli, to the town hall. It was transmitted to Signore Casoria, the Justice of the Peace, who ordered the arrest of Mannarelli and three other grave-diggers. The accused men said, in self-justification, that since the time set for the exhumation of the bodies and their transportation to the charnel-house—*ten years* after burial—had just come, they were moving the bones at nightfall, had been overtaken by the snow and the cold, and had not been able to transfer some of the skeletons. At first the grave-diggers, in their own defense, tried to deny that the bones found were those of Signore Coccozza's father; in this way they could plead that the game-warden had not been wronged by

<sup>1</sup> *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, September, 1905, pp. 551-555.

their negligence. But it appeared, through confidential information and from other investigations made in the cemetery, that the bones were really those of Signore Cocozza, senior, who had been dead for ten years.

The dream was veridical from every point of view. If, on the one hand, we cannot exclude the possibility of the grave-diggers having influenced the percipients telepathically, there remains, however, an implication that some more than human agency intervened, some agency which alone knew that wolves had gnawed the bones. The grave-diggers, moreover, could not, when they exhumed the bodies, have known to whom the skeletons belonged. And lastly—and this is remarkable—two percipients, the only persons directly concerned, had this dream simultaneously.

GUIDO FIOCCA-NOVI.

A careful, systematic investigation of these strange occurrences has led to certain conclusions that are worthy of our attention. One of the most important documents in the case bears the stamp of the Castel di Sangro justice of the peace. Here it is:

On Dr. Guido Fiocca Novi's demand and in the interests of scientific research, with the authorization of the Justice of the Peace of Castel di Sangro,

We hereby certify:

That, from the records of the trial instituted by the Justice of the Peace with an ordinance against Mannarelli Francesco, Gentil Antonio, Fusco Ippolito, Petrarca Antonio, and Ricchiuto Giovanni, following an accusation dated March 4, 1905, for the misdemeanor of exhuming human bones, it appears:

(1) On page 1 of the official records of March 4, 1905, that the police officer Vito Peschinelli, as soon as he received the accusation of Signore Pascal Cocozza (son of the deceased Pierre), went to the spot and verified what Signore Cocozza had related. He found, also, that there were wolves' and foxes' footprints near the bones; this helped to explain the disappearance of certain portions of the skeleton.

(2) On page 15 of the official report of the action brought by

the plaintiff, dated March 7, 1905, that Signore Pascal Cocozza stated to the magistrate that on the night of March 3-4, he had seen, in a dream, his father, who had complained that no one thought of protecting his remains. He then went immediately to the cemetery, and afterward went back there with his brother-in-law, who told him that he remembered the precise spot where the deceased had been buried. Scattered over a distance of from fifteen to twenty meters, thirteen human bones were found. Signore Cocozza, senior, had died on January 10, 1895.

(3) On page 20 of the Royal Riflemen's report, dated March 7, containing the record of the investigation, the commanding officer of the riflemen (the author of the report) declared that everything led to the belief that the bones in question had been abandoned there by the grave-diggers because of the difficulty they had had in carrying them to the charnel-house, about which a great quantity of snow had accumulated.

From the Clerk's Office of the Justice of the Peace (Castel di Sangro) May 24, 1905.

RIDOLFI GUIDO,  
Assistant Clerk of the Court.

*(Official stamp of the  
Justice of the Peace)*

*Examined this day by A. CASORIA,  
Justice of the Peace.*

Before publishing this case, Dr. Dariex, editor of the *Annales psychiques* at that time, wrote to Dr. Fiocca-Novi once more, asking him for information as to the result of the grave-diggers' trial, and requesting him to find out whether in the days immediately preceding the dream Signore Cocozza had not passed near the cemetery, where, more or less unconsciously, he might have been struck by its disordered condition. Here is the doctor's reply:

Castel di Sangro, August 4, 1905.

First, I shall give the result of the trial: The grave-diggers were found guilty. The superintendent, Mannarelli, was acquitted, be-

cause he was able to justify his absence. Signore Coccozza was allowed to assume the position of plaintiff, as the injured party, since the Justice of the Peace admitted, after the proofs submitted during the proceedings, the reality of the dream.

As for the *accidental* or *subconscious* knowledge which Signore Coccozza might have had as to the condition of the bones, this theory must be absolutely ruled out: (1) because the cemetery is difficult of access; a special trip must be made to it; it is on the top of a very precipitous pass, surrounded by great, mediæval walls, as you may see from the enclosed photograph; (2) because, at the time when this happened, the snow was very high, wolves infested the country-side and we had had nothing less than 21° below zero! It was precisely for these reasons that the poor grave-diggers had withdrawn. How could Signore Coccozza have been walking in the graveyard under such conditions, when it was only with the greatest difficulty that he and the other subordinates (my clerk included) were persuaded to leave their houses? . . .

GUIDO FIOCCA-NOVI.

Can we reasonably dispute the fact that there was direct influence on the part of this man who had been dead for ten years?

These experiences are of the greatest interest.

Since this chapter is devoted to posthumous manifestations observed from four to thirty years after dissolution, I must here remind my readers of the occurrence related in Volume II (page 314) by Miss Lucy Dodson. A mother appeared, sixteen years after her death, bearing in her arms two children which she held out to her daughter, whose sister-in-law had just died, as a result of confinement. But we may suppose that the woman who was in childbed, thinking of the future of these children, acted telepathically on her sister-in-law, and that she herself produced the image of the mother.

In the matter of identity, we can be less certain, in this case, than in the case given on page 88: a father, dead for

fourteen years, who appeared to his son and to his daughter-in-law.

The following occurrence took place twenty years after death. I am taking an account of it from a letter sent me in May, 1900. The apparition, in a dream, seemed objective to the dreamer. Was there, in this case, only a wave of memory due to the subconscious mind? That hypothesis deserves discussion.

Mr. Holbrook, editor of the "Herald of Health" (New York), wrote on July 30, 1884<sup>1</sup>:

In the spring of 1870 I had an attack of acute bronchitis, which made me very ill. Since I had had a similar attack every winter and every spring for several years, I was most disturbed and believed that it would become chronic, and would, perhaps, end fatally. I was young and having just begun a line of work in which I wished to remain for a long time, I was most dejected by the prospect.

One day I fell into a deep sleep, and had the following dream, which is still fresh in my memory:

My sister, who had been dead for more than twenty years, and whom I had almost forgotten, drew near my bed and said: "Don't worry about your health; we have come to take care of you; you still have a great deal to do in this world." Then she disappeared, and it seemed to me that my brain was electrified, as though by the shock of contact with a battery. But instead of being painful, this sensation was delicious. The current descended into my lungs and chest, where I felt it very strongly. It spread, thence, to the extremities, where it caused an agreeable warmth. I awakened almost at once, and felt very well. Since then I have never had any attack of this illness. The phantom of my sister was indistinct, but her voice was very clear. Nothing like that had ever happened to me before, and has not since.

M. L. HOLBROOK.

<sup>1</sup> *Proceedings S. P. R.*, VIII, 374. *Human Personality*, I, 370. *Annales des Sciences psychiques*, 1899, p. 168.

One may easily imagine the doubts of an honest-minded seeker, when these experiences are put before him. Is it probable that the sister counted for nothing, as regards these sensations? Was not, in this case, a sort of magnetism transmitted from beyond the grave?

The following account was sent me from Valparaiso on May 9, 1899. The apparition was that of a person who had been dead for more than thirty years.

I was extremely young at that time, and slept in a room with my mother. My bed was just in front of the door which gave on to a hallway. One evening I was sent to bed early, as usual. My mother went with me herself, with a candle which she put on the table, and left me, to rejoin the rest of the family; they used to stay up until ten or eleven. I was sitting on the bed, hesitating as to whether to slip under the sheet because it was growing cold, when, lifting my eyes by chance, I saw at the end of the hall—for the door was still open—an old woman coming toward me. I thought at first that it was my grandmother. But as I perceived details better I saw that it was not she, and that I did not know her. My astonishment changed to terror when the apparition entered the room. Although she stood fully in the light, and I could see her clearly, I perceived the furniture through her body. The phantom approached the foot of my bed, and then I could not help uttering piercing cries. Every one came up; I told what I had seen; they laughed in my face, and said that I had been dreaming.

No one in my family had died at that time. Some years later I heard my grandmother relate that, about thirty years before, my uncle had bought this house from the heirs of an old woman to whom it had belonged, and that this old woman had died in the very room in which I had seen the apparition. I should like to point out the coincidence without drawing any conclusion. I shall add only one thing: that I had never had any visions or hallucinations before this adventure, and that I have never had any since then.

L. JOURIDE.

(Letter 666.)

It is usual to reason like the parents of this child, who was accused of having seen nothing, of having dreamed. But he was not asleep. Was it an imaginary vision? He never had any other. In this way such occurrences—which are, as a matter of fact, inexplicable—have been dismissed. But should they not be examined a little more carefully? The child saw an old woman whom he mistook at first, in all calmness, for his grandmother. It was a phantom, through which he could see the furniture. On the other hand, an old woman had died in this room. It seems to me that instead of wiping the slate clean of the picture, and effacing everything because the occurrence puzzles us, it is more scientific to enlighten ourselves by investigating and discussing such problems.

These diverse accounts, therefore, give us examples of apparitions observed ten, fifteen, twenty, and thirty years after death. Have we not already read (in Volume II, page 195) of the apparition of a Mrs. Carleton, who had been dead for fifty-six years? Mrs. Carleton, faithful to her promise to a woman friend, announced to this friend that she must prepare to die in twenty-four hours. The friend, convinced of the truth of the announcement, took a bath, that the family might be spared the trouble of washing her dead body. She died at the time specified.

I have before me a great many bits of testimony as to manifestations on the part of dead persons. They include warnings helpful to those who received them. Among the documents is an account of a personal experience, which was sent me by Monsieur Oscar Belgeonne, secretary to the Anvers public prosecutor. The account bears the number 4421, in my records. The large number of documents contained in this volume obliges me to hold these bits of testimony in reserve; they might be considered a supplement to those published here.

While seeking to explain these experiences—to bring them

into line with the normal course of events—as forgotten recollections, latent in the memory, we have seen that many call for quite another sort of explanation. I had kept one last one in reserve, an occurrence which took place sixty-eight years after dissolution. It concerns a man who died in 1824, and who appeared to his grandson in a dream, in 1892, to show him where his grave was. The analysis of the case fills a large number of pages, and leaves us with an impression that it is “possible” to attribute the dream to a forgotten recollection. In any case, I should like to call investigators’ attention to it—the attention of those with a love for analysis. (See “*Annales des Sciences psychiques*,” 1912, page 24.)

Are the occurrences which have just been given (and painstakingly analyzed) not at one in proving the immortality of the soul and the reality of communication between the dead and the living? They take place at intervals, as we see, from the very moment of dissolution to days, weeks, months, and years afterward.

There are other occurrences still farther removed from the hour of dissolution. These persist as legends, even for several centuries. In this way we reach haunted houses, step by step.

We cannot here investigate this important field. But we cannot help taking still a little time to consider other proofs of survival and the continuity of psychic life by turning to the teachings of spiritism, which, so far, we have not been able to take up in this work.

I had planned to put still another series of occurrences before my readers, since they add special evidence. These were, on the one hand, apparitions, at death-beds, of those already dead. On the other hand, I had planned to show the actual reality of certain phantoms, and to give photographs of them. But space is lacking for such an analysis.

The conclusion that we may draw, therefore, from all the preceding pages, and from these ten chapters, is that if

readers have not been convinced by the innumerable proofs offered, clear as the sun at noon, they will never be convinced. One might as well go into the fields and speak Hebrew or Sanskrit to the husbandmen.

Perhaps future science will discover an explanation of the phenomena—one different from that which seems to us to-day the most direct and most natural. But the occurrences prove that there are such phenomena, and that they must no longer be disdained.

## XI

### MANIFESTATIONS OF THE DEAD IN SPIRITISTIC EXPERIMENTS

I, like every one else, laughed at spiritism. But what I mistook for Voltaire's laugh was but an idiot's laugh.  
EUG. BONNEMÈRE.

**S**PIRITISM<sup>1</sup> is, in general, in bad repute, and deserves to be. Most of its disciples are unmethodical; they are often lacking in mental poise, are often dupes of illusions. They prefer a belief and a religion which merely console, to the impartial and critical investigation without which we can be sure of nothing. These are bad conditions for research; adequate safeguards are lacking.

In Allan Kardec's time (in the course of the speech which I made at his grave on April 2, 1869) I believed it helpful and even necessary to proclaim, at this very grave, that "*spiritism is not a religion but a science*," and to add that "we are now at the dawn of an undiscovered science." During the fifty years which followed the utterance of these words, the continued progress of our research has lent them greater and greater emphasis, confirmed them more and more fully.

It is by the scientific method alone that we may make progress in the search for truth. Religious belief must not take the place of impartial analysis. We must be constantly on our guard against illusions.

Apart from deliberate deception, dishonest and inexcus-

<sup>1</sup> Monsieur Flammarion makes a distinction between "spiritualism" and "spiritism." By "spiritualism" he means the general doctrine that departed spirits hold intercourse with mortals. By "spiritism" he means mediumistic research.—*Translator*.

able, there is autosuggestion leading to involuntary deception. Believers allow themselves to be easily gulled. I have seen tables moved, quite patently, by the hands of so-called "mediums," without these "mediums" themselves suspecting it (at times), despite the clearest evidence. People too often accept the sayings of self-styled "spirits," without the slightest verification (*contrôle*). Moreover, they have ended by giving the name *contrôle* ("control") to the spirit itself—that is to say, to the unknown cause which is to be determined! This is a grammatical absurdity.

And all this is usually done in good faith.

There are also dishonest exploiters of credulity, who give "séances," promising apparitions and posthumous manifestations to the simpletons who listen to them. Those who have been gulled then complain, laughably, of having been robbed! The human race, supposedly intelligent, is truly strange. One must have a great deal of courage to work perseveringly, surrounded by these impostors; one must be sustained by the conviction that there are truths to be discovered.

There is more than one danger in psychic research, and above all in spiritistic experiments. The chief danger is that we prove, indubitably, the reality of phenomena that are not merely inexplicable but are, at times, improbable and logically inadmissible. In this way we begin a dangerous descent, for where does reality stop? There is a limit. Where is it? Men and women admit the most blatant absurdities in perfect good faith—women, above all, if we must speak the truth. Their credulity sometimes equals that of the most simple-minded bigots, who see the devil or Providence in the least changes in temperature or the least important vicissitudes of existence. And with what ease certain "mediums" play upon weak minds! We even ask ourselves, often, whether these naïve experimenters are dupes or accomplices, and would not *prefer* to be deceived! We must

guess where this dangerous descent begins, and never draw near that point.

It is difficult to obtain definite results from the encompassing psychic atmosphere. We get, at times, replies differing so greatly from the ideas of the persons present that the identity of the spirit that has been evoked would seem to be proved by the particular details which that spirit reveals. Then, when his name is asked, he cannot give it! Very often, too, he gives only one initial. Why? It is disconcerting.

But those who reject everything connected with these experiments are wrong, without a doubt. We cannot say in such cases, "*Everything or nothing.*" There are occurrences worthy of the most serious attention. And these occurrences, as well as the diverse experiences given in the three volumes of this work, prove the materialistic theory to be erroneous.

It appears to me that, in order to form an exact and rigorous estimate of the authenticity of proofs of identity in spiritistic communications, we must be certain, above all, that no part of these communications proceeds from the subconscious minds of the experimenters and of those present. If any part can be attributed to them, this renders posthumous research illusory.

