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*J. J. Tipton*  
1887

# 'TWIXT TWO WORLDS:

A Narrative of

*The Life and Work of William Eglinton.*

BY

JOHN S. FARMER,

AUTHOR OF "A NEW BASIS OF BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY,"  
"HOW TO INVESTIGATE SPIRITUALISM," "EX ORIENTE LUX," ETC., ETC.



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To

CHARLES BLACKBURN

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED

BY THE AUTHOR

AS A SLIGHT ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE MANY SERVICES

HE HAS RENDERED TO THE CAUSE OF

MODERN SPIRITUALISM IN ENGLAND.

# 'TWIXT TWO WORLDS.

## CHAPTER I.

### *EARLY LIFE AND DEVELOPMENT AS A PSYCHIC.*



WILLIAM EGLINTON (or Willie as he is familiarly called by his friends) was born on the 10th of July, 1857, in Islington, near the New River, a now densely populated quarter of the Metropolis, but at that time almost open country. The family on the father's side is Scotch, and through John Montgomerie, of Bridgend, who died about 1630, a descent can be traced from the Montgomeries of Ayr. His mother, a Miss Wyse, came of a family, some members of which have held important official positions in the City of London.

His early life was spent at school. Though extremely imaginative, dreamy, and sensitive, and, as a boy, passionate and hot-tempered to a degree, no indications of the wonderful power which afterwards developed itself were noticed. He recollects nothing himself, nor, as far as can be ascertained, is any member of his family aware of abnormal phenomena having occurred in Willie's presence.

His education was a limited one, being purely commercial, and it ended just when most boys are commencing their studies in earnest. From school he passed into the well-known publishing house of a relative to learn the business of a printer and publisher; but, owing to his association with Spiritualism, his connection in this capacity was of short duration.

Willie's religious training was practically *nil*. His father in early life had renounced Christianity, and had become an Agnostic. On the other hand, his mother was distinguished by a sweet, gentle piety, and "between the two," he writes, "I was puzzled both ways, and was practically left to solve the problems of life and religious teaching for myself, the result being the acceptance of materialistic notions, and the doctrine of total annihilation."

Very early in life were the principles he had adopted brought to the test of experience, in the passing away of his mother in July, 1873, her remains being consigned to their resting place on his birthday. *Mors janua vitæ*; and so it proved to be in the present case. Writing of the event, he says: "The loss to me was irreparable; for she was my only friend and counsellor. She left a void which has never been filled." This bereavement seems to

have stirred him to more earnest thought and action, and to a deeper sense of the reality of life. He now began to take a more active interest in endeavouring to fathom the truth of the various dogmas, with the result that Atheism seemed to him the most rational. A poor result maybe, but he was in the right track, for he had begun to *think*. The mischief is not that people believe this or that doctrine, or profess this or that faith; it is rather that they are indifferent and apathetic, and will not think at all about these things. There is hope for the former, but very little for those who imbibe their religion as mechanically as they do the air they breathe.

At this time he was, in company with his father, an occasional attendant at the services held by Mr. Charles Bradlaugh at the Hall of Science, becoming more than ever prejudiced against everything and everybody Christian. In this place, however, he was destined to receive the first impetus to a career in which he would be fighting in defence of what was then intolerable to him; and little did he think that, through his own marvellous but latent gifts, he would be able to deal deadly blows to the miserable doctrine of annihilation. So it was to be, however.

It was in February, 1874, that a discussion on Spiritualism took place at the Hall of Science between Dr. Sexton and Mr. Foote, the former defending the latter's attack. Dr. Sexton, it should be observed, had himself been converted from Atheism through Spiritualism. Willie Eglinton relates his impressions as follows:—"I had never heard the word Spiritualism mentioned before, and was full of eager inquiries about it. My father attended this discussion with some friends, as also did I with some young companions. The place was densely packed, and hundreds had to be refused admission. I remember that when Dr. Sexton appeared he was but slightly cheered compared with Mr. Foote, owing, as I then supposed, to the weakness of the Spiritualistic party. I can but own that I felt a slight feeling of awe creep over me when Dr. Sexton began to address the audience, because my scant information had led me to expect that in his presence chairs and tables would float about. This showed my utter ignorance of the subject."

In the course of his debate, Dr. Sexton advised all persons wishing to test the truth of Spiritualism to try in their own homes by themselves rather than with a professional medium. Willie's father, who was never a bigot, thought this sensible advice, and consulting a friend (Mr. John Davis, who has himself since become a Spiritualist, and whose family subsequently developed remarkable psychical powers), they agreed to buy a book of rules and try that very night to see "if there was anything in it."

A home circle was formed, and, conforming with the conditions laid down in the book of rules, chapters from the Bible were read, and hymns were sung—"proceedings," remarks Willie Eglinton in his description of what took place, "quite unprecedented in our family circle. I refused to join them, on the plea that 'it was all humbug, thus setting myself up as an authority upon a subject of which I knew nothing.'" Who has not done the same?

The others sat patiently for two hours, awaiting manifestations, but in vain. Not discouraged by this failure, it was agreed to sit again and again, and give the subject a fair trial. Seven or eight evenings were passed in endeavouring to obtain proofs of the existence of some spiritual power, but none were forthcoming. To show his feelings on the matter, Willie fixed upon the door of the *seance* room large cards, upon which were written, "There are lunatics confined here; they will be shortly



let loose ; highly dangerous," etc., etc. This so far offended his father, that he was told either to join the circle, or leave the house during the investigation. He elected the former alternative ; and, under protest, entered the *séance* room. I now continue in his own words :—" My manner, previous to doing so, was that of a boy full of fun ; but as soon as I found myself in the presence of the 'inquirers,' a strange and mysterious feeling came over me, which I could not shake off. I sat down at the table, determined that if anything happened I would put a stop to it ! Something did happen, but I was powerless to prevent it. The table began to show signs of life and vigour ; it suddenly rose off the ground, and steadily raised itself in the air, until we had to stand to reach it. This was in full gaslight. It afterwards answered, intelligently, questions which were put to it, and gave a number of test communications to persons present. The next evening saw us eagerly sitting for further manifestations, and with a larger circle, for the news had got widely spread that we had 'seen ghosts and talked to them,' together with similar reports. After we had read the customary prayer, I seemed to be no longer of this earth. A most ecstatic feeling came over me, and I presently passed into a trance. All my friends were novices in the matter, and tried various means to restore me, but without result. At the end of half an hour I returned to consciousness, feeling a strong desire to relapse into the former condition. We had communications which proved conclusively, to my mind, that the spirit of my mother had really returned to us. Even upon the hypothesis that we and our friends were conspiring together to delude each other, as is too commonly suggested nowadays by many, the internal evidence contained in the messages was sufficient to convince me of the presence of some abnormal power which could tell us of things only known to 'the dead' and ourselves. The various theories of 'elementals,' 'astral bodies,' and 'shells' had not then been propounded to perplex and confound, and I readily accepted as proved the fact that those who had passed beyond this life could and did communicate with us. I then began to realise how mistaken—how utterly empty and unspiritual—had been my past life, and I felt a pleasure indescribable in knowing, beyond a doubt, that those who had passed from earth could return again, and prove the immortality of the soul. In the quietness of our family circle, only broken by the admission of friends to witness the marvellous manifestations, we enjoyed, to the full extent, our communion with the departed ; and many are the happy hours I have spent in this way."

Frequent *séances* were also held with a professional trance medium. About this time Mr. Haxby, afterwards well-known as an excellent physical medium, and who died a few years ago, joined the circle, and began to develop strongly his mediumistic faculties.

A few months after the first *séance*, stronger phenomena gradually developed, and instruction and guidance were given by a spirit who gave the name of "Joey Sandy," and who has since become one of the principal directors at all Mr. Eglinton's *séances*. The latter says :—"To his honesty and fidelity I owe the success I have met with both in public and private, while his vivacious disposition and common sense have rendered him a general favourite."

I, as well as many others, can confirm this estimate of "Joey Sandy's" character and work. I have ever found him willing and patient in his endeavours to bring home to earnest inquirers the truth of Spiritualism. I have learnt, after a long experience of his ways and objects, to respect him as a man, and to esteem him most highly for his work's sake. Ever faithful and true, "Joey Sandy" will never be effaced from the memory of thousands who owe to him what has proved an inestimable blessing.

"Ernest," another of Mr. Eglinton's "guides," or instructors, as I prefer to say, came to him

about eighteen months after the advent of "Joey Sandy." His sober common-sense, intelligence, and kindness, have made him respected by all, and too high a tribute cannot be paid to so good and noble a spirit.

Apropos of the estimation in which this co-worker of Mr. Eglinton was held, even in 1876, when he first began to manifest strongly, a writer in the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* thus speaks of him:—"When 'Ernest' gives us some of his calm, well-expressed advice, delivered in words of earnest feeling, or when he tenderly commits us to the care of guardian angels, invoking blessings upon us, the voice causes our very hearts to swell in soft responsive affection; and it would be impossible to ascribe a voice so full of the human feeling gained through a long life of experience, and such vicissitudes as human existence always brings, to an elementary. No; we feel it is a man before us, a spirit rich in the love of humanity, long-suffering, patient, calm above human weakness by self-conquest, and a very angel of mercy and beneficence to mortals."