If the influence of persons present at the séance can be eliminated, research becomes possible. But, again, we must not lose sight of our present knowledge of telepathy and forget that living people may transmit thought to a distance.

We see what care is necessary in the experimental study of spiritism.

We have already, in this volume, seen examples of such manifestations—among others, in our preliminary investigation, in the revelations of Monsieur Bossan's family, and in other cases in which the identity of the communicating spirit has seemed to us well established.

They are not things of to-day, these investigations in which the identity of the communicating spirits is discussed; investigations which lead to positive results. More than a quarter of a century ago Dr. Chazarain published, in "*Le Progrès spirite*" (Lyons), the following account:

Monsieur Honoré Chavée was a distinguished anthropologist and linguist, and author of a remarkable book, valued by all the savants of the world: "*The Indo-European Lexicology*." He was Hovelacque's instructor in matters of linguistic erudition, and was one of the first lecturers who, with Flammarion, Jacolliot, Sarcey, Maria Deraisme, and others, used to speak in the lecture hall in the *boulevard des Capucines*, at a time when Yves Henry, whose physician and friend I was, was in charge of it. This was in 1866.

While attending his lectures I became acquainted with Monsieur Chavée, and entered into long-continued and friendly relations with him, which lasted until his death.

Monsieur Chavée believed in successive existences, but did not admit that it is possible for the dead to communicate with us. To explain spirit communications and the part played by mediums, he had evolved a most original theory, similar to that based on mental suggestion and the exteriorization of thought.

Madame Chavée had obtained, through Madame Rodière as a medium (in 1862 she had served as Monsieur Flammarion's medium), a communication which seems to me to express her husband's ideas before he returned to his life in space.

Some days later I had gone to the home of one of my patients, Madame D—, who was in bed. I entered her room, in which were two of her friends, Mademoiselle G— and Madame V—, her housekeeper; they were seated at a table placed close beside her bed. Both were mediums and were at that moment engaged in spiritistic experiments. At once I decided to profit by the occasion and to evoke Chavée. It was simple curiosity on my part; I had no other idea.

The table having replied in the affirmative, Madame D—, sitting up in bed, wrote down the letters given by the rapping.

After the last letter, the table stopped; we asked whether the communication were ended. Since there was an affirmative reply,

Madame D—— wrote the spirit's name at the bottom of the sheet, spelling it in this way: *Chavet*. She believed this spelling to be correct.

Scarcely had she finished when the table, on which our hands were still resting, began to move once more, and dictated these words: "That is not the way my name is spelled."

When Madame D—— had had the pencil in her hand, I was about two meters away from her, on a level with her feet. Had I wished to do so, it would have been absolutely impossible for me to see what she had written. This was equally true of the other persons who had their hands on the table; they were, moreover, ignorant of the correct spelling.

No one of us, therefore, could have known that the name had been wrongly spelled when the table began to move, calling attention to the error.

Consequently, the medium could not have been warned, by thought-vibration on the part of the persons present, of the mistake that had been made, and could not have controlled the table.

I must inform you that the great linguist Honoré Chavée could not bear, when he was alive, to have his name incorrectly written or his first name altered. His widow, to whom I showed the communication in question and the subsequent remark which the writer of it had dictated, cried at once: "Ah, that protest was just like him! Just think: when one of his compatriots and friends [Monsieur Chavée was a native of Namur] spoke of his books most eulogistically in a speech he made in Brussels, the newspapers of that city printed a report of the speech, giving his first name as Henri. He was so annoyed by this error that he had scarcely finished reading the account in the Belgian newspaper when he sent a telegram protesting against the unintentional substitution; he was n't willing to wait until evening to send a letter."

This furnished still another proof of the spirit's identity. It was because of the persistence, beyond the grave, of this original side of his character that he wished to call attention to the mistake that had been made. For this reason we have here, more or less by chance, an extremely clear proof of identity; its value is unquestionable. But I am inclined to believe that, while faithful to this peculiarity which made him, when alive, unable to bear any

confusion of his name with any similar name whatsoever, even for a moment, he also availed himself, eagerly and joyfully, of an occasion to give us a rare proof of the identity of a spirit.

DR. CHAZARAIN.

The best proof that these phenomena are not always caused by autosuggestion is the fact that they often occur without our willing it. For example, how many times do we not, at table-rapping séances, demand vainly that an important message be continued! All those present wish ardently for a continuation, and despite all their waiting (it sometimes lasts a very long while) nothing happens. An *exterior* will dominates us, or, at least, dominates our own *conscious* will. The beginning of a sentence is dictated, and we think we can guess the end of it; but not at all: it ends in another way. A word is begun: we believe we foresee what the last letters will be; but it is another word which is dictated. On a particular day we are in an especially receptive mood as regards communications; we wait for half an hour, an hour, two hours, without obtaining any results. On another day there are rappings, cracking noises; the table moves at once. There is here, plainly, a cause other than our consciousness.

All of us live, without knowing it, in a psychic environment we do not understand. The atmosphere contains not only chemical elements—oxygen, nitrogen, carbonic-acid gas, watery vapor, et cetera—but also psychic elements. Everywhere there are souls. There is a constant mingling of animism and spiritism in the experiments of which we are speaking; it is extremely difficult to separate them, to isolate them. Let us try to do this here, however.

Among the experiments which would lead us to believe in communication with spirits, I should like particularly to call my readers' attention to the following ones, because these were made during the very first years of modern spiritism,

which had its inception in 1855. We are concerned here with unquestionable testimony: that of Judge Edmonds, who observed the phenomena in question in his own family, in the case of his daughter Laura.

Judge Edmonds was not a negligible witness. He enjoyed a considerable renown in the United States by reason of the exalted powers with which he was invested, at first as President of the Senate, then as a member of the New York High Court of Appeal. When his attention was drawn to spiritism he despised it with all the skepticism of a magistrate accustomed to dealing with uncertain human testimony. But after a conscientious inquiry he stated that he believed not merely that such occurrences took place, but also in the validity of the theory of spirits as an explanation.

The amazement and indignation of the best American society were so great that Judge Edmonds was forced to give up his work as a magistrate and tender his resignation. He sacrificed, unhesitatingly, his own personal interests to what he considered to be the truth. He showed in this a rare courage which we should do well to admire; it lent weight to the affirmations of this early witness.

His daughter Laura had received a careful education. She was a fervent Catholic. Her spiritual adviser ordered her to renounce mediumistic research; she did this, and refused to be present at séances, though the persons about her often held them.

But the dwelling in which she lived eventually became a sort of haunted house. Half a year had gone by in this way; she constantly heard strange sounds and witnessed phenomena no less strange occurring without apparent human intervention; phenomena which, nevertheless, seemed to be guided by some intelligent entity. Impelled by curiosity, she began, once more, to go to séances. Soon she was convinced of the presence of an intelligent force, without knowing what this force could be. She began to speak various

languages, though she knew besides her mother tongue only French, which she had learned at school. Her father stated that during this first year, in various circumstances, she spoke nine or ten languages, sometimes within an hour, with perfect ease and fluency.

But let us listen to the judge himself:

With her as an intermediary, people who were perfect strangers to us could speak to their dead friends in their own languages. The following occurrence, among others, took place:

One evening I had a visit from a stranger, a Greek named *Evangélidès*; it was not long before he was speaking to Laura in his own tongue. In the course of the conversation he seemed greatly affected, and even shed tears. Six or seven people were present, and one of them asked the reason for his emotion. The Greek avoided a direct reply, saying that it was a question of family matters.

On the next day he renewed his conversation with Laura, and since there were no strangers in my home this time, he gave us the desired explanation. The invisible personality with whom he was speaking, with Laura as an intermediary, said that he was an intimate friend, who had died in Greece: the brother of the Greek patriot *Marco Bozarris*. This friend informed *Evangélidès* of the death of his (*Evangélidès*'s) son, who had stayed in Greece and had been in excellent health when his father left for America.

Ten days after his first visit *Evangélidès* informed us that he had just received a letter telling him of the death of his son. This letter must have been on its way at the time of his first interview with Laura.

I should like to know how I should regard this occurrence. It is impossible to deny it; it was too startlingly evident. I might just as well deny that the sun shines upon us.

Nor could I consider it an illusion, for there was nothing to distinguish it from any other reality which one grows aware of at any time in one's life.

All this took place in the presence of from eight to ten persons, all of them educated, intelligent, logical, and as capable as any one of distinguishing an illusion from a real occurrence.

It would be vain to contend that it was the reflection of our own thoughts. We had never seen this man; he had been introduced to us by a friend on that very evening. Moreover, even supposing that our minds could have transmitted to him the idea that his son was dead, how could our thoughts have made Laura understand and speak Greek, a language which she had never heard?

J. W. EDMONDS.

In giving this account Aksakof,<sup>1</sup> too, asks himself how it should be interpreted. If there ever was a case, he remarks, in which we might cite clairvoyance, this would be the one. But such an explanation could not apply, here. Laura saw Evagélidès for the first time in her life. She knew absolutely nothing of his family, which was living in Greece, and still less of his deceased friend, Bozarris's brother. Where, then, can we discover the "intense interest" the "powerful motive," capable of rendering the medium clairvoyant, by which Hartmann claims to explain everything? And however perfect this young girl's clairvoyance might have been, how could it have given her the ability to speak Greek? Nor would it be logical to attribute to one source the gift of speaking Greek, and to another source the revelation of the child's death. Plainly, the two manifestations had one and the same cause.

There is, in this case, a psychic element still to be isolated.

Here is a similar story, also related by Judge Edmonds:

One day, an unknown entity caused my wife to speak the purest Scotch dialect. This entity had taken the name of a woman from Paisley, Scotland, who informed us of her death; she said that she had died in that town some days earlier. We learned that she was the grandmother of one of the members of our circle who had come to America about a year before. Three or four days afterward the same individuality manifested itself, using as a medium Miss Scon-gall, a young person from Rockfort, Illinois, who knows no Scotch

<sup>1</sup> *Animisme et Spiritisme*, p. 419.

at all. She announced her death through this young woman as well, speaking her usual dialect and giving various details as to the house in which she was living: the garden, the trees, etc. Miss Seongall had not been present at the first manifestation of this woman, and knew nothing about it. A young man who had a personal interest in the communication, asked various questions, that he might verify the identity of the entity manifesting itself. He sought information concerning certain people,—among others, those whom he had known in Scotland,—and got replies that were satisfactory in every respect. The same spirit manifested itself at several consecutive séances, and gave undeniable proofs of its identity.

The young man's conviction was so absolute that he wrote at once to his friends in Scotland and informed them of his grandmother's death, taking care to indicate the source of his information. The letters which he afterward received confirmed the news fully.<sup>1</sup>

We have, therefore, in the foregoing, two similar occurrences: the death of a person completely unknown to the mediums, announced in a language with which the mediums were unacquainted, but which was spoken by the deceased person. These phenomena occurred during the period of the first experiments of modern spiritism.

We might give a large number of like cases in which the messages announcing the deaths of certain persons also revealed various details as to the deceased persons' private affairs, details which were entirely unknown to the others present. "Light" (Letter 1885, page 315) gave among other occurrences the following most remarkable one:

Dr. Davey, who was living near Bristol, had a son—also a physician—residing in a foreign country. The son, who wished to return, left for England on an English vessel, bound for London. Instead of paying for his passage he offered his services as ship's doctor; but he died in the course of the voyage. When the ship

<sup>1</sup> Edmonds, *Letters on Spiritualism* (New York, 1860), pp. 118–120.

reached London the captain informed the father of this, and gave him the sum of twenty-two pounds sterling which he said he had found on the deceased man. He also gave him an excerpt from the ship's log-book, in which all these details were set down. Dr. Davey was touched by the captain's acts and gave him, as a remembrance, a gold pencil-holder.

Some months afterward the doctor and his wife were at a spiritistic séance in London. Several boisterous manifestations took place, such as the moving of furniture, rappings, et cetera. The medium, who was a woman, explained these phenomena as meaning that the spirits had a communication to make to one of the persons present. We wished to know which one it was. Then a large table, which no one was touching, and which was at the other end of the room, began to slide along and stopped very near Dr. Davey. We asked who was manifesting himself. The name spelled out was that of Dr. Davey's dead son. He declared, to every one's horror, that he had been poisoned!

The doctor, wishing to make sure of this person's identity, asked for a proof. Then the occult speaker told him of his gift to the captain, a thing which no one of the persons present could have known about. The doctor asked whether the poison had been administered intentionally or by accident. The reply was, "Both things are possible." It was stated, furthermore, that the sum of money left by the deceased was seventy and not twenty-two pounds sterling. Various other details were also given.

After receiving these communications, Dr. Davey had the ship-owner give him a copy of the log-book; it did not agree with the excerpt which the captain had put into his hands.

In October, 1884, just before publishing this account, we wrote to Dr. Davey. Here is part of his reply:

"After my son's death (1863) I had occasion to take up spiritism. I learned, one day, at a séance held in London at which my son manifested himself, that the details as to his death, given by the captain, were not authentic. I found out that his death was due to the imprudence of a steward who had put extract of bitter almonds into his castor-oil instead of mint, as my son had requested. I knew nothing, beforehand, about all the pecuniary matters to which he alluded. Among the effects which were given me after my

son's death were only twenty-two pounds sterling and several copper coins, but I have every reason to believe that at the moment of his death he had nearly seventy pounds sterling in his possession."

We are seeking to arrive at certainty. But in what science do we attain it, absolutely? Most of the time we attain only a high degree of probability, generally speaking, as an equivalent for certainty. This is true, above all, in ethical questions.

The following is a remarkable case, vouched for by absolutely trustworthy witnesses.

Dr. Vincent Gubernari, who had made his home on the pretty Arcetri Hill near Florence (all Galileo's admirers know of it), had been an orphan from his earliest years and had been brought up tenderly by his aunt, who had become a second mother to him.

He was a convinced materialist, and was, above all, completely skeptical where spiritism was concerned. He was nevertheless impressed by the fact that several of his friends, who were learned and well balanced, were taking certain experiments seriously. Desirous of learning the truth with his own eyes, he expressed a desire to try a séance in his home.

Favored by fortune, he had married Signora Isabella Sergardi, a member of a patrician family in Siena, who had brought him a large dowry. The husband and wife had agreed that, in case either should die, the possessions of the deceased one should go to the other. Signora Isabella had already made her will with this provision, thinking that her husband had done likewise.

The doctor made an agreement with his spiritistic friends that he would be present at certain séances, and would see what happened. Let us listen to the story<sup>1</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> Bozzano, *Luce e Ombra*, Dec. 1919.

So they held some séances. On the occasion of the second one, on October 29, 1874, the persons of the group had scarcely placed their hands on the table when it was violently shaken. The doctor demanded the disturber's name.

"Tua zia Rosa [Your Aunt Rosa]," was the answer.

Surprised, the doctor replied:

"Well, if you're really my good Aunt Rosa, help me in my profession and aid me to make money."

"I did not come for that. I came to advise you to change your way of life, and to think of your wife."

"Of my wife? I've already thought of her," the doctor answered boldly. "So much so that each of us has made a will in the other's favor."

"That is a lie," said the spirit, shaking the table violently. "She has left everything to you, but you have left her nothing."

It was then that Signora Gubernari, who was present at the séance, entered into the conversation. She declared that the spirit was mistaken and that her husband could prove it by showing his will to the friends then present.

Upon this interruption on the part of his wife, Dr. Gubernari, feeling himself compromised, answered that he was a conscientious man, but that he would show the will to no one.

Then the spirit, shaking the table still more violently, added:

"I tell you again that you are an impostor! Change your will, and change your life, too! You have no time to lose, for before many days have passed you will be in the spirit world."

This revelation was like a thunderbolt to the doctor. He was overwhelmed by it, and cried, in a rage:

"Die before my wife? It's impossible. I'm younger than she. To the devil with that table!"

The séance ended at this point.

The next day Colonel Maurizio, a friend of the doctor, saw that he was greatly agitated, and spoke to him of the deception often practised at spiritistic meetings, proposing that he verify the statements at another séance at the home of Countess Passerini. This seemed to calm the doctor, and he awaited impatiently the upshot of the new experiment.

"There was no deception," the spirit stated at this new séance, "and what was said was the absolute truth."

"Therefore," they asked, "Dr. Gubernari must soon die?"

"Without any doubt, and before the end of the year."

That they might not increase the doctor's worry, they told him that there had been deception in this case also, and that he would be wrong to bother himself about it. This statement calmed his distress to such an extent that he found himself unable to understand the anguish which the prediction of his imminent death had caused him.

Nevertheless during the night of November 12th, he came down with a raging fever. The physicians stated that his illness was not serious, yet the patient suffered terribly.

His friends went to Countess Passerini's home, for a new séance.

A spirit manifested itself, and made this reply to the questions asked: "I understand nothing about medicine, but to do you a favor I can go and look for a spirit who followed that profession during his life on earth. Wait a minute."

A silence. After some moments the table moved once more:

"I have found the doctor; he is here; question him."

"What illness is Gubernari suffering from?"

"From a fatal disease. He will soon be one of us."

"Is his illness merely physical, or is it mental as well?"

"Both physical and mental."

"Can you tell us who you are?"

"My name is not unknown to you: Dr. Panattoni."<sup>1</sup>

Some days later Signore Gubernari's colleagues, called into consultation, diagnosed his malady as inflammation of the bladder, and he succumbed on December 30, 1874.

This former skeptic, on his death-bed, stated that he saw, near him, Dr. Panattoni, who did not desert him for an instant, and also his mother and his Aunt Rosa, who tried to console him, and exhorted him not to regret leaving this earthly life. And he added: "What I say is the absolute truth; I feel it's the end, for me, and under such circumstances people don't lie."

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Panattoni was, when he was alive, a physician in Florence.

This case seemed to me a most interesting one to give here. All conceivable scientific explanations are inadequate to explain it: the hypotheses that Signora Gubernari's doubt was transmitted, that the doctor had an uneasy conscience, that there was telepathy, and so on. As for the first hypothesis, the doctor's wife showed that she had no doubt of his sincerity. As for the second, Signore Gubernari felt, assuredly, no remorse, and was astounded by his aunt's intervention. Was it a case of clairvoyance on the part of the medium, who might have read his thoughts? But the whole thing was absolutely unforeseen. And who knew of this "Aunt Rosa," long since dead? That it was telepathy would seem equally out of the question.

The spiritistic theory must be taken into consideration, like all the other theories, and is no less "scientific." Let us repeat that when Newton discovered the laws of gravitation he summarized his thought in these words: "Things behave as if the stars attracted each other by a force proportional to the product of their masses and inversely proportional to the square of their distance apart." Let us state, here, with equal simplicity: "Things behave, in the story we have just related, as if the doctor's aunt had really appeared to reproach him as he deserved, and to announce his death." And this explanation is the most satisfactory of all; let us admit this without any prejudice and say, with Newton, "*Hypotheses non fingo!* I put forward no hypothesis, I merely state facts!"

Myers gave, as particularly conclusive evidence of survival after death, an experiment recorded by the English Psychical Society (VIII, page 428). This was the case of Mrs. Finney's brother, who, some months before his death, made certain marks on a brick and, breaking it in two, gave half of it to his sister. He promised to tell her after his death, if he could, the spot where he intended to hide the

other half, as well as the contents of a sealed letter concealed in the same place. After her brother's death Mrs. Finney received, by means of a table, the promised communication.<sup>1</sup>

We may think that Myers had sufficient reasons for considering this case conclusive, for his discussion of motor automatism shows that he had a tendency to dismiss the spiritistic explanation. He had written previously<sup>2</sup>:

There is no reason to attribute the movements of a table to my deceased grandfather's intervention, any more than to my own influence, for though we do not see how I could have caused these movements, we see no better how my grandfather could have done so. By my way of thinking, the most plausible explanation is that these replies were dictated not by the conscious mind, but by that deep and hidden region where fragmentary or incoherent dreams originate.

It was, assuredly, the precise realization of the dead man's promise which made Myers certain of the reality of this posthumous manifestation. He himself tried an experiment conducted on the assumption that he was already dead. It did not succeed.<sup>3</sup>

These manifestations from beyond the grave, through mediums, are the subject of much debate, and rightly so, for it is of the highest importance that their authenticity be proved. A remarkable example was also afforded by the case of Minot Savage. His dead son asked him, in the course of one of Mrs. Piper's séances, to go to one of his (the son's) former dwelling-places, which the father did not know of, to look for certain papers hidden in a drawer, and to burn them. The father understood the reason for this. The extreme partizans of telepathy think that the son's sub-

<sup>1</sup> *Human Personality*, p. 346.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, p. 313.

<sup>3</sup> Oliver Lodge, *The Survival of Man*. Official report, Dec. 13, 1904.

conscious mind might have acted, when he was alive, upon the father's mind, and have revealed the secret papers to him, and that Mrs. Piper might have read the father's subconscious mind. According to his extremely informative work on telepathy, Monsieur Warcollier considers this hypothesis preferable to that of influence on the part of the dead son.<sup>1</sup> It appears to me, however, the least probable explanation.

We were, assuredly, surprised, not many pages back, to read of a spirit going in search of a physician in the other world; but such quests are not infrequent in these strange experiments.

Proofs of identity are the touchstone of this research. They are as rare as they are difficult to obtain. Satisfactory, conclusive, unquestionable proofs are rarely met with. The following proofs were of a sort absolutely unlooked for. They were based on mutually consistent attestations published by the English Society for Psychical Research. The account was given, recently, by the review "Psychica," and was published by Myers ("Human Personality," Volume II, page 473), by Bozzano ("Les Phénomènes de hantise," page 129), and by other competent writers. The story was told by an esteemed observer, Mr. Hodgson, and deserves to be classified with the preceding ones. Let us listen to this curious narration:

On Saturday evening, June 14, 1890, Sofia-Alida Kamp, a widow living in Wymberg (Wolf Street), her daughter, Alida Sofia, and Miss Catherine Mahoney, who was living in the same house, went to bed about eleven o'clock, and from that moment to dawn were not able to sleep because of the strange noises which they heard. They could not discover what caused them, though they searched the farthest corners of the house.

The next morning they told me of these sounds. They had heard stools being rolled heavily in their rooms, noises of empty boxes

<sup>1</sup> R. Warcollier, *La Télépathie*, p. 335.

being dragged across the attic, though it contained nothing by which these sounds might have been explained. Upon their request I consented to go and spend the night in their house (Sunday, June 15th).

The narrator then goes on to say that, before he went to bed, he suddenly thought of improvising a "mediumistic séance" in his room, and of inviting the ladies in question to take part in it. When they were seated about the table the name "Lewis" was dictated, by rappings, and shortly afterward the words: "It is a warning." The séance then ended. Here is the rest of the story:

After I had gone to bed, I kept my candle lighted until after midnight, that I might finish a novel in which I was interested. Then I fell asleep.

About two o'clock in the morning I was awakened by the noise of a chair being dragged heavily about in the room in which I was sleeping. This noise was succeeded by another: that of a heavy body being pulled about the attic floor. There was such an uproar that it would have awakened any one. And, as a matter of fact, I heard Miss Kamp's voice asking me, from her room, what this noise could be.

I heard a box of matches fall down very near me.

I got up, out of curiosity, and groped for this box, which I had put on the candlestick, but was not able to find it. I had a second box of matches and was therefore able to light the candle. Then I saw that the other box was on the floor, two feet away from the candlestick.

Now begins the strangest part of this business. Up to that time not one of us had been able to guess for what motives an individual named Lewis should disturb our sleep. We were all the more perplexed from the fact that none of us had ever had anything to do with people of this name. On Monday morning, June 16th, I opened the newspaper I habitually read,—*"The Cape Times,"*—and among other news I read that on the evening of the fourteenth, at forty-five minutes past eight, an *unknown man* had been killed by a moving train, near Woodstock. It did not occur to any of us that the mysterious noises might be attributed to this accident.

The Tuesday edition of this same newspaper printed the records of the inquest, from which it appeared that the victim was *unknown*. That evening I was seated in the Kamps' shop, when a negress came in. In the course of her conversation with Mrs. Kamp, she asked: "Have you heard about the man who was killed by a train on Saturday evening?"—"Yes," Mrs. Kamp answered, "but they don't know who he is."

"I knew him," the negress replied. "He lived in my sister's home, and his name was Jim Lewis." When we heard this name we all thought that we had the key to the mystery. We thought so for the following simple reasons:

(1) A man had been killed at forty-five minutes past eight on the evening of June 14th.

(2) Mrs. Kamp had closed her shop at ten o'clock; she had gone to bed at eleven o'clock, and at that moment the noises had begun.

(3) None of us knew of the accident until we learned of it through the newspapers—that is to say, on the morning of the sixteenth.

(4) Before the night of the fourteenth no nocturnal noises had ever been heard in Mrs. Kamp's house.

(5) The disturbing spirit, on the night of the fifteenth, had given the name "Lewis."

Unquestionably, these arguments were enough to convince us. Out of curiosity, we held still another séance that evening. The name "Lewis" was again dictated, together with this message, "I cannot find peace until they succeed in identifying my body." He answered our repeated questions by declaring that he was "the spirit of the man who was killed by the moving train." He said that his name was Lewis.

This account was supplemented by the following attestation:

All of us declare that this account is in perfect conformity with the truth.—FREDERICK HODGSON, SOPHIA ALIDA KAMP, ALIDA SOPHIA KAMP, KATE MAHONEY, C. F. KAMP, J. S. KAMP.

It appears to me that this spontaneous occurrence leaves nothing to be desired as a proof of identity. To attribute

it, in all its details, to unknown human faculties, would seem to me absolutely out of the question.

Without prolonging endlessly our discussion of this subject (a subject which has already taken up six hundred pages of "*Les Forces naturelles inconnues*") I shall end this chapter concerning manifestations during the course of spiritistic séances and proofs of identity, with the following story, which is astounding, unbelievable, and yet real. The observer himself told it:

How many of the four of us who were together that evening are still of this world? Life has separated us. The war came. On two occasions I had news of the three others; one died at Sedul-Bahr, when he was leading his company of Senegalese in an attack on the Turkish positions. If one of my other two friends should happen to see these lines, this reminiscence will certainly awaken a deep emotion in his breast, for there are things which one never forgets, and the message which we received on that day is one of them.

As for me, my agitation was the beginning of a salutary moral evolution, which brought me faith, calmness, and serenity.

It was in 1904, in Toulon, when the entrance examinations for the Military School were being held. We had returned from the colonies, and had gone to the barracks of the Fourth Regiment of Marines. In this way we found one another again—three from Madagascar and one from Africa. We lived on the same floor, in the rue de la République. In the evenings we used to gather in the room of one of us, to work or to talk and drink tea.

A friend lived in the same house in which we were. One fine evening we went into his room, for he had invited us to a table-turning séance. The evening party was a gay one, and we received a multitude of revelations as to the contents of our pocket-books, the number of buttons which each of us had on his trousers, and the numbers on our watch-cases. One of us, who had mislaid his watch, found it again, thanks to the numbers stamped on the gold watch-case.

Every evening there arose in our conversations the question

whether in what we had seen, proved, experimented with, there was something supernormal: the manifestation of an intelligent entity, apart from that which we agreed to call the soul of each of the persons taking part. Can the mingling of fluids emanating from the organisms of several human beings produce another intelligent soul, which has access to our inmost consciousness, can read numbers in our pockets, and count pieces of money in our purses, the contents of which we do not know? Or is all that the marvelous feat of a clever conjurer or a potent trickster?—a trick which may deprive a whole gathering of the power of reasoning, of memory, and of feeling? Can the trickster draw from every one present everything he wishes to know, and, waking his subjects once more, restore each person's self-control, and astonish us with the result of his robbery of our pockets and our thoughts?

Or can there be really a manifestation on the part of a disembodied soul and for that reason could we find in life, once again, an object, an ideal, a driving force?

Such were the deep thoughts which glowed in our minds and lifted us to dizzy heights!

How could we know?

Why not ask this unknown thing to answer the question which was burning on our lips: "Who are you? Where did you come from?"

One evening we gathered in my room, about a small, round, three-legged table. We had placed this table in the very center of the room, with only our four chairs around it; all the other furniture had been moved away. We examined everything, so that we could see that there could be no tricks, and that no strings were tied to anything. On the mantelpiece were two lighted lamps.

We promised one another that we would do nothing either to help or to hinder anything that might take place, and sat down, with our hands flat on the table, forming a continuous chain with our fingers.

Ten minutes passed without anything happening. We were serious, and in a rather painful state, perhaps (at least I was), but were not in the least nervous. I was praying, under my breath: "If there is really something beyond terrestrial life, may a gleam come to us from this unknown source of light."

Suddenly, within the table—in the wood of the table, seemingly—a sharp blow was struck. We looked at one another. This cracking noise seemed to me so characteristic, of such a special kind, that the idea that it might have been caused by one of my three friends did not occur to me, and I felt a shiver run through me from head to foot.

Soon another sharp blow was struck; the table rose on two of its legs and struck three very distinct blows. I had the feeling that the cracking noise could not have been caused by any of us, but that the movement of the table, in striking the floor with one of its legs, might have been so caused, and without a doubt we all had the same thought: that perhaps without wishing to, one or the other of us, bearing down too hard, had pulled the table toward him.

We confided these thoughts to one another, honestly, and then decided to make use of the alphabet, and agreed that the various letters should be designated by the number of blows. After stipulating, besides this, that one blow should mean “no” and two blows should mean “yes,” we sat down again.

It was not long before the table tilted again. I asked:

“Is this table being moved?”

“Yes.”

“May I know who is moving it?”

“Spirit.”

“Spirit! The spirit of whom?—of one of us?”

“No.”

“Have you a name?”

“Yes; Baudelaire.”

The blows had been struck distinctly, and the letters designated without any mistake. One of the party, even if we had not been watching him, could not have made the table rap with such precision. In a painful state, we looked at one another, without daring to say anything. The table answered some questions as to the existence of the soul after death, and as to certain great moral and religious subjects; it stated the dominant defect of each one of us, and advised: “Read *‘Fleurs du Mal* [*Flowers of Evil*].”

All this time the rappings had been sharp. We were growing accustomed to this long and difficult mode of conversation. At times we would guess a word before it was finished, would utter it,

and the table would rap out, more sharply, "Yes." We sometimes guessed the wrong word, and the quick, jerky blows seemed to express the impatience of the spirit who was speaking to us; they were somewhat like: "No, no! No, no! No, no!"

After a silence the table said, of itself, "Jacquot doubts!"

"Why, yes, I do doubt!" cried Jacquot, getting up. "Have n't all of you doubts?"

No one answered, and the table rapped out, "*Kammara!*"

Only three of us had our hands on the table; Jacquot had gone over to the mantelpiece and had put his elbows on it. These seven letters meant nothing to us three. I asked that they be repeated, and said to Jacquot: "Get a pencil and take this down; it's growing complicated."