To this many a heart comforted through his ministry will say "Amen." Only those who have come into these intimate relations, born of mutual confidence and trust, can conceive the weight of the evidence so ungrudgingly given in favour of the survival of the soul after death. Critical acumen is of immense service in psychical research, but to pass beyond even the threshold of the inquiry one needs something more, hence the failure of many investigators. But to those who unite with a critical eye the sympathetic mind, all the things of the spirit are possible, and no trouble is too great, no proof too much to ask of the invisible workers. I acknowledge with deep gratitude my personal indebtedness to Mr. Eglinton's guides, and hope that placing on record my firm conviction of the cause of so much failure may open up the right path to others.

A variety of phases of mediumship were subsequently developed—trance, healing, and clairvoyance—and finally materialisations were obtained; not with a cabinet or darkened room, but in the moonlight, while all sat round the table. At these times Mr. Eglinton was invariably conscious, and the figure of his mother generally appeared, radiant, and transcendently beautiful, "and looking," he says, "more as we imagine spirits to be than any I have since seen, and they are not a few. I was induced to sit in the dark for manifestations by a friend of mine, who had been to a *séance* with a professional medium, and who gave a wonderful account of what had taken place. After I did this the really *spiritual séances* we had been having seemed to leave us, and in their stead we obtained the rough physical phenomena so common to all dark *séances*."

It is a matter for deep regret that these dark cabinet *séances* have played so important a part in the history of Spiritualism. Why they were introduced at all seems a mystery, as no more potent source of error or perplexity could possibly have been devised. Happily at the present time they relate to a state of things, let us hope, passed away for ever. More rational and sounder methods now obtain, to the advantage of all concerned. Fortunately, Mr. Eglinton steadily set his face against them, and though, in deference to the wishes of others, and the exigencies of circumstances, he has occasionally sat in this way, yet it was always distasteful to him, and his best results have ever been obtained under the auspices of better conditions.

## CHAPTER II.

### EARLY PROFESSIONAL MEDIUMSHIP.



HE powers of Mr. Eglinton's mediumship having now attracted public attention, he received numerous applications for *séances*, but he steadily resisted for a long time all efforts to induce him to become a professional medium. However, after having given a large number of *séances* to his friends, he found the strain in following his business and giving sittings at the same time was proving too much for him, and, after a rather severe illness, he resisted the calls of the public no longer, but entered upon his career as a professional medium. Personally he now regards this step as an injudicious one, as thereby all his prospects in life have been destroyed. I hope events will yet falsify Mr. Eglinton's fears on this point.

One of the earliest of these *séances* is recorded in *The Medium* for September, 1875, and again in October and succeeding months. About this time he became acquainted with Mrs. Catherine Woodforde, who was then giving "developing" *séances*, and to her and Mrs. Brewerton he owes much for their kindly advice and support. In Mrs. Woodforde's rooms he commenced a series of most successful sittings, and at the same time his equally remarkable professional career. At the end of the same year (1875) several *séances* were given to the Dalston Association of Spiritualists, of which society he was afterwards made an honorary member. Perhaps one of the earliest sittings on record in England for plaster casts took place with him in January, 1876, when, at the residence of Mrs. Woodforde, several moulds were obtained, including that of a face.

In January, 1876, another successful series of *séances* was given, this time to the Brixton Psychological Society, under the presidency of Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald, M.I.TEL.E., and these were followed in quick succession by others. The first *séance* held by him at the house of Mrs. Macdougall Gregory, whose intimate friendship he enjoyed from that time until she passed from our midst in May, 1885, took place in February, 1876, and was fully reported in the *Spiritualist*, of March 3rd. There were present Sir Garnet (now Viscount) Wolseley, the Hon. Mrs. Cowper-Temple (now Lady Mount-Temple), Mr. A. Joy, the Viscountess Avonmore, General Brewster, Captain James, and others. Most striking results were obtained, but as in the matter of evidence I suffer from an *embarras de richesse*, I shall have to pass by many cases with only a bare mention. At this time he first came in contact with Mr. Benjamin Coleman, a long-to-be-remembered pioneer and supporter of Spiritualism in England, and Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Blackburn Park, Didsbury, Manchester.