And the table said once more, "*Kammara!*"

But then something happened which froze us with terror and made us rise suddenly and leave the table. Scarcely had the last letter of the word been rapped out when Jacquot, who had written it down, advanced toward the table. I had never seen him so pale; his voice was raucous, though he had had a mocking, almost joking air before. He said, "Lieutenant, when you ordered me to stay, did you know of the danger?"—"Yes!"—"But, then, why did you tell Ravan to lead the men? It was my turn."—"Because I was fond of you."

We three from Madagascar witnessed this scene without understanding it. We felt only that something fearful was happening before our eyes. Our comrade, who had been skeptical a short time before, was standing before the table, and speaking to it respectfully, as he would have spoken to a real person, and the table, which we had left suddenly, was moving of itself, rapping replies which we spelled out, mentally, letter by letter.

It was terrible!

The dialogue went on, and we learned in this way that Lieutenant Maucorgé was speaking; he had been in command of the military post of Kammara, in western Africa, where he had under him the French non-commissioned officers Ravan and Jacquot, our friend. Since the lieutenant was fond of Jacquot, and knew that a reconnoitering expedition, which was to be made, was dangerous, he had chosen Sergeant Ravan to accompany him, leaving Sergeant Jacquot

at the army post. He went away and never came back. The whole of the reconnoitering party was massacred; the bodies of the two white men were not found.

Before us, the lieutenant told his former comrade the story of the ambushade in which he and Ravan were wounded. Both were roasted and eaten by their cannibal foes; the infantrymen were massacred, and no one ever knew what had happened. The guilty native chiefs would not be found, and this somber drama of the African brush was forgotten. The lieutenant gave our comrade the names of the traitorous and rebellious chiefs; he stated where his and Ravan's revolvers might be found, and Ravan's watch.

On that evening in February, 1904, we lived through hours which we shall never forget. When he had told his story, this entity went away; Baudelaire returned to say that he was fond of Jacquot, that he would always come back when he called him, and that we, too, had in him a familiar spirit and a protector. Then we parted company.

The examinations were held. Three out of the four of us entered Saint-Maixent that year. I, the fourth, went to Indo-China, where I served with the Native Guard.

Some years later, in Saïgon, I saw one of my three friends, and we talked of the past. I learned that, through information given by Lieutenant Jacquot to the Ministry of War, Lieutenant Maucorgé's weapons and watch had been found, and Sergeant Ravan's weapons. They were discovered in the hands of the black chiefs who had planned and carried out the ambushade in which a part of the Kammara garrison perished.

I have never seen Jacquot since, but the message from his former commander, who was fond of him and wished to banish all doubt from his mind, gave him back, most certainly, his faith in the immortality of the soul. And it gave him, as it did me, the courage to live on, doing a little good, and waiting for the blessed hour when we, too, shall step over the threshold of this new life, which will be what we know how to make it. There is, in the spontaneous manifestation of Lieutenant Maucorgé's soul, a fine example of communication with the dead, and a convincing proof of identity.

It is as a proof of this sort that I am giving the story. I guarantee its truth, so far as I can answer for my memory, and I assure

you that that past scene is always in my mind. When I recall it, I still feel a little of the intense agitation which it aroused in all four of us, who witnessed it.

P. DE LA FONTAINE.

This fantastic story was published in the "Revue spirite" of July, 1920. I thought at first that it must be taken only for what it was worth. I sought information as to the narrator, and when my first inquiry had virtually satisfied me, I asked Monsieur Jean Myer, the editor of this review, for his personal opinion. He was the founder of the Metaphysical Institute, is an unbiased thinker, and—something that does not lessen intellectual worth—is upright and a generous philanthropist. This was in February, 1921. His reply, dated February 18th, was as follows: "I knew Monsieur de la Fontaine personally; he died eight days ago. You may consider his story authentic."

It seems to me that all the objections that may be brought up on the score of forgotten recollections, and the subconscious mind—any objections whatsoever—could not disprove the identity of the spirit which manifested itself in this case. I could not say the same of the spirit of Baudelaire.

As regards testimony concerning the identity of the spirits manifesting themselves, I should like to bring to the attention of readers of psychic works the information given by Jules Baissac in my friend Eugene Nus's book "A la recherche des destinées" (1890), page 223, and the testimony that may be read on page 128 of G. Bourniquel's book "Les témoins posthumes" (1921). But, as a matter of fact, there is a whole library concerning these occurrences, infinite in their variety.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter, which began with clearly defined manifestations occurring during the first years of spiritism and

<sup>1</sup> Among the latest books to be published, Madame Lacombe's is noteworthy, *Merveilleux phénomènes de l'Au-delà* (Lisbon, 1921).

gave, as a final example, a very recent case, must end here. It has given us clear proofs that in the course of certain mediumistic experiments dead persons have made their presence known. I have, in both an unpublished and a printed form, ten, twenty times as much testimony. It is of the deepest interest, above all from the point of view of the psychic environment, about which we must learn, but there is no place for it in a single chapter. Baffling obscurities must be cleared up before we can eliminate entirely the influence of the subconscious mind. Spiritism either will or will not become scientific. It must be transformed, and the time for this has come. As we remarked in the first lines of this chapter, most of its adepts have, until now, been the dupes of senseless illusions. When one asks a student of these problems, who is convinced of the reality of psychic manifestations, the question: "Are you a spiritist?" it would be wise to come to an understanding. Certain lecturers are of the opinion that spiritism is represented by incidents such as the following:

*Knock, knock, knock!*

"Dear spirit! Is that really you, Napoleon?"

"Yes. What do you wish?"

"It would be so good of you if you'd go and find the Virgin Mary for us, for we want to ask her for some information about the apparitions of Lourdes."

"All right, my friends. Wait a minute."

*Knock, knock, knock!*

"Is this the Virgin Mary?"

"No, she's busy. But here's Messalina."

I know spiritists so credulous that they believe in communications of this sort!

If this is what is called being a spiritist, we can say that we are not spiritists. But metaphysical research is quite another thing. From this time on such credulity must cease.

The pages already read are numerous and very closely packed. They contain a considerable number of documents: the basic material for the new science. I have already greatly overtaxed my readers' patience, and it is time to end this general exposition, that we may arrive at conclusions.

## XII

### CONCLUSIONS FROM THE THREE VOLUMES OF THIS WORK

I say that the tomb, which closes on the  
dead,  
Opens the firmament,  
And that what, on earth, we call the  
end  
Is the commencement.

VICTOR HUGO.

THE object of this work has been attained. The evidence embodied in it is based on accounts which I have been amassing for more than half a century; barely a tenth of them have been presented here. The writing of the three volumes took no less than three years. The occurrences cited, the truth of which has been duly established, prove that there is no death; that it is but evolution; that human beings survive this supreme hour, which is by no means the last hour. *Mors janua vite*—"Death is the portal of life." The body is but an organic garment of the spirit; it dies, it changes, it disintegrates: the spirit remains. The matter which constitutes the body of Man is a mere appearance, like all other matter. The universe is a dynamism. An intelligent force rules all. The soul cannot be destroyed.

After the publication of Volume II of this work, a thinker wrote me:

Will your third volume give us the same certainty with regard to the immortality of the soul which the first two volumes gave us concerning the real existence of the soul? If it does not, there is nothing left for us but to die of despair, for we shall be forced to ad-

mit that Chance created us, that there are no moral truths, nor any justice, and that no fertile harvest will spring from all the suffering sown along the road of life. A negative reply from you would mean the final annihilation of all that constitutes the nobility of mankind.

(Letter 4743.)

I hope that I have now definitely brought out the fact that my reply is in the affirmative, and that my readers have gained the satisfaction which they desire and deserve.

Is this not, as a matter of fact, the time-honored wish of thinking beings, expressed in every epoch and in all tongues? It is Nature's cry. Among the works of our contemporaries, one of the beautiful poems of the Countess of Noailles, that passionate singer of Life and Love, ends with this sorrowful stanza:

Never to see you again, O radiance of the sky!

Alas, I was not made to die!

No, poets, your vibrant souls were not made to die; no soul was made to die, and the light of the heavens is not extinguished.

Empirical science gives us this assurance, to-day.

Readers who have had the time and the inclination to read the one thousand two hundred and sixty-five pages of the three volumes of this work must, like me, have reached the conviction that there is in a human being an element not yet understood in the recognized scientific theories: a thinking soul, endowed with special faculties. And they must know, also, that this soul does not undergo dissolution, like the body; that it survives the body. It was our object to prove this survival by positive occurrences. That is the chief result of this long work.

The conclusions arrived at in this book reach farther than those given previously in "L'Inconnu," published in

1900, and in "Les Forces naturelles inconnues," published in 1906. We have proceeded slowly, step by step, in this gradual elaboration. Our previous conclusions were:

(1) The soul exists as a real entity, independent of the body.

(2) It is endowed with faculties still unknown to science.

(3) It may act at a distance, telepathically, without the intermediary of the senses.

(4) There exists in nature a psychic element, the character of which is still hidden from us.

To-day we may add the following conclusion:

(5) The soul survives the physical organism and may manifest itself after death.

We have reached, experimentally, the conclusion that the reality of thought-transmission, at all distances, between the minds of the living, has been proved beyond question. And we decided that "the existence of telepathy is as certain as the fact that Napoleon existed, that oxygen and Sirius exist." Well, it is just as true that *there is this psychic transmission between the souls of the dead and those of the living.*

Phenomena the authenticity of which is unquestionable leave no doubt that at the moment of death the soul (whatever its nature be) acts upon the minds of the living when it is kilometers—hundreds and thousands of kilometers—away from these minds; it causes people to hear rappings and varied noises, often extremely loud noises, and to see the image of the dying person, under aspects equally varied. These phenomena convince us, also, that the soul manifests itself *after death*; the inquiry which I began in 1899 and have since continued, that I might add to the numerous accounts which I had been receiving for many years and aid in the experimental study of manifestations of the dead—this inquiry has yielded, as we have seen, conclusive results.

By reason of the phenomena which have been witnessed—consistent, numerous, and definite phenomena—it seems to

me that I am justified in putting forward the following, as statements resting upon unshakable foundations:

(1) Human beings who have died—those we call the *dead*—still live on after the dissolution of the material organism.

(2) They exist in the form of invisible, intangible substances, which our eyes do not perceive, which our hands cannot touch, nor our senses grow aware of under normal and ordinary conditions.

(3) In general, they do not manifest themselves. Their mode of existence is entirely different from ours. They act on our consciousness at times and, in certain circumstances, may prove their existence.

(4) When they act upon our souls and, through these, upon our brains, we see them in perceptible forms, as we have known them, with their clothing, their bearing, their habitual movements, their individualities. It is our inner eye which sees them. One soul can perceive another soul.

(5) These are not hallucinations, imaginary visions, but realities. Invisible beings become visible.

(6) They may also manifest themselves in objective forms.

(7) In a great many cases, apparitions of the dead do not appear intentionally. The dead person does not act on the spectator purposely. It would seem that he continues, vaguely, certain habits; that he wanders about the places where he has lived, or not far from his grave. But let us not forget that these are human conceptions on our part, and that with spirits distance does not count. Ether-waves emanate from the soul; these reach the percipient and are changed to images in his brain, which receives them and is attuned to them.

(8) Apparitions and manifestations occur with relative frequency during the hours which follow immediately upon dissolution; their number diminishes as time passes, and grows smaller from day to day.

(9) Souls which have left the body, long retain their ter-

restrial mentality. In the case of Catholics, demands for prayers are often expressed. This is a fact which might well be analyzed from a psychological and transcendental point of view.

These statements, induced from the entire body of scientific observations, hold good, in general, with regard to apparitions of the dead. There are cases not in accord with them; there are variations and exceptions. But the principle which may be laid down, from this time on, is that we may be certain that there is an entity which persists after death, that there is a dynamism, thanks to which our personality continues its existence.

We make these inductions from experiment and observation, and with the absolute conviction that every impartial seeker, endowed with a spirit of analysis, who gives himself up to a serious investigation of this sort, will reach the same conclusions.

Humanity has progressed since the time of Francis Bacon. That profound philosopher foresaw the gradually won victory of scientific observation and experiment in every domain of human research, *with the exception*, he said, of investigations as to the destiny of the soul, which belong in the domain of religious faith. He erred in making this exception. The positive method, the Baconian method, has pervaded such research as it has all others. Bacon made, in this case, the same error in judgment that Auguste Comte did when he declared that it would be impossible ever to discover the chemical composition of the stars. May the experience of these great minds guide us!

There is no break between this life and the next. There is continuity. Our personalities survive, though there is a considerable difference between the two states of existence. Material possessions no longer exist; physical suffering and infirmities are done away with. In general, the dead person does not understand his new state. There is slumber, there

are dreams and inconsistencies. Sometimes there are added faculties. The marvelous metamorphoses of insects—the transformation of the larva into the chrysalis and into the butterfly—present a vague and loose analogy to the change to the after life. The *psyche* spreads its wings; there is a spiritual life in the ether. The faculties function through the immensity of space; the bodiless spirit is not confined to our space; it lives in the fourth dimension, in hyperspace.<sup>1</sup> It can communicate with the living only with difficulty. In order to do this, it must enter our sphere of activity, must penetrate our minds, must undergo materialization, must express itself by mechanical means. The influence of invisible entities on us may be more general than would appear, and may even pass unperceived by almost every one: we are too preoccupied with the business of living to notice it.

Let us acknowledge that these posthumous manifestations are not in conformity with our usual terrestrial point of view. They are far removed from our conception of what they should be. We have an entirely different world to investigate: an unknown, unexplored, incomprehensible world. It is difficult, in the study of it, to eliminate our own earthly associations.

These difficulties are a great stumbling-block; they oblige us to be extremely cautious in our interpretation. So many objections rise up before us! It seems to us that our dearest friends should be at our beck and call, and should always manifest themselves. Beings from whom we expect testimony remain dumb. Most of the time the messages are vulgarly trivial, and teach us nothing about "the other world." The master minds—philosophers, savants, writers, artists—who in various lines of endeavor have contributed to

<sup>1</sup> Those wishing to study the fourth dimension and hyperspace may read, with profit, the astronomer Newcomb's dissertation; I published it in 1899, and included it in *Rêves étoilés*, pp. 343-345.

the progress of humanity, have not returned to enlighten us. These and a hundred other objections stand in the way of our honest desire to know the truth. Let us point them out without abandoning our investigation. They make us think, at first blush, that there is no greater equality among the dead than among the living. There is an infinite diversity among souls, from the most exalted to the humblest. For the moment all that we can affirm is that the spirit does not die when the body dies, and that, in certain circumstances, the soul may give proof of its survival.

Side by side with the material world, there is a psychic world, the reality of which is as certain as that of the visible world. These two worlds interpenetrate.

To gain as precise an idea as possible of the reality of the occurrences set forth in this work, it will be best for us to give, here, a sort of comparative recapitulation of these numerous and varied experiences.

The most usual communications are those from relatives and friends. They are with us, or, rather, distance does not exist for them. Some unforeseen circumstance often suffices to reveal their presence. The dead show their survival in the most varied ways.

In the first place, they may appear to be flesh and blood. To recall the truth of this, readers need only open this volume at pages 16, 26, 29, 32, 49, 54, 55, 64, 69, 70, 80, 91, 99, 120, 127, 129, 133, 138, 141, 143, 146, 151, 152, 154, 156, 159, 161, 172, 178, 183, 188, 191, 194, 202, 208, 212, 214, 216, 220, 223, 225, 227, 229, 230, 231, 234, 236, 239, 240, 242, 246, 247, 253, 254, 259, 265, 267, 268, 270, 275, 277, 279, 292, 303, 310, 315.

If curiosity impels you to re-read certain of these accounts, your conclusion will be the same in the case of each of them: that dead persons have been seen beyond a doubt, not in dreams, but in a state of mental alertness. This is a

fact; it is definite, positive; it demands an explanation.

The dead manifest themselves by noises, movements, psychic phenomena which are usually incomprehensible (pages: 10, 20, 22, 24, 29, 55, 56, 58, 98, etc.)

They appear to us clothed either in the garments in which we knew them, or in those in which they were buried (52, 134, 151, 179, 181, 191); or in forms more or less vague, though recognizable (page 16, etc.) These phantoms are sometimes opaque, like real bodies (pages 128, 152, 178, 190) sometimes transparent, and furniture and walls can be seen through them (page 315).

They may manifest themselves, for several years, to the same person (pages 291, 302-306).

They may return to keep a promise (pages 10, 47, 49, 54, 56, 58, 59, 61, 64.)

They may come back because of personal affairs (pages 77, 78, 79, 80, 83, 87, 91, 92, 94, 96, 98, 99, 103, 105, 245, etc.)

They may reveal their death, when thought to be still alive (pages 22, 126, 128, 129, 134, 138, 141, 143, 154, 252, etc.)

A murdered man may tell who the murderer was (page 172, etc.)

They may appear to be amusing themselves; their manifestations may seem farcical (pages 24, 55, 59, etc.)

They often ask for prayers (pages 87, 96, 119, 176, 199, 201, 224, 243, 251, etc.)

They may take gruesome revenges (pages 61, 101).

They may manifest themselves through spiritism (pages 34, 303, 322, 326, 328, 330, 334, 336, 338).

They may transmit telepathic mental impressions to the living (pages 150, 308, etc.)

They may appear to children (pages 30, 161, 183, 187, 225, 246, 256, 268, 277).

They may appear to animals (pages 16, 243, 253, 305).

They may not believe that they are dead, and may feel so alive that they are astounded to see their dead bodies and the people gathered about them (pages 154, 179, 195, 208, etc.).

They may save people from imminent dangers (pages 91, 280) or announce an approaching rescue (page 279).

They may be seen without showing themselves intentionally, (pages 190, 208, 212, 236, 265, etc.), as if they did not recognize their nearest relatives. How paradoxical is such indifference! But apparitions such as these manifest themselves frequently.

Let us not forget that these were actual *occurrences*, as real as all the happenings which make up daily life. They bring us face to face with posthumous manifestations that are extremely varied; almost all of them are, to us, inexplicable. The thoughts and beliefs of the living often play a part in such manifestations, and it is difficult to eliminate them and to decide precisely what belongs to the other world. Let us note, however, that a belief in the dogmas of the Christian paradise, the Christian purgatory, and the Christian hell is not justified by the communications—apart from the cases in which prayers are demanded.

What emerges most clearly from all this is the fact that there exists in us "something" that is unknown, that has up to the present time been systematically eliminated from all scientific theories, and that this "something" survives the disintegration of the earthly body, and the transformation of our material molecules; these, as a matter of fact, cannot, from the strictly scientific point of view, be said to be destroyed, either. Whether this "something" be called a principle, an element, a psychic atom, a soul, or a spirit, matters little. In what form does this force survive? That is what we are investigating. Manifestations (intentional or involuntary) on the part of the dead prove that this force inherent in every living being may in certain cases,

and during a rather long period, be bound to earthly life by extremely subtle threads. But there is nothing to show that this is the normal state of the dead. The change from terrestrial life to life after death would indicate that the soul must adapt itself to new psychic conditions—something very difficult for us, who are living, to grasp.

I am all the more certain of my inductions as to the existence of the soul beyond the grave, and the soul's influence, from the fact that I spent a long time in probing them, verifying them, and passing upon them. From 1861 to 1922 there are more than sixty years. So far-reaching an investigation is in itself a guarantee which gives me the highest hopes of the scientific worth of the conclusions. It would be only logical for those who deny the occurrences to base their opposition on an investigation of the same sort.

It is to be noted that we are here concerned with *facts* and not with explanations. There is an important distinction! We know almost nothing as to the real nature of all these phenomena. There is a whole world to be discovered.

The numerous discussions inspired by this complex subject show us that, in general, people do not form a correct estimate of the precise nature of the formidable problem. We may divide our uncompromising adversaries into two distinct categories: intolerant Catholics who are convinced that they know the fundamentals of the future life—heaven, purgatory, and hell—and who, knowing all, have nothing to learn, and materialists equally convinced that the soul does not exist. The materialists, believing they know that the soul is an illusion, see in everything manifestations of organized matter. It is, therefore, to neither of these two sorts of adversaries that these pages are addressed, since they are not impartial and are already predisposed to deny. Since they know everything, let them not waste their time reading this book, which is written for those who seek. But readers free from all prejudices may wish for indispensable

enlightenment on which to base their personal opinions.

First, a word as to the value of our method.

Despite all the care we may take in verifying documents and investigating the accuracy of the details given in them, it is impossible that they should all have an equal value. Some of them remain, of necessity, inexact, because, though people remember what they have witnessed, they do not always take note of details. Others, however, are mathematically exact. We must take this into consideration in judging the recollections. Our adversaries have not always the necessary honesty of mind. For example, the account given in Volume II, page 200, has been called questionable, doubtful (it is not a scientific report, but a mere reminiscence). But the hotheads who wish to reject it on this pretext, and who dare to say that this lack of precision is typical of all the rest of the accounts (!), have taken good care not to call attention to the apparition told of on page 335—a case in which the names, the place, and the time were given, or that on page 354, or a hundred other cases. This is not mental honesty: it is a systematic opposition to the search for truth. A person who relates an occurrence is not making a technical report, and is not of necessity careful in noting every detail. In the case in question (that of Lord Dufferin) there may have been confusion as to the place and the date, but the occurrence itself took place,<sup>1</sup> and this is what struck the writer. Why should we not feel that in this, as in every case, there are degrees of precision? Are there not degrees of precision in astronomy, the most exact of all sciences? What observer can be sure as to the thousandth-of-a-second parallax of a star? And in spite of this, who can doubt that the stars are really at a great dis-

<sup>1</sup> We may read of an analogous case in *Les Phénomènes prémonitoires*, by Bozzano, p. 397. It is even, most probably, another reminiscence of the same occurrence. Let us not take all these accounts literally.

tance away? For example, when the famous constellation of Hercules was measured with precision, the calculations did not agree. Do these divergencies prevent us from affirming that this star-cluster is an immense distance away? In all these extremely complex investigations, there must be a certain proportion of errors. These do not invalidate the worth of the investigation. Let us not judge these psychic phenomena more severely than we do mathematical astronomy, and let us not forget that in the case of every scientific observation there is the personal equation. Nor must we be more severe than in the case of historical facts, which it is difficult to be certain of. Let us judge every science, every field of research, according to its own special characteristics, and the conditions under which it may be investigated. Let us even suppose that out of these thousands of accounts, in general scrupulously authentic—accounts presented sincerely, carefully and faithfully—there are a few that are vague or incomplete: in what way would the exceptions lessen the value of the others?

We can be sure of the facts. The explanations are still to be found. I should like to take the opportunity, just here, to remark that our knowledge is not absolute. All human science comes down to a perception of the relations existing between the appearances of things: science is a tiny island in the midst of the unknowable absolute. In my first published book (*"La Pluralité des Mondes habités,"* 1862) I laid especial emphasis on this great issue in modern philosophy. Readers will find, as a matter of fact, the heading *"The Essential Relativity of Things"* on pages 249–253 of this work, and the following statement:

The whole of human science—from the alpha of our knowledge to the omega—is *but the study of relativity*. There is nothing absolute in the edifice of our sciences, however marvelous that edifice may be appear. The human mind seeks to know the relations between things; this is all that it may dare. Our knowledge has

validity when we compare things to an arbitrary "metaphysical unity," taken as a starting-point. The universe, with its interplay of forces which are transformed ceaselessly as they act upon matter, can provide nothing fixed which we might take as an absolute guide in our investigation of nature.

These lines were written in 1862. I did not suspect to what degree the progress of science would have confirmed them by the time the words should come under the reader's eyes.

The essential nature of the forces of the universe is hidden from us. We cannot be said to have penetrated the mystery merely because science has invented certain words. I have before me at this moment a compass made in the time of Louis XIII. It responds as readily as ever: its magnetized needle oscillates feverishly when it is moved in the slightest degree, and points with a sort of love toward the north pole. What is magnetism? What is this property which has lasted for three hundred years? With what inherent quality has the steel needle been endowed?

What is universal attraction?

The degree in which the worlds attract one another has long since been calculated by astronomers. Attraction between spirits, invisible communication and telepathy are quite as real. Some day the force of this attraction will be rigorously calculated. And there is nothing to prove that psychic communication will not be established between the worlds: between Mars or Venus and the earth, between the various earths of the heavens.

This work has proved, it appears to me, that spirit rules all, from the smallest molecule to human intelligence; I had already demonstrated this.<sup>1</sup> All is contiguous, but the world of thought is not the world of matter, and we must repeat, for the hundredth time, that materialism is an erroneous

<sup>1</sup> *Dieu dans la nature* (1886).

and untenable theory. Mental attributes such as the power of judging, of reflecting, of affirming, of deciding, are not dependent on a mechanical combination of molecules of iron or carbon. The world of thought is not like this. Nor could any collection of molecules succeed in even working out the simple calculation that two and two make four, or that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. Yes, the materialistic doctrine is erroneous. If we assume that the universe is ruled by forces that are unconscious, blind, and hostile, this leads to the conclusion that all life will finally be annihilated because of the cooling of the earth and the dissipation of energy, while a belief in spirits leads us to grant the existence of an intelligent guiding force—a safeguard of the Ideal—and a progressive evolution of all beings. And, as a matter of fact (let us ask it again), what is matter, really? The difference between a block of ice and a cloud is only a difference in their state; the nature of them is not dissimilar. The word *matter* is but a word. An analysis of what matter really consists of makes it take on, to-day, fantastically intricate aspects. It would appear, from rigorous calculations and extremely precise experiments, that a milligram of radium contains two million trillions of atoms! What can the size of an atom be? The atom, in turn, is revealed as a world in itself, a system of forces. May not an “immaterial” soul be an atomic world? Matter and energy become one. This is what Pythagoras said (we quoted him at the beginning of this very volume). The visible universe is composed of invisible elements.

All is still to be looked into. But how unprepared humanity is for a complete investigation of things! Mankind as a whole does not live in the sphere of the spirit.

It follows that it is not possible to convince every one. In fact, our earthly human kind is not wholly intelligent. It is not ruled by pure reason; it is still a little barbarous, a little animal, we might say. General Berthaut, a man of

great mental vigor and wide erudition, wrote me one day: "Yes, this human kind of ours, supposedly logical, is stupid. I can still see Colonel de la Tour d'Auvergne, standing, in 1870, on the field of battle. Crossing his arms as death mowed down all those about him, he cried, 'Good God! how silly it all is!'"

With two or three exceptions out of every thousand human beings, we must acknowledge that we are living on a planet of brutes. Our earthly race, far from having reached an age of reason, is hardly more than four or five years old. People are children, unconsciously ferocious; they find amusement in cutting the heads off flies, in making innocent animals suffer; they think that war, which is infamous and the heritage of the beasts, is a divine institution and will endure forever. Yes, it will endure as long as men are fools.

Must we, on this account, despair of progress?

Analytical research will require much time, above all in the realm of the psychic. We must applaud every attempt.

The special problem which we have gone into deeply in this work has been probed and discussed numerous times, in particular by spiritists. Monsieur Léon Denis, a writer who is sincere, eloquent, and persuasive, published in 1890 a remarkable book entitled "*Après la mort: exposé de la philosophie des Esprits*" ("After Death: An Exposition of the Philosophy of Spirits"). It was widely read and ran through a large number of editions. It is a sort of new bible, founded on spiritism. I considered myself justified in giving the name "After Death" to the third part of this trilogy; I told the author of the aforementioned work, whom I have the honor of numbering among my friends, that it would be impossible to confuse his book with mine, since mine is the third part of a longer work, and is an independent scientific discussion, in which spiritism enters only as something to be investigated and not as a doctrine. I think that mediumistic research must not be disdained, must not be considered

illusory and valueless (this accusation is often made), but that it is far from having solved the problem. There is no connection between the work which I have had the pleasure of mentioning and the present work. Out of the four hundred and thirty pages which make up Léon Denis's book, one hundred and eighty are given over to an exposition of the various religions, from those of ancient India to Christianity, and the two hundred and fifty other pages are dedicated to the teachings of spiritism considered as a religion. It is a noble ethical and religious dissertation and is, above all, a work in which feeling predominates.

In the present work we have been careful not to abandon the experimental method; careful to remain within the realm of pure science.

The objection is often made that there is a possibility of illusions, of wrong impressions, of hallucinations; I believe that I have answered all such objections. To deny everything would be highly absurd. Unless we reject all human testimony, it is not possible to doubt narrations that are sufficiently well authenticated. Indeed, there are not many historical facts or scientific phenomena which are vouched for by so great a number of witnesses. To suppose that all these people were "woolgathering," had hallucinations, or were the dupes of their imagination—such a hypothesis is absolutely untenable.

We have before us a problem to be solved; the solution of it is so difficult, the problem is so obscure that in general people prefer not to face it, to deny everything. But not to admit the authenticity of occurrences because one is incapable of explaining them, presupposes, really, an ingenuousness no longer in fashion. What are we *really* explaining? Are we not always halted by a question-mark? But facts are facts; there is no escaping that. The skepticism of uncompromising deniers seems as strange and as lacking in logic as that of certain believers, who are familiar with

astronomical truths and know that the earth revolves around the sun; know the importance of this heavenly body; know that the distance from the earth of millions of suns has been measured; know about the Milky Way, the star-strewn immensities, and yet continue to believe that our planet is the ethical center and the goal of creation, and that the starry universe was created for the dweller on this tiny ant-hill. But most physiologists reason in this way, because they cannot discover a soul with their scalpels.

No one has the right to affirm that the dead never come back, that ghosts are always illusory, and that all apparitions are the products of erroneous impressions. We do not die (as was proved recently, in his treatise, by Monsieur Chevreuil, one of the most indefatigable of our contemporary psychologists). But what we may state with certainty is that manifestations of the dead are not a part of the normal course of nature and that they constitute extremely rare exceptions.

Life beyond the grave must be regarded as entirely separate from ours, from a physical point of view. The two spheres are dissimilar, and our mortal eyes cannot behold the other world.

By watching the course of events we see that *in general* the dead do not come back, and that manifestations from the other side of the grave are exceptional. We may regret this with regard to the administering of justice and the correction of errors in the teaching of history—in particular cases as well as in general. But it is a fact.

The ethical world is governed by laws, as is the physical world; but we do not know these laws. Everything still awaits investigation. It is a world very different from ours, and we, with our earthly ideas, should like to see it conducted on different principles. After certain crimes, should not spirits protest, reveal, take vengeance? (We are astonished, for example, to mention a recent case, that the

eleven women and the youth murdered by Landru remained unalterably dumb during this long trial of a vain and infamous monster.) Such silence on the part of victims is—let us not deny it—one of the great objections which our honest investigation finds in its way. Unfortunately, psychic phenomena always come unsought; we wish for them in vain. It is a question of *observation* and not of *experiment*, a difference which is almost always forgotten.