It needs no words of mine to emphasise the services so freely and spontaneously rendered to

Spiritualism by Mr. Blackburn. As a matter of fact, the movement is indebted to him more than many Spiritualists dream of—especially the new generation of inquirers and investigators. For years Mr. Blackburn has spent himself, his time, and his resources, in furthering the cause of spiritual research. Hardly a medium can be named who has not experienced his fostering care, and whose gifts, but for him, would never have been carefully examined and usefully applied. Nor is the literature of the movement less indebted to him. For a long time he contributed *hundreds of pounds yearly* to the support of the *Spiritualist* newspaper, and in numerous other ways has he watered and tended the growth of what he believed would, if carefully guided, prove one of humanity's greatest blessings. I hope Mr. Blackburn will forgive these allusions to what I know he himself regards as of little account, but for the sake of historical accuracy it is desirable that the facts should be made known.

Mr. Blackburn united a wise discretion with unbounded generosity in his work for Spiritualism. He clearly saw the great need of Spiritualism at that time, as now, was systematic research, and with this end in view he arranged for a series of experimental *séances* with various mediums. These took place at the rooms of the British National Association of Spiritualists at 38, Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, and were known as the "Blackburn *séances*." Mr. Eglinton was amongst the mediums engaged, and the first *séance* took place in March, 1876. Important results were obtained at these sittings. They were given before a committee of the B.N.A.S., and taking place as they did in the light, they were much appreciated owing to the extreme difficulty existing at that time of obtaining other phenomena than those occurring at dark *séances*. Mrs. Marie Neville, the wife of George Neville, the well-known actor, writing in the *Spiritualist*, for March 17th, 1876, testifies that these daylight *séances* were a great step in advance. She further expressed an opinion that these conditions should be encouraged in every way as likely to be satisfactory to inquirers, adding that "Mr. Eglinton's courtesy and willingness to submit to any proposed test cannot be too strongly commented upon."

At one of these *séances* he met another life-long friend and tried worker in Spiritualism, Mr. Dawson Rogers. Mr. Rogers, in the *Spiritualist*, for March 24th, 1876, gives a very interesting account of the manifestations witnessed by him, and concludes his report by saying, "I will only add my belief that all present had the most implicit confidence in the genuineness of the manifestations." Amongst those present on the occasion were the Rev. W. Miall, the Rev. W. Newbould, and other well-known Spiritualists.

On March 21st, 1876, Mr. Eglinton held another *séance* at Mrs. Gregory's, at 21, Green Street, W. He there met Dr. Kenealy, M.P., who was, if not then a Spiritualist, very much interested in the subject. A frequent correspondence ensued, and as instancing how thoroughly Dr. Kenealy believed in the Claimant up to the day of his death, I may mention that, in one of the advocate's letters to Mr. Eglinton, after expressing his wonder and belief in the phenomena of Spiritualism, he adds a characteristic note, "Anniversary of poor Tichborne's conviction."

It should be specially remembered that from this time (March, 1876), down to the year 1883, Mr. Eglinton never gave a single sitting on his own premises. This fact entirely cuts the ground from under the feet of those who ignorantly assert that mediums can only obtain results in a prepared room of their own.

*Séance* followed *séance* in rapid succession, and Mr. Eglinton was kept fully employed.

As showing the impression being made upon the public—especially the critical expert investigators—it is pleasing to read in the *Spiritualist* of May 12th, 1876, that “the test manifestations with Mr. Eglinton are of great value, not because other mediums may not obtain equally conclusive results, but because, in his case, they have been observed and recorded by good critical witnesses, whose testimony will carry weight with the public; all mediums should seek to get their test results thus verified.” How strong and conclusive the testimony in regard to Mr. Eglinton's mediumship was, to which the editor here refers, will be seen when I come to deal with the general results of these experimental *séances* of Mr. Blackburn's.