These phenomena are spontaneous; they are witnessed; they are not deliberately produced. Several professors at the Sorbonne and at the Collège de France are declaring that an occurrence is authentic only if it can be reproduced in a laboratory. Such reasoning is absolutely fallacious. We cannot reproduce, experimentally, a shooting-star, an aërolite, a storm, an electrical disturbance, or a sun-spot. I will go farther and add that the impossibility of authenticating a metaphysical occurrence does not justify us in denying that it actually took place. A celebrated physician told me that a woman who was in his care grew seriously ill and almost died as a result of a psychic manifestation on the part of some one dead. But it seems that she refused, obstinately, to allow her name to be mentioned in connection with the story, which remained, of necessity, anonymous. We must take things as they are.

If, therefore, on the one hand, the immortality of the soul has been proved positively, the fact has been brought out, on the other, that these occurrences which prove it are rare, exceptional, and often incomprehensible. But—let us repeat it—it is not important from the standpoint of reality whether or not we understand a thing, whether or not we can explain it. Are there indubitable manifestations of the dead?—yes, or no? This was the question which we asked. We have answered it in the affirmative.

Judging by the occurrences as a whole, we gain an impression that visible manifestations of the dead are rare.

But who can prove to us that spirits do not act upon our minds, and that thoughts which seem our own are not caused by them, in certain cases? Beings whom we love may be near us without our suspecting it, and may, though we know nothing of it, act upon our souls, which are attuned to theirs.

An invisible world surrounds us; unknown forces are more numerous than known forces; science is merely at its dawn, and—let us repeat it—what we know is but a tiny island in the midst of an unexplored ocean. During the last quarter of a century, unexpected discoveries in the realms of physics and occultism have made us guess the existence of regions hitherto unsuspected; since we are now better informed, we shall be able to explore them from this time on. For centuries, our minds have slumbered too deeply on the pillow of indifference offered us by the recognized sciences.

We must not expect to enter into relations with the dead under the same conditions as with the living. They have no material bodies, endowed with physical senses. They are different beings, in a different world. Communication between the living and the dead is of the most varied and enigmatical nature.

In this work we have always stressed actual occurrences, not metaphysical reasoning, not philosophic or religious considerations nor sentimental inductions. Eventually all these must be brought into harmony with the new facts; but the positive experimental method must continue to be our guide.

Now that it has been proved that death does not annihilate human beings and that they continue to live on, we should like to know what substance they consist of, where they exist, whether they are happy, whether they continue their relations with us.

Yes, these questions must now be asked. Where are these souls? Do they remain in communication with the beings whom they loved? What do they do? What becomes of them? Do they go far away from the earth? Do they oc-

cupy a determinable sphere? By what means do they manifest themselves? Are they immortal? Are they reincarnated? Does the multiplicity of the soul's existences complete the doctrine of the multiplicity of inhabited worlds? All these are further problems, supplementary to our first problem; they could not be taken up until it had been considered. Can they be solved by the scientific method which enabled us to solve the initial problem? All these are questions like those which we have just looked into; I should be particularly happy if I could solve them, as well. I must ask my readers to take into consideration the fact that we had to begin at the beginning—that is to say, *by first proving the existence of the soul after death.*

Since this main point has been settled, we shall now try to elucidate some few of these questions. But before beginning this attempt we must bear in mind the fact that we shall not be able to attain the same certainty that we did in the case of the existence of the soul, and that we shall, doubtless, succeed in solving only a small part of a mystery that has until now been impenetrable.

In the first place, the accounts of occurrences given in this work show us that our loved ones who have died remain for some time in our mental environment, and manifest themselves when circumstances are propitious, though to them time and space are not what they are to us, and though they live in the fourth dimension, in hyperspace. Material manifestations do not take place easily, and are rare, but psychic impressions may be frequently transmitted. Reincarnation, which would seem to be the general law, does not take place immediately. Perhaps the higher spirits soar, of themselves, and without any delay, to the other worlds for which their evolution has fitted them. The ethical world, as we have said, is governed by laws, as is the physical world.

We have proved that manifestations of the dead are unquestionable. But how can we understand the manner in

which a dead person acts upon a living person? This requires extended and complex investigation. I should like to remind readers that I had made this my subject of inquiry when I wrote "*Uranie*" (1889), and that I tried to sum up my conclusions in the following terms:

Must we admit that in these apparitions the dead person's spirit really took on bodily form? It does not seem necessary to assume this. In our dreams we believe that we see persons who are in reality not before our eyes, which, as a matter of fact, are closed. We see them perfectly, as distinctly as in broad daylight. We speak to them, we listen to them, we converse with them; we have an impression that we are really living through certain scenes. Assuredly, it is neither our retina nor our optic nerve which sees them, any more than it is our ears which hear them. It is a question of our brain-cells alone.

Certain apparitions may be subjective, within us. In this case, the being who manifests himself acts, from a distance, on the being who perceives, and this influence on the percipient's brain determines the inner vision, which seems exterior, as in dreams. But this vision, while subjective, is neither chimerical nor illusory.

The investigations conducted recently through experiments in the phenomena of suggestion, hypnotism, and somnambulism put us on the road not to an explanation, perhaps, but at least to a rational admission of a certain number of facts. In these cases, one mind influences another, beyond a doubt. Certainly the soul is not actually borne from one place to another, and does not really take on the aspect of a person whose clothes were made by a tailor or a dressmaker. And there is no being before the percipient; no being with an overcoat more or less ample, a dress or a cloak, and the various accessories of masculine or feminine dress; no being with a cane or an umbrella. But, without a doubt, the spirit which is to appear acts directly upon the mind of the percipient and effects it in such a way that the percipient believes he sees, hears, and even touches a person appearing in the exact form in which he (the percipient) knew him.

Just as a thought, a recollection gives rise, in our minds, to an image which may be very clear and vivid—in this same way a be-

ing, acting upon another being, may transmit to him an image which will give him a momentary illusion of reality. These phenomena are now obtained experimentally in investigations of hypnotism and suggestion, investigations which are still in their first stages but which yield nevertheless results worthy of the closest attention, from a psychological as well as a physiological point of view. It is not the retina which is affected, but the optic centers of the brain; these are played upon by psychic forces. It is the actual mentality which is influenced. In what way? We do not know.<sup>1</sup>

I still agree with what I wrote at that time. I continue to think as I did then, after more than thirty consecutive years of experiments, and this interpretation has been confirmed and elaborated by the progress of the psychic sciences, by the prodigious discoveries of Hertzian waves, of the wireless telegraph and telephone, and by the new phenomena observed in the fields of telepathy and thought-transmission.

One mind may act upon another, from a distance. This mental action results, in the receiving brain, in a mental image which seems objective.

There is, really, no clothing, nor is there any body, even an ethereal or astral body; there is merely a cerebral impression which results in an image. The image which we see in a mirror is not real, though it seems so, at first sight, to a child or a dog.

As the fact that there may be suggestion from one incarnate mind to another incarnate mind is admitted to-day in scientific theories, is it rational to refuse to admit that the soul, freed from the material bonds of the body, may possess the same faculties, since its survival has been proved?

Is it over-bold to suppose that a bodiless soul may manifest itself to an incarnate soul, and may make this incarnate soul perceive a form, an aspect known or unknown to the percipient?

<sup>1</sup> *Uranie*, p. 236

My readers may have seen the following (in the year 1900) in "L'Inconnu," on the subject of apparitions:

It is not necessary to suppose that the soul of the dying person leaves its sphere and is borne to the subject affected. There may be only a radiation, a kind of energy still unknown, an ether-vibration, a wave coming in contact with a brain and giving it an illusion of external reality. All the objects which we see, in fact, are perceptible to us only through images and reach our minds only as images.<sup>1</sup>

What we conceived of intuitively in 1900, has been actually shown to be true, to-day.

Through a historical coincidence worthy of attention, our present metaphysical conclusions synchronize with one of the most marvelous discoveries of physical science: the radio telegraph and telephone. A performance, a concert, a speech may be seen and heard, when we are hundreds of kilometers away; they may be gathered in by a receiving apparatus, without being transmitted by any wire whatsoever. In the open ocean the passengers and crew of a ship may see and hear a performance being played and sung in Paris. I had dared to predict this progress in "Lumen" (in 1866), on page 273, where the following may be found: "The telephoneoscope makes all the most important or the most interesting happenings known everywhere. A play given in Chicago or in Paris, is heard and seen in all the cities of the world." The genius of inventors has made such progress possible in our times—progress which I had thought of as taking place only in future centuries—and, to-day, makes us begin to understand telepathic transmission, which was denied only a few years ago.

We may now try to discover what apparitions consist of, since their authenticity has been proved. What is their nature? Are phantoms *real*?

<sup>1</sup> *L'Inconnu*, p. 276.

In the first place, what is reality? What is our criterion of reality?

The usual answer is: "That which is *objective*, outside ourselves, is real; that which is *subjective*, a product of our own sensations, is not real."

This definition is highly debatable. An inner sensation may correspond to reality, above all with regard to psychic occurrences. A friend who has just died at a distance, *appears to you*, in a dream or otherwise, announces his death, tells you that he has been drowned, crushed beneath a train, or murdered. He is dripping with water, or you can see his wounds; in a word, his image corresponds to reality. We have had a large number of examples of this. These are subjective impressions, but real.

The first half of the definition is equally debatable. We are told that that which is objective, outside ourselves, is real. But in what consists the reality of the rainbow which you see, which you measure, which you analyze, which you take a photograph of? It is but an optical phenomenon. Your neighbor sees a rainbow different from the one you see; your left eye does not see the same one as your right eye. In what, then, does the reality of the rainbow lie? Or that of a landscape depicted by the atmosphere, in the form of a mirage? The stick which, when you thrust it into the water, is broken by refraction, furnishes merely an example of an illusion. Et cetera.

Our reasoning must be guided by such considerations as these.

Yes, phantoms are real. But in what does their reality lie?

Madame Ballet-Gallifet's father, who had been dead for two years, really appeared to his daughter, to his son-in-law, and to their dog, in their house in Lyons (Chapter I, page 16). Robert Mackenzie really appeared to tell his employer that he had not committed suicide (page 26). The young

woman who died of the cholera in St. Louis, and whose face had been scratched by her mother when she was being attired for the funeral, really appeared to her brother, in broad daylight (page 32). Monsieur Castex-Dégrange's aunt actually saw her woman friend, in a costume of which the aunt knew nothing (Chapter II, page 52). Russell, a member of the church choir, really appeared, with a roll of music in his hand, to his colleague, who did not know of his death (page 64). The Colorado Indian was actually seen, at Interlaken, by Mrs. Bishop (page 67). Mrs. Bellamy's friend really appeared to Mr. Bellamy (page 69). A father really appeared to his daughter to ask her to pay a debt of which she was ignorant (Chapter III, page 77); there was the same sort of apparition in the case of Count Czacki (page 78). Mrs. Simpson's friend really appeared to her, and asked her to pay a small debt (page 79). The voice of a father was really heard by his daughter—a voice which revealed the secret whereabouts of a sum of money (page 84). Drisko, the captain of a ship, was actually saved by his friend Burton just as his ship was about to be wrecked (page 91). Michael Coulay really appeared to his daughter, in the clothing in which he had been dressed for burial (page 94). The Copenhagen teacher really saw her husband (Chapter IV, page 119). The child of seven really saw his father (page 120). A young man actually heard his friend speak—a friend who had just committed suicide (page 122). Rosa, the young Italian woman, really appeared, after her death, to Mademoiselle Hosmer (page 126). Mademoiselle Stella actually saw, in her room, her friend who had just died (page 127). Mrs. Tweedale actually showed herself to her grandson and her son (Chapter V, page 133). Bard the gardener actually saw Madame de Fréville (page 141). The Albany doctor really saw a young woman, who had just died, crossing his room (page 143). Madame Boullier, in Cherbourg, actually saw Madame

Arondel, who had been dead for some hours (page 154). The little Gayraud boy really saw his little girl friend, who had died the day before (page 161). Count Ubaldo Beni really appeared to his wife, to tell her about his murderer (Chapter VI, page 170). A young man who had been buried for two days was really seen by his sister, walking along before her (page 189). Monsieur Basset really saw, on a road, the phantom of a man who had been dead for a month (Chapter VII, page 212). Et cetera. We might go on in this way to the end of the volume. It would be useless to give a recapitulation of these hundreds of pages.

It is absolutely clear that these were neither illusions nor the products of the observers' minds. Phantoms of the dead exist, show themselves, manifest themselves. They are seen in full face, in profile, obliquely, and reflected in mirrors, in perfect accord with the laws of perspective. We may even think that certain of them are more or less material, like the doubles of the living which we investigated, for photographs have been taken of them (I have unquestionable proofs of this). They are, therefore, similar in certain aspects to living persons.

We have realized, on the other hand, how difficult it is to understand the transition from the visible world to the invisible world, even from the essentially materialistic angle of the atomic state. What we call matter is a visible and ponderable collection of invisible and imponderable atoms. One and the same substance may be in turn visible and invisible, the difference being effected in a lapse of a few minutes. Observe the formation of a summer cloud, and its dissipation into the blue, and you will be convinced of the possibility of this metamorphosis. Fire consumes a fragment of matter and reduces it to vapor, to invisible and imponderable molecules. Air, water, carbon, nitrogen, and the other elements are palpable in the living bodies which they have formed, as well as in inorganic substances. To our eyes, to our senses,

a fragment of marble, a piece of iron, a human being, an animal, a tree, is solid, compact, unyielding. In the case of electricity, the air offers resistance, while metal is a conductor. To minds superior to ours, endowed with other means of perception, this solid matter may seem unreal, while thoughts may be the only things real to their habitual perceptions. And this is not a purely groundless hypothesis: in that part of terrestrial nature which we perceive directly—in the animal world and, in particular, in the insect world, though we class animals and insects as inferior beings—we note faculties very superior to ours. These faculties are markedly different from those of human beings; they are disconcerting and incomprehensible. The least imaginative entomologists attest that such powers have been scientifically observed, and that they are marvelous and inexplicable.

That there is a psychic world, invisible yet real, would seem to me proved unquestionably for all future time. Doubtless, we are now committing:

The unpardonable sin of being right too soon,  
but the problem will be solved in the near future.

The particular occurrences investigated in this work have shown us unquestionable physical phenomena: furniture moved, blows struck, bells rung, objects broken, et cetera. The preceding pages are full of such things. Often these noises, these rappings inside furniture, this ringing of bells, these chairs and dishes being moved, these steps that are heard, astonish us by their trivial nature. But should we base our beliefs concerning the future life on the descriptions of Plato, of Confucius, of Buddha, of Jesus? Should we think of normal life beyond the grave as going on in a world only of noble minds, of thinkers? On the day after their death are men very different from the men they were the day before? We know the worth of the great majority of them, from equatorial Africa to the poles.

We have a tendency to think that the dead are superior to the living, a tendency to see in them theosophists taught by Zoroaster, Manu, and Krishna, making conscious progress toward nirvana, and learned in the doctrines of Karma. Such an idea is erroneous. There is no testimony to prove this superiority. Take most of the dwellers on our planet, more than half of them: what can these be after death? How many human beings are there who feed their bodies greedily, but who never nourish their minds? It cannot be denied that there are very few who do otherwise. In such cases the human machine is controlled by a soul smothered in matter.

I often pass the door of a ruddy-faced wine-merchant, and always see him pouring out more or less adulterated drinks for groups of drunkards, and listening to their various political squabbles. Oaths and disputes have free sway, to the joy of the speakers. What will all those people be the day after their death?

And the millions of peasants who have never thought of anything, whose horizon is bounded by a nut-shell? And the innumerable vulgar simpletons of great cities? In a word, all the stupid, illiterate elements, all the useless or harmful persons? Look at the idlers, the actors, the dancers, the boxing enthusiasts, the petty stock-jobbers, the gamblers, the pleasure-seekers, the prostitutes; people who do nothing, who think of nothing but their own engrossing selves; these intellectual and moral nullities—all these beings who are blind and deaf in the midst of the varied spectacles offered by nature, in the midst of human evolution and the prodigious discoveries of science! They live on the snobbishness found everywhere, on material appetites that are ever unsatiated, ignorant of everything and totally indifferent to the search for truth (there are souls of animals which are superior to those of certain men). We may ask ourselves in just what their immortality lies.

An erroneous impression, the origin of which is lost in the night of time, and which successive religions have handed down for thousands of years, has perpetuated the idea that bodiless souls, by the mere fact of having left the flesh, become perfect, pure spirits. This is a false doctrine similar to the one which teaches that the sky is a beatific abode unchanged by any shadow, any disturbance, though we know from modern astronomy that the immensity of the skies is the scene of tremendous cataclysms. We perceive this constantly with our telescopes.

When the human soul leaves earthly life, it does not become angelic. Death cannot make any man omniscient. The state of the soul on the day after death cannot be very different from its state on the day before death, as we have already remarked. The ignorant man cannot take on knowledge which he did not acquire, nor can the simpleton become intelligent. The guillotine does not make a saint of a bandit. We may conclude from this that, for the most part, the dead are not intellectual, are not superior to most of the living.

On this earth, taken as a whole, nearly a hundred thousand human beings die in a day. The great majority of these dead beings are unconscious monads. The atmosphere is full of them.

It would appear that souls still at a low stage of evolution—in an embryonic state, so to speak—remain for some time in the atmosphere, and that the vast majority of them are unconscious. They constitute a cosmic environment of diffused consciousness. This mingles at times, and under certain conditions, with the individual, subconscious minds of the living, and, in the case of mediums, manifests itself in various spiritistic phenomena. If this is true—and it would seem very probable—we should have to change markedly our conception of the composition of the atmosphere. Simple chemical analysis would no longer suffice. We should have to make out a list such as the following:

Nitrogen .....	78.1.
Oxygen .....	20.9.
Watery vapor .....	(variable according to location and temperature).
Hydrogen .....	(increases with altitude; considerable quantities 300 kilometers above sea-level).
Carbonic acid .....	0.03.
Argon .....	0.00937.
Neon .....	0.0015.
Helium .....	0.0005.
Krypton .....	0.0001.
Xenon .....	0.000005.
Innumerable, invisible bacilli, by the billion.	
Ions, electrons, dynamic atoms.	
Psychic elements, which cannot be measured.	

(A long time must elapse before the last line of the foregoing can be set down in scientific treatises.)

We do not live merely in a material way, but are surrounded by a mental environment which influences our physical and moral well-being. Many incidents in our lives, which we attribute to chance, are not fortuitous.

There are psychic currents which may be likened to aerial and magnetic currents; their existence is shown by very numerous and exact coincidences. The old adage that "ideas are in the air" is not far from the truth.

The psychic elements which we spoke of a short time ago manifest themselves in particular in spiritistic experiments. I should like to give, word for word, the following statements, made by Primot<sup>1</sup>:

To scientific observations, which bear each other out, on the part of Aksakoff, Myers, and Carl du Prel, I can add my own personal observations. In the course of the numerous mediumistic experiments which I have made (more than three hundred) with mediums of different temperaments and aptitudes (one of them went into

<sup>1</sup> *Psychologie d'une Conversion*, p. 671.

a trance each time and was a remarkable subject of study) I have never been able to obtain, though I asked for them at each experiment, any exact and coherent replies as to the form and conditions of life in the Beyond. Most of the time I was given information hopelessly meaningless. Very often, the spirit answered that the inhabitants of the other world were forbidden to make revelations of this nature. And when, by chance, he deigned to drop his customary triviality, it was to dictate sentences and statements more or less philosophic, some of which were not lacking in power or in literary value, but which never passed beyond the bounds of what the subconscious mind of a cultivated man could have thought of or suggested, and which, in any case, never told us anything that we should have liked to know as to the future life.

Nevertheless, it will be admitted that if there is any one subject on which a disembodied spirit might help us by giving us interesting and unlooked-for information, it is assuredly this subject of survival after death. It would even seem that this should be his chief concern and that he should spare no pains to give precise replies to those who question him on such important matters; replies which should bear the stamp of mystery, originality, and extraneousness, so to speak, which we would be justified in expecting from a spirit who has become a stranger to our terrestrial preoccupations, and who lives in a world very different from ours. Take the case of a traveler who has returned from the polar regions: has he nothing better to talk of to his friends and relatives than the unimportant news of the day and the trivialities of ordinary life?

When we consider, moreover, the motives which inspire and appear to govern the apparitions of phantoms, we see, likewise, that it is almost always terrestrial preoccupations, terrestrial monoideisms which absorb completely the very limited field of consciousness through which they manifest themselves. These preoccupations are like those of hypnotic suggestion, which also absorbs, entirely, the field of consciousness, equally limited, of a hypnotized person, and renders him insensitive to any other influence but that of the hypnotist.

It is the same with the disembodied spirit when it manifests itself through a medium. The field of consciousness which the medium displays in this manifestation, must be, like that of the

phantom, very limited, and is most often made up only of earthly recollections. The spirit's real personality, the personality which results from his new state in the Beyond, would appear to have no part in it. And it is precisely because this is true that, in France, disembodied spirits—unless it is the medium himself or those with him who play this part unconsciously—teach the doctrine of successive reincarnations, while those in America, on the contrary, condemn this doctrine. Both groups of spirits are sincere: all have found such beliefs among their earthly recollections. The reincarnationist, for example, has remembered the works of Allan-Kardec or other French spiritists whose books he might have read when he was alive, or else such things were discussed in the circles which he frequented. The anti-reincarnationist remembers certain books or the discussions in American spiritist circles where a belief in reincarnation is usually condemned (because of the negroes).

Our conclusion, after considering these various circumstances, is as follows: That part of the personality of the deceased which, in mediumistic séances, manifests itself and reaches us, is, generally speaking, but a reflection of the total consciousness: one of those transitory and fragmentary states of being which the study of hypnotism has allowed us to perceive and to define; a condition fed by terrestrial memories. It is a sort of dim dream on the part of the disembodied spirit.

It is not to be doubted, however, that intelligent forces exist around us. When, in spiritistic séances, we ask that our hands or our foreheads be touched, we feel this contact exactly in the spot designated. There is no hesitation, even in total darkness. Du Prel relates that, during a spiritistic séance in Vienna, he asked, *mentally*, that his left ear be pulled, and, since he felt nothing, that his nose be pulled: still nothing. Then he asked that his right ear be pulled. Thereupon, his left ear, his nose and his right ear were pulled consecutively, without any hesitation, and with as much assurance as if it had been done by some one who could see clearly. I know personally of fifty phenomena of this same sort.

The psychic world which is still to be discovered is immense and illimitable.

Many conceptions have been formed as to the state of the soul after death and the future life: by the Aryans in the time of Rama; by the Asiatics in the time of Zoroaster; by the Greeks in the time of Homer, of Hesiod, of Pythagoras, of Plato; by the Pharaohs known to us through excavations; the Hebrews in the time of Moses; the Hindus in the time of Buddha; the Druids in the time of the Gallic dolmens; Jesus Christ and the gospels; Mohammed and the Koran; the Swedenborgians; the spiritists; the theosophists; the scientists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There have been descriptions of the Elysian Fields, of paradise, of hell, of purgatory, of limbo, of the abode of the dead, of the astral plane, of ethereal journeys, of palingenesis, of reincarnation, of the multiplicity of the existences of the soul: a whole unexplored universe has been created, in comparison with which the suggestive bits of sculpture of our cathedrals are but an inadequate anthropomorphic representation. Is it possible to bring some clarity into these more or less hazy conceptions?

Analysts enumerate about fifty religions, or, rather, about fifty distinct religious beliefs, each with its own particular dogma as to the future life. These religions are not in agreement, nor do they agree with the little positive science which we may possess. But let us not forget the noteworthy pronouncement of a deep thinker, Claude Bernard: "I am fully persuaded," he wrote, "that a day will come when the physiologist, the poet, and the philosopher will speak the same language, and when all of them will agree." And let us join Edouard Schuré in regretting that science and religion are two mutually hostile and irreconcilable forces; such a state of things should not prevail. Two truths cannot be reciprocally opposed. Men know only what they have learned. We know, for example, that the earth makes a complete rotation in twenty-four hours and a complete revo-

lution about the sun in a year. These are facts; they are incontestable, proved up to the hilt. That which positive science has definitely proved is unshakable. We are justified in thinking that religious ideas will undergo a progressive evolution and that the conflicts between religion and science, rendered famous by Spencer and the other rationalists, will vanish like the fogs of dawn at the rising of the summer sun.

Louis Eblé, a distinguished author, wrote, some years ago, a discerning book<sup>1</sup> which aimed to show that modern science cannot teach us what the future life is, but that there can be no doubt as to the reality of that future life. This work was published in 1904. Have the investigations of the last twenty years shed any more light?

“Where are the souls of the dead?” people ask.

The various religions present various views as to the future life. Those Christians who are Protestants have taken over heaven and hell; Catholics have set purgatory between the two. The Jews refrain from putting forward a definite conception, while retaining the angels; the Mohammedans hope, rather, for a sensual paradise; the Buddhists see nirvana on destiny's celestial horizon; the Greeks had their Elysian Fields and their Tartarus; the Egyptians had their Amenti, and believed in doubles. At bottom, all these conceptions are anthropomorphic.

In the reliefs on Gallo-Roman tombs, we often see the moon represented by a crescent (to see these one should visit the Langres museum, in particular), and the idea that the souls of the dead might be borne to the moon prevailed for a long time. Upon the rise of the Christian religion, its followers immediately opposed this conception, and we frequently read the following denial in the homilies of the first centuries of our era: “*Nec in lunam incolant*” (“They do not dwell on the moon”).

<sup>1</sup> *La Vie future devant la sagesse antique et la science moderne* (Paris, 1904).

The question of an abiding-place does not apply to souls as it does to bodies. The spirit does not occupy any definite spot. But let us acknowledge that it is impossible for us to conceive of any form, any aspect of a future life which is dissociated from our senses.

Christians ask themselves, very naturally, where their dead loved ones are; they try to form a conception of the place where they may dwell. This is because they have been brought up with the ideas and according to the imagery of the ancient theological astronomy of the time of the Apostles, the Apocalypse, the Evangelists, and the church fathers. By this doctrine there is a paradise for the good, the saints, and the angels; this conception of things includes the descent of Jesus into hell, the Ascension, the Assumption, the Trinity, the singing bands of the chosen. It is difficult, not to say impossible, to rid ourselves of terrestrial ideas of time and space.

Nevertheless, the soul, withdrawn from human life, is free from all these restrictions of the material world.

Astronomy has always been connected with philosophic and religious speculations as to the future life. It could not be otherwise. The physical world is the framework of the spiritual world. That these two divisions of thought should be associated is inevitable. What does the expression "to be in the sky" mean? Everything is in the sky. The earth on which we live is a heavenly body in the sky, like Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Sirius, or Vega. Dante's spheres, the choirs of the Cherubim, the thrones and the heavenly hosts, the band of the chosen, the supreme domination of the Trinity—all these can no longer be accepted save in symbolic form. Eternal life has nothing to do with all this. We know to-day that nothing in the universe is either "up" or "down." A representation of Christ's ascension had a meaning when people believed that the earth was flat and at the bottom of the universe, that hell was in the lower

regions (*ad inferos*), and that the sky was above. This representation no longer has any significance, since, twelve hours afterward, by this way of thinking, Jesus would fall vertically, head downward.

What is the sky, then? It is universal space; to us it is the Milky Way. Our planet is a tiny village of this Milky Way; our sun is one of its stars; it is composed of a billion suns. According to modern calculations it may have a diameter anywhere up to three hundred thousand light years, each of these years corresponding to nine thousand four hundred and sixty-seven billion kilometers!

The reliefs on our beautiful Gothic churches show us, everywhere, representations of the Christian universe, of the last judgment, of heaven and hell; these can correspond to no reality.

For centuries and centuries Christian doctrines have taught the resurrection of the body. *Credo resurrectionem carnis*. It is an article of faith. In his Epistle to the Romans, Saint Paul said (viii, 11): "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Belief was exacted—definite, unquestioning belief. It was actually that same body which lived, suffered, and enjoyed while on earth, that was to awaken and come to life again at the last judgment. Jesus was to appear in the East, announced by angels' trumpets; the dead were to rise from the earth, and graves were placed in such a way that, in arising, those brought back to life should face the east. Such was the admitted ordinance of Christian cemeteries. This custom has been abandoned since the passing away of faith, and to-day the bodies are buried in any position, just as the opening happens to be placed. Nor are churches built to face in any particular direction. But the principle of the *Credo* is absolute. Is as unquestionable as it is unacceptable. No educated, in-

telligent, and honest-minded man admits, any longer, the resurrection of the body, unless he humbles his knowledge before a self-contradictory dogma. Such ideas belong to another age.

As for the legend of the eternal torments of hell, where the bodies of the damned were to suffer without end, we may with difficulty conceive of the possibility of human reasoning having dictated the teachings of the church, when we read, in Bossuet's books, phrases such as this: "Thus ever living and ever dying, immortal that they may suffer, too strong to die, too weak to bear their pain, they shall wail eternally on beds of flame, racked by terrible and irremediable torments."

But that is what believers in a "Good God" judged him capable of doing when he created human souls! What an aberration, and what blasphemy!

Human bodies brought to life again! The idea is, in itself, indefensible. Life beyond the grave is spent under conditions altogether different from those of earthly life. There can be no assimilation of food. What would organisms made like ours be good for? It is a state without any connection with the vital needs of human beings on our planet. Assuredly, those in the other sphere are not slaves of their digestive tubes, like the coarse dwellers on earth. They have different bodies! Are they fluid beings? In this other world, there are no Adam and Eve, nor Mars, nor Venus: "*Neque nubent, neque nubentur*," says the gospel. But it is quite impossible for us to conceive of unknown forms, and, I repeat, it is entirely out of the question. Can we even imagine what the mentality of a soul freed from earthly impressions might be? The larva, if it were capable of reasoning, could not guess what the life of the butterfly might be, though the question of its own existence is involved. And as for memory, could the butterfly—supposing that it were endowed with a memory—have any recollection of its former state?

Despite difficulties, contradictions, and antitheses, let us note that the Christian religion is in agreement with Buddhism and its four hundred million believers in asking, in the prayer for the dead, for eternal repose. *Requiem æternam dona eis Domine!* This repose bears a great resemblance to nirvana, to annihilation.

But this immobility is found nowhere. The universe is a dynamism ruled by the spirit, and matter is but an appearance, since atoms are governed by energy. All is in movement, all is in flux in the infinite. God, the Unknowable, rules all, from the infinitely large to the infinitely small. The future life is a part of this whole. The designation "future life" is, moreover, relative and anthropomorphic, since what is the future for us, is now the present for those who lived before us, and since our "present" will be "past" in an approaching future. To put it in terms of the absolute, there is but an eternal present. Those who were alive a hundred years ago are now in "the future life" which has become the present for them, and in a hundred years that life, which is now the future for us, will be the present.