## CHAPTER III.

### THE "BLACKBURN SÉANCES."



AS already mentioned, these experimental *séances* were, for the most part, held at the rooms of the late British National Association of Spiritualists, 38, Great Russell Street, with various mediums. The results obtained were valuable, and marked a distinct advance in our knowledge of occult science. Mr. Eglinton contributed not a little towards this end; indeed, more *séances* were held with him, as medium, than with any other, while the records of that period speak in no measured terms of the uniformly satisfactory conditions observed at his sittings. As an example of the impression given to those who came in contact with him one instance will suffice. Writing in the *Spiritualist* of December 22nd, 1876, Mr. W. Newton, F.R.G.S., in summing up a few of the results of a fairly good *séance* says:—"All were impressed with a conviction of the thoroughly genuine nature of the phenomena, and it is unnatural to suppose that fourteen individuals keenly set upon preventing fraud, should, at the same time, deliberately meet for the purpose of imposing on each other a mutual delusion." A week or so later (*Spiritualist*, January 5th, 1877) he adds, "The value of these sittings is great to those who desire evidence of physical power external to the medium; whilst the readiness of Mr. Eglinton to submit at all times to the most stringent and frequently somewhat uncomfortable conditions, helps to confirm the conviction of his thorough honesty induced by observance of the phenomena which occur in his presence." Similar testimony was borne in many other quarters, but one other must suffice. The Secretary of the B.N.A.S. Experimental Research Committee, when summarising the results of these sittings, incidentally says, "Those who have attended the series of *séances* . . . have reason to thank Mr. Eglinton for his thorough sincerity, simplicity, and cordiality. . . . The orderly manner in which the *séances* have been conducted, the strict yet simple tests imposed, and the facilities given to strangers to satisfy themselves of the *bonâ fide* nature of the manifestations, have had lasting and beneficial results." Testimony like this, often repeated, was one of the few gleams of light at an exceptionally gloomy period in the history of Spiritualism. The whole movement was passing through a crisis. Mediums were being assailed on every side from without, and, in some cases, from within the movement. "Exposures" were thick in the air. Mr. Lawrence had been sentenced to three months' imprisonment, as also had Mr. Slade, whose sentence, however, was quashed on appeal. Later, Dr. Monk was sentenced to the same term at Huddersfield. Fortunately Mr. Eglinton escaped;

and though often threatened since, he has not yet in that respect been called to bear the martyr's cross.

The Blackburn *séances* consisted of three series of twelve sittings each, and extended over a period of upwards of nine months (1876). Between eighty and ninety inquirers were admitted free of charge, many of whom attended more than once, a large percentage ultimately becoming members of the Association. These *séances* were for the most part held in the light—a feature of Mr. Eglinton's mediumship which time has only strengthened. A characteristic *séance* is described by Miss Kislingbury and Dr. Carter Blake (Doc. Sc., and Lecturer on Anatomy at Westminster Hospital) in the *Spiritualist* for May 12th, 1876, amongst those present being Mr. and Mrs. Desmond Fitzgerald, Mr. J. Romanes, F.R.S., Captain Rolleston, and Mr. Hensleigh Wedgwood, J.P. for Middlesex. On this occasion "Mr. Eglinton's coat sleeves were sewn together behind his back near the wrist with strong white cotton; the tying committee then bound him in his chair, passing the tape round his neck, and placed him close behind the curtain (of the cabinet) facing the company, with his knees and feet in sight. A small round table, with various objects upon it, was placed before the medium outside the cabinet and in view of the sitters; the little stringed instrument, known as the Oxford chimes, was laid inverted across his knees, and a book and hand-bell were placed upon it. In a few moments the strings were played upon, though no visible hand was touching them; the book, the front of which was turned towards the sitters, opened and shut (this was repeated a great number of times, so that all present saw the experiment unmistakably); and the hand-bell was rung from within, that is without being raised from the board. The musical box placed near the curtain, but fully in sight, was stopped and set going, while the lid remained shut. Fingers, and at times a whole hand, were now and then protruded through the curtain. An instant after one of these had appeared, Captain Rolleston was requested to thrust his arm through the curtain, and ascertain whether the tying and sewing were as at first. He satisfied himself that they were, and the same testimony was given by another gentleman later on. This was the first part of the *séance*. Mr. Eglinton was released from his bonds, and it was found that the muscles of his arms were in a cramped condition from the constrained attitude he had been forced to maintain. As all the sitters expressed their opinion that the manifestations were beyond a doubt genuine and convincing, it was agreed that a second short sitting should be held without putting the medium into bonds. Mr. Eglinton sat, however, so close behind the curtain that that on one occasion, when a large bare foot had been protruded, the sitters nearest the cabinet drew back the curtain, with "Joey's" permission, and showed Mr. Eglinton asleep or entranced, with his boots on his feet. Something like a face appeared between the curtains, but some of us were not at all sure about it. 'Joey' asked for paper and pencil, and in another moment handed the paper out of the side window of the cabinet, with the word *Evée J. S.* in Greek characters upon it. 'Joey' explained that he meant to express by this his joy that some friend in the cabinet had succeeded in materialising a face."

These experiments were often repeated and similar satisfactory results obtained. In the *Spiritualist* for May 19th, 1876, Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald, M.I.TEL.E., reports a very marvellous *séance* held in the light. There were also present on that occasion Mr. Robert Wyld, LL.D. (Edin.); Mr. Alexander Tod, of Peebles; M. de Veh, and others. The medium was similarly secured, his wrists and neck being, in addition, tied to the chair, and lastly the free

end of the tape used for the last mentioned purpose was passed through an aperture in the cabinet, so that Dr. Wyld might hold it in his hand. The feet were placed upon a hassock, the curtains of the cabinet being so drawn as to leave the feet and knees exposed to the view of those present. A stringed musical instrument was placed on his lap constituting a kind of table, on which was placed a book and a hand-bell. The gas was then lowered, and Mr. Fitzgerald thus narrates what took place:—"In about half an hour the book was distinctly and repeatedly seen to open and close up again. Then a finger was seen in proximity to the book; and, in a short time afterwards, a hand was several times protruded between the curtains. 'Joey' now requested that someone should come forward and ascertain, immediately after a hand had been shown, whether the medium was still secured as at first. This challenge was taken up by Dr. Wyld and Mr. Collingwood." This test is an important one for investigators, and Mr. Fitzgerald happily requested Dr. Robert Wyld and Mr. J. F. Collingwood to give their testimony. This they freely did, and signed the following brief statements:—"On two occasions immediately after seeing the 'spirit' hand protruded from the cabinet, I examined Mr. Eglinton's bonds and found them perfectly secure. (Signed), R. S. WYLD, M.D." The other ran, "I also, on one occasion did the same. (Signed), J. F. COLLINGWOOD." Mr. Fitzgerald continues:—"Miss Kislingbury then asked 'Joey' whether Dr. Wyld could be allowed to stand behind the medium, inside the cabinet, whilst the materialised hand was shown to the sitters outside. This inquiry was answered in the affirmative; and, accordingly, Dr. Wyld entered the cabinet, and took up a position behind the medium, who moaned and shivered as though 'power' were being drawn from him to an unusual extent. In relation to this test, I obtained the following very brief but sufficient testimony, bearing in mind the value of evidence obtained on the spot and at the time:—"We saw the hand whilst Dr. Wyld was in the cabinet. G. de Veh, Ellen Potts, E. Kislingbury, E. Fitzgerald.' Dr. Wyld also expressed himself as being perfectly satisfied with the test. Some of the sitters did not very distinctly see the hand on this occasion, by reason of others pressing forward towards the cabinet. After a break a second *séance* was held, at which the medium sat unbound, with his feet and legs in view. Under these conditions a foot was protruded between the curtains of the cabinet, being distinctly seen by M. de Veh, Mr. Tod, and Mrs. Fitzgerald, and less distinctly by the other sitters, including myself."

On other occasions (*Spiritualist*, June 9th), notwithstanding the testing being somewhat different, equally good results followed. Mrs. Wiseman, 1, Orme Square, Palace Gardens, W., describes the facts, and is supported in her testimony by Mrs. E. T. Chaplin; indeed, the reports of all these *séances* were, as far as the facts are concerned, officially endorsed by all present, and whatever might be the special theories adopted by individual members to explain them, there was no question as to their supernormal character as far as the medium was concerned.

Mrs. Wiseman says:—"The wrists of the medium's coat sleeves were sewed securely to the knees of his trousers, and he was tied round the waist to the back of his chair. A bell and a stringed musical instrument were placed on the ground behind him in the cabinet and the curtains drawn, leaving his hands and knees in full view. The gas was lowered, and in ten or fifteen minutes 'a voice' from the cabinet, said to be that of Mr. Eglinton's controlling spirit, greeted the company, asking the names of the strangers. Mr. Tapp introduced me, when the voice said, 'I know Mrs. Wiseman; I am very glad to see her and her friend.' Mr. Tapp



then asked him to do something for us. He answered, 'We will do what we can, but the medium is not well; we wish to do something new. Start the musical box.' This being done, an attempt to keep time with it upon the stringed instrument in the cabinet was made. Faces were seen by two or three of the company between the curtains, which at this time were opened about a foot by unseen hands, which also held them apart. The most sceptical could not deny that the hands and knees of the medium were at the same time distinctly seen. The next manifestation of interest was a light which seemed to proceed from the palms of the medium's hands; one of the party said it was a handkerchief, which it somewhat resembled in form. To me it appeared in substance like a fleecy cloud, undulating for a few seconds; then it was drawn back under the medium's chair, and at the same time it was fading away. After a short break the hands of the medium were tied cunningly together, and he was placed in a calico bag, which was sewn up tightly to his throat; he was then re-seated in his chair, and the curtains were drawn. The spirit asked that a pair of black gloves might be laid upon a small table in front of the cabinet. This was done by a stranger, Mr. Terrell, who, as was afterwards found, had provided them for a special test, which he had only mentioned to Miss Kislingbury, before entering the *seance* room. The spirit then asked for matches 'that had no smell,' and some sealing wax. Taking these from Mr. Tapp, he observed, 'I hope we sha'n't burn the medium.' Presently we heard several attempts to strike a light, two of which were successful, showing through the curtains that the light was under the medium's chair, about a foot from the ground. After this a book was placed, by 'Joey's' request, on Mr. Eglington's knees, and was distinctly seen by all present to open and shut several times. When the entranced medium was released from the bag, we found the black gloves on his hands, buttoned, and dabbled with sealing wax. The matches and wax were found at the feet of the medium, inside the bag."