A fairly large number of occurrences would lead us to grant that all phenomena are permanent or simultaneous; that they take place in the midst of a universal soul to which our ideas of time are foreign. The future is seen. The past is also seen. It is as though there were a perpetual present.

In eternity, which stands still, time does not exist. Our conception of it is connected with the movements of the earth.

If we did not have a succession of years, of seasons, of days and nights, then there would be a motionless eternity instead of our calendar, instead of days, of hours, of minutes, of seconds.

In absolute space there is no time.

Each planet makes and measures its own time. Neptune's year equals one hundred and sixty-five of ours, Uranus's eighty-four of ours, Saturn's thirty, Jupiter's twelve. A

day on Mars lasts twenty-four hours and thirty-nine minutes; our days might last as long as that or longer, and to us they would still be days.

Considered in itself, time does not exist.

Since time has no real existence, the future, as well as the past, is the present. All occurrences are determined by the causes which produce them. The human will is a part of the forces at work in nature.

This is not a theory; these are facts. Readers of this work have learned as much through the large number of future happenings seen beforehand.

Metaphysical analysis, therefore, as well as scientific observation proves that time has no existence in itself, that occurrences may be seen beforehand, and that everything is in the present.

Since time does not exist, that which remains of us after death—the soul, the spirit, the psychic entity, whatever name one gives it and whatever its nature be—ceases to belong to what we call “time” when we are alive. To the thinking being, which may live on, there are neither years, nor days, nor hours. The relative gives way to the absolute.

That which underlies appearances, “the thing in itself” of which Kant speaks, the essence of things, has nothing in common with our ideas of the past or the future, and any happening may be as easily perceived before it takes place as afterward. To a being beyond the sphere of time, our terrestrial ideas of the past and the future wear different aspects. Yesterday and to-morrow are to-day.

Nevertheless, there is a continuity. What we call the survival of the soul must not be taken to mean merely the conservation of an indestructible psychic atom, with no consciousness of itself, but the persistence of a thinking entity, endowed with memory.

The soul is an invisible, impalpable, imponderable substance; it cannot be perceived under our physical conditions

of observation. Nor can our measurements of space be applied to it any more than our measurements of time. It may manifest itself over distances of hundreds and thousands of kilometers. The occurrences given in our three volumes prove this.

In a word, therefore, time and space, as, with our ideas of measurements, we conceive them to be, do not exist. It is a question of infinitude, of eternity. The distance from the earth to Sirius is no greater part of infinitude than that which lies between your left hand and your right. Electricity has already accustomed us to rapid transmissions over distances. Light rays do not take two seconds to cross the space between the earth and the moon. There are transmissions which may be called instantaneous. Time and space sometimes become one.

Nor is space, on the other hand, what it seems to us. Our measurements of a practical nature are in three dimensions: length, breadth, and thickness. But there is a fourth dimension; there is hyperspace. The force of gravitation, which is not exerted on surfaces but penetrates bodies; the electromagnetic energy of ether; molecular chemistry—all these reveal a fourth dimension. The apparitions which we have read of have their being in this fourth-dimensional space. We saw, among other accounts, how Alfonso of Liguori was borne from his convent in the Kingdom of Naples to the bedside of Pope Clement XIV, in Rome ("At the Moment of Death," page 35); how Saint Anthony of Padua, preaching in Montpellier, showed himself in his convent (*idem*, page 36); how Saint Catharine de' Ricci, in Prato, talked with Saint Philip of Neri in Rome (*idem*, page 36). We read of Mademoiselle Sagée's double (*idem*, page 40); of Sir Carne Raschse in the House of Commons (*idem*, page 47); of Mrs. Wilman (*idem*, page 48); of Miss Rhoda Clary (*idem*, page 55), et cetera. We have already made the assertion, based on precise scientific observations (*idem*, page

59), that "a man or a woman in good health may, in the form of a phantom, be in a spot other than that in which the normal body is." We might also cite proved calculations as well as these accounts, but this is not the place to discuss them. Everything, however, is in agreement in leading us to believe in the existence of a fourth dimension. An object or a man shut into a room by the four walls, the ceiling, and the floor, may leave that room. It would seem that the ultra-terrestrial life of the soul is passed in this fourth-dimensional space, already calculable by algebraic methods.

Do souls take on a form? What is Saint Paul's "spiritual body," the theosophists' "astral body," the occultists' "etheral body"?

Cases in which "doubles" have appeared may be instructive to us. We made a special choice of certain examples of these in Volume II, and we have encountered them during the entire course of our work. There are, indubitably, three elements in a human being: the thinking soul, the fluid double, and the physical body. This double is governed by the soul and has been analyzed under more than one aspect. It was the double which, in the middle of the last century, Reichenbach studied under the name *Od*, a word taken from the Sanskrit, meaning "that which penetrates everywhere." The word does not mean ether, however. All psychists have the works of this writer in their libraries, as well as those of the man who continued his work, Colonel A. de Rochas. The odic body is the *aura* investigated by occultists, the human emanation visible to sensitives and even to certain normal eyes, after suitable preparation. It is this fluid which comes into play in experiments in levitation, in cases of apparitions, and of more than one posthumous manifestation. It survives molecular disintegration. When I was present at the experiments of my friend Colonel de Rochas, at the Polytechnic School, and also at those of Dr. Baraduc in his laboratory, we could not help thinking that the "doubles" inves-

tigated in our era were those which figured in the rites of the ancient Egyptian religion. Innumerable representations of them have been preserved, representations four thousand years old. These traditions would seem to have been lost.

Charles du Prel, a Bavarian savant (1839-99) of French extraction,<sup>1</sup> to whom the psychic sciences owe important investigations, reached the conclusion, after thirty years of study, that the soul is not spirit alone but a spirit that is joined to a transcendental body, which he likens to Reichenbach's Od. According to his way of thinking, this 'etheral, odic body comes into play in hypnotic and spiritistic manifestations. It is the occultists' and the theosophists' "astral body," endowed with its own special forces. According to this theory it survives the physical organism, has a direct connection with the universal ether, can penetrate matter, and creates, at times, substantial phantoms such as those described by Crookes and other observers. This astral body exists during life (it is said) as well as after death. In this connection, it reminds us of Kant's idea that "after this life the human soul is bound simultaneously to two worlds" and that "when, at last, the union of the soul and the body ceases with death, the soul's life in the Beyond is the natural continuation of the affinity which it has already had with this Beyond." ("Dreams of a Seer," 20-25.)

If the human soul survives the physical organism, it existed before this physical organism; there is the same eternity behind us as before us. The fundamental objection made to this is that we remember nothing. It is not unanswerable, for every one of us is born with personal faculties which do not come from heredity, and, on the other hand, some people have more or less definite recollections of an unknown past.

<sup>1</sup> Le Prel is in the possession of the Saint-Claude Monastery (Franche-Comté). See du Prel's book *La Mort, l'Au-delà, la Vie dans l'Au-delà*, published by Madame Hæmmerlé and Colonel de Rochas (Paris, 1905).

Eternal life can be understood only according to the principle of reincarnation laid down by Pythagoras, Origen, Jean Reynaud, and so many other philosophers. We have not the space in the present volume in which to discuss this tremendous question, but we must accept the principle of reincarnation.

In our total ignorance, from a scientific point of view, of the conditions of ultra-terrestrial life, we can only make conjectures as to this life. We know, and shall know henceforth, that the soul exists. To admit this survival leads us to admit preëxistence. Earthly life is but a phase in the life of the spirit. The doctrine of reincarnation is, moreover, the only one which remains admissible after we have pondered all metaphysical considerations, and it is the oldest of definite religious beliefs. There must be both a previous existence and an after life.

The discussion of this great problem would take up a whole book. From the historical point of view alone we should have to go back to Origen, one of the most learned fathers of the Church, and still farther back—to Pythagoras, to Manu, to Buddha. The arguments in favor of preëxistence have indisputable value.<sup>1</sup> The principal argument is the inequality of human beings, from the time of their birth. There are mental inequalities which cannot be attributed to heredity, special aptitudes for sciences and arts, innate predispositions, and convictions dating from childhood, which could not have been acquired previously, in this life. Another argument is that people have recollections more or less vague, more or less precise, of things “already seen,” of sounds “already heard”; sensations that are most marked with certain men and women, and that are inexplicable save by the hypothesis of reincarnation.

<sup>1</sup> See, in particular, the book by André Pezzani, the laureate of the Institute, *La Pluralité des existences de l'âme, conforme à la doctrine de la pluralité des mondes* (1865): The chapter on Jean Reynaud, Henri Martin, Flammarion.

Each of us, I repeat, enters this world with special aptitudes, the origin of which cannot be found in heredity. I know a family in which there are five boys. They differ entirely, radically, as though they were of different races. A hundred, a thousand such examples might be given.

All accumulated memories of the past remain latent in the depths of us, in a subconscious mind independent of the brain. The memory of that which occurred in a former life is not recorded on the brain.

In our tastes, our preferences, our impressions, our intuitions, our dreams, our recollections, our sympathies, and our antipathies, it is the self which existed previous to terrestrial birth that emerges more or less vaguely.

One of my friends has, as a companion, a lovable and distinguished wife. Her disposition is unfailingly gay in normal, everyday life; she is a charming model of perpetual good humor. But her dreams are terribly sad and often so painful that they make her weep.

There are two beings in us from the point of view of memory; two memories which are usually combined but are at times perfectly distinct.

The chief objection made to the theory of preëxistence is that we have no precise recollections of our previous lives. Of what use is it to have lived if we cannot remember having done so? Is memory not the essence of personality? One may answer this objection by saying that upon entering earthly life, the physical organism brings with it new conditions and a brain endowed with new recording capacities for transitory memories. It may further be answered by the statement that we do not remember the thousandth part of what has happened since our birth, and that the soul's inherent memory cannot function except during its freedom in the intervals between incarnations. In our subconscious minds there is knowledge, there are thoughts which belong to our former existences, and cerebral thoughts born

of our present existence. The first are truer, deeper than the second and more firmly based on reality.

In the case of certain people, recollections of the occurrences of a former life have been very distinct. Our previous existences have been a preparation for the present life. The present life is a preparation for the existence to come.

The soul brings with it, in assuming bodily form, the aptitudes resulting from knowledge previously acquired. Among other child prodigies we might mention Pic de la Mirandole, Pascal, Mozart, and Saint-Saëns. Parents give physical life to their children, at birth, not intellectual and moral qualities.

I have often heard the objection that if reincarnation is a law of nature, communication with the dead is impossible. We may answer that, as a matter of fact, such communication occurs infrequently, but that in any case there is nothing to prove that reincarnation takes place, of necessity, at once. Since we know, as yet, almost nothing of this other world, all is still to be learned. Our present research will result in the complete transformation of the various religious doctrines as to the future life. The dead who communicate with us speak neither of paradise, nor of hell, nor the gardens of Islam, nor the Elysian Fields of the Greeks, nor the Hindu nirvana. We may say with Monsieur Alfred Benezech and with Conan Doyle that we are witnessing an intellectual movement which will revolutionize the trend of human thought,—the most important movement since the advent of Christianity.

From the philosophic and religious point of view, let us be Pythagoreans who have reappeared in the twentieth century, with its astronomical knowledge.

Whether definite or not, the belief in a future life dominates all nations, in spite of uncertainty and denial. Under some form or other, immortality allures human hopes, to-day as in the time of the Gauls and the Romans. Revolutions

have altered this in no way; Robespierre presided at the festival of the "Supreme Being," and, until recently, on the front of the church near my observatory in Juvisy could be read this inscription, in large letters: "The French people acknowledges the existence of God and the immortality of the soul." This soul is believed in in all latitudes. In Japan, at the present day (as was recently seen at the funeral of Lafcadio Hearn, the writer, in Tokio) little cages are opened, setting birds at liberty: a touching symbol of the flight of the soul from its terrestrial prison.

From existence to existence, psychic life lifts us by a progressive evolution. Each of us has been mineral matter, vegetable matter, and animal matter before becoming a man, and Man is not the last stage. We are, as yet, most inferior.

Our life after death will vary according to our preparations for it. We are what we make ourselves. The theosophists' Karma is real. Those who live only for matter and by matter will not enjoy the pleasures of the spirit. Plainly, voluptuaries, wedded to the flesh, will be disappointed; sensualists will long be delayed in their evolution. Spiritual progress is not the same for all. Reincarnation is bound up with intellectual and moral qualities.

There is no reason for thinking that the reincarnations of the human soul are limited to our planet. Nor is it unscientific to attribute to psychic monads the faculty of voyaging through the immensities of space, of passing from one planet to another—from the earth to Mars, Venus, or some other world. Science has recently demonstrated that ions and electrons are borne almost instantaneously across the one hundred and fifty million kilometers which lie between the earth and the sun. During the magnetic storms of the solar photosphere, the sun's ions reach us; they pull the needles of compasses out of their proper direction and cause disturbances of our terrestrial electricity.

Since there can be telepathic transmissions over vast distances, it would not be unreasonable for astronomers to hope, as we remarked above, that the day is perhaps not distant when psychic communication might be established between a planet of our solar system and the earth. As regards telepathy, space is non-existent. All these aspects cannot be gone into deeply. My readers had a glimpse of them in "Lumen," half a century ago.

The conclusions which we have reached are the result of independent, individual labor, carried on without predilection for any belief or any religious system.<sup>1</sup> It is noteworthy, from the historical point of view, that these conclusions are in conformity with the teachings of occultism, the esoteric traditions common to India, to Egypt, to Chaldea, to Persia, to Greece, to the Hebrews, to the Essenes, to Cabbalism, and to the alchemists of the middle ages.

Most of the subjects discussed in the chapters of these three volumes—doubles, telepathic transmissions, manifestations after death, and apparitions—we find in the Book of the Dead, in the Rig-Veda, in the Zend-Avesta, in the Buddhists' Tripitaka, in the Mahabharata, in the Laws of Manu, and in the Bible. We should be less surprised by this close relation between the ancient and modern perceptions of the same truth—conclusions reached at periods several thousand years apart and by methods wholly dissimilar—than was the first Jesuit missionary who arrived in China upon learning that the myth of a child god, born of a virgin, had been taught there for five thousand years.

Are we returning, therefore, in our twentieth century, to doctrines enunciated seven thousand years ago? Yes, and no. Yes, in the sense that the ancients knew more about these things than is generally supposed. No, in the sense

<sup>1</sup> The first precept of Pythagoras's *Golden Verses* may be translated as follows: "Let human beings devise their religions, but have your own."

that present scientific methods have brought practical confirmation and the beginning of an explanation.

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Whatever additional information may be added to that gathered from the preceding occurrences, from this time on we may be certain—and our certainty is based on scientific proofs—that the soul survives after the last earthly breath has been drawn. *The soul is independent of the material organism and continues to live on after death.*

Assuredly, we are far from knowing everything. There are difficulties, obscurities, and enigmas which remain insoluble to our human faculties. Proofs of survival are rare and exceptional. A limitless, unknown region surrounds us: we have not attained to a knowledge of reality. If we approach it in some measure, let us be satisfied; instead of slumbering in the night we shall awaken at the dawn.

Since this is the first time that a work of the sort has been written, and since no mortal has been able, thus far, to lift the veil of Isis, I dare not claim to have entirely solved our tremendous problem; but I hope that the present work will not prove fruitless. I have only cleared the ground and opened a way for the new science. The future will pass judgment on the results of my efforts. We have acted upon the counsel of Jesus: "Seek, and ye shall find." However far future discoveries may carry us, the doctrines which we have acquired may henceforth be summed up in these words: The body dies. The soul lives on in the infinite and the eternal.