Miss Kislingbury adds:—"In reference to the black gloves, I may add that when Mr. Terrell asked me whether he should be allowed to impose his own test, I replied that I did not know, and I made no further mention of it; the gloves were not mentioned in the circle until the spirit himself asked for them. Neither the medium nor any one present but myself and Mr. Terrell, and probably his friend, knew anything of the proposed glove test."

There were also present besides Mrs. Wiseman, Mrs. Chaplin, and Miss Kislingbury, Captain James, late of the 90th Light Infantry, Baron von Dirckinck-Holmfeld, Mr. T. Terrell, Mr. E. S. Morris, Mrs. Mackinnon, Mr. F. Napier, Lt. R.N., Mr. R. Stock, Lt. R.N., and Mr. G. R. Tapp, on behalf of the *seance* Committee of the Association.

Further details with reference to a similar *seance* appeared in the *Spiritualist* for June 16th, 1876. The medium's coat sleeves were sewn to his knees, and were thus placed in full view of all present. No "spirit" hands were projected on this occasion, the presiding intelligence explaining that the test was an unusually severe one, as the substance with which the spirit hand is clothed in order to render it visible to ordinary mortal vision has to be abstracted from the hand of the medium, and that this exceedingly subtle chemical process is carried on with far more difficulty in the light, and under the eye of man, than in the still darkness of the closed cabinet.

At the next *seance*, however, it was suggested by the spirit that the same test should be tried again, as he was ambitious of accomplishing the feat; he further remarked that he and

his medium were much indebted to the managers of these *seances* for allowing and encouraging new manifestations under strict test conditions; they were somewhat tedious to develop, but were of the greatest benefit to the cause.

Miss Kislingbury says:—"The efforts were attended with success. Hands came out freely at the height of a foot or more above the medium's hands; also several times at the side of the curtain; to which facts Dr. Carter Blake, who sat nearest the corner of the cabinet, gives testimony: 'When Mr. Eglinton's hands were sewn to his knees, and in view of the circle, a naked right hand and arm, to above the elbow-joint, was seen by me through the crevice of the curtains; and that this hand, after ringing the toy-gong, placed it in my own hand. The arm seemed to proceed from a body behind Mr. Eglinton, and his right hand sewn to his knee was seen by me and others at the same time.'"

The toy-gong is a little instrument with a whistle at one end, and something resembling a gong at the other, which a friend brought in just before the *séance* began. Mr. Eglinton was seen to make convulsive movements with his arms and legs during these proceedings, and was heard to breathe deeply, but his hands were never out of sight of the sitters; and the sewing, which had been done by Mr. Collingwood very effectually, was found intact when an interval was ordered.

The second test was quite as satisfactory as the first, and altogether novel. Mr. Eglinton's coat-sleeves were sewn together, and to his coat behind his back; the coat was also sewn together in front near the throat, this time by Miss Collingwood, who was the greatest stranger present. The following attestation explains what took place under these conditions:—"We, the undersigned, entered the cabinet during the *séance* with Mr. Eglinton, and stood behind him during several minutes. In this period of time, according to the statement of the sitters outside, hands were seen, and several objects were moved about by these hands, which we certify were not those of the medium, since we satisfied ourselves on this point by keeping our hands on his shoulders during the occurrence of the phenomena. (Signed), C. FITZGERALD, 19, Cambridge Street, Hyde Park, W.; JOHN JAMES, Tottenham; MARION COLLINGWOOD." Miss Collingwood also placed her hands, by request, on Mr. Eglinton's head while the above was taking place.

The objects which were moved by the hand, or hands, were placed on the little stringed instrument known as the Oxford chimes, which was laid inverted on Mr. Eglinton's knees. The strings of this were struck at times, and a book which was placed upon it was opened and shut repeatedly. Sometimes a hand was seen to touch the book; sometimes it appeared to open and shut alone. In any case, the hands were not Mr. Eglinton's hands, as is proved below:—"We, the undersigned, entered the cabinet in which Mr. Eglinton was seated, examined the sewing which secured the medium's hands behind his back, and found it intact. *Immediately before and after* this examination various phenomena occurred, and hands were exhibited at the aperture of the cabinet. (Signed), MARION COLLINGWOOD; EMMELINE COLLINGWOOD."

Amongst those present were Mrs. Fitzgerald, Captain James, Mr. R. Pearce, Signor Pizzi, Mr. J. Sparrow, Mrs. Lewis, Mr. J. F. Collingwood, Miss E. Collingwood, Miss A. M. Collingwood, Dr. C. Carter Blake, Mr. D. Fitzgerald, on behalf of the *seance* committee of the National Association of Spiritualists, and Miss Kislingbury. All concurred in the verdict of "quite satisfactory."

I have only space for another case. It is related by Dr. Carter Blake, and is specially

confirmed by Mr. A. A. May. It occurred at the close of these *séances*, at a meeting which was devoted to the repetition of experiments previously conducted. Dr. Blake says:—"The medium's hands were firmly sewn to his trousers' knees, and placed outside the curtain in view of all the company. After a short time, the voice of 'Joey' being heard, hands were shown at the aperture above the level of the medium's hands which were still in view, and a hand was projected to a distance of more than eight inches from the limits of the medium's elbows; it moved the curtain forcibly, and subsequently rolled it up from the corner towards Mr. Eglinton, showing nothing behind the curtain. With permission I, who was sitting at the corner of the cabinet, to Mr. Eglinton's left, placed my hand therein, when it was clasped by an object resembling two fingers and a thumb, the annulus and minimus fingers being absent. The hand was distinctly a *right* hand. The curtain being again drawn towards the medium, I distinctly saw a whole right hand lying transversely across Mr. Eglinton's forearm. A lady then entered the cabinet and stated to me that she saw a hand projected in an upward direction from Mr. Eglinton's knees. During that time, hands were several times freely projected from the aperture. At the second part of the *séance* Mr. Eglinton's hands were sewn behind his back to his coat. The 'Oxford chimes' being placed on his knee, and a book placed on them, the leaves of the book were often lifted, on one occasion a hand being seen lifting the cover and leaves of the book in front of the medium, and with the curtains tightly drawn and pinned between his mouth and the book. The *séance* shortly afterwards broke up, leaving upon the minds of the visitors the conviction that the experiment (previously witnessed through Mr. Eglinton's mediumship) of showing two visible and tangible hands, one being his own and one being similar to his own, had been well and exactly repeated."

Few, except the hypercritical, will be disposed to question the value of such evidence. The methods were sound, and the results do not rest upon a single experiment. The facts were in many instances repeated, and results obtained at one *séance* verified over and over again at subsequent meetings.



## CHAPTER IV.

### *WORK IN LONDON, THE PROVINCES, AND ABROAD.*



At intervals, during the progress of these sittings for experimental research, Mr. Eglinton visited various provincial towns, giving *séances* with more or less success. In May, 1876, he went to Manchester, causing a good deal of controversy and promoting inquiry. The following month Southsea was visited, remarkable phenomena occurring in his presence whilst there. The results were recorded in the spiritual and local press at the time by the Rev. T. Colley (now Archdeacon Colley). On one occasion (*Spiritualist*, June 2nd, 1876), he says of the levitation of solid objects in the light :—"We have just had a remarkable sitting with Mr. Eglinton, round a very small table, in light sufficient to see one another, our hands in view. Our circle was composed of three ladies, a clergyman, and a medical gentleman. The direct voice of 'Joey,' the spirit, spoke to us, and a spectral hand was seen to take up a roll of paper and float it about, touching one and another, and afterwards to take it out of the circle, and let it fall on the dining-table. Then it was suddenly snatched up, and lightly 'chastised' us, startling us not a little, for it was a strange sight to see an inanimate object behaving in such a way; the medium's hands were in full view on the table. The musical box was levitated a little. The medium was next entranced, and carried by invisible power over the table several times, the heels of his boots being made to touch the head of our medical friend. Then he was taken to the further end of the dining-room, and finally, after being tilted about as a thing of no weight whatever, was deposited quietly in his chair. It was a strange matter to witness, and made us fearful lest the power should fail, and the medium fall."

The medical gentleman referred to is Dr. Malcolm, and at one of the recent *Conversazioni* of the London Spiritualist Alliance, after an interval of nine years, Mr. Eglinton was much gratified to learn from Mrs. Malcolm that their experience at this time had been the means of converting them to a belief which had been tenaciously held ever since. "Cast thy bread upon the waters, and it shall return to you after many days," has been the experience of the subject of my narrative as regards hundreds with whom he has, at various times, come in contact.

After a heavy season of hard work he took a well-earned rest in the West of England. Going on to Plymouth in a professional capacity, he gave *séances* for upwards of three

weeks with the most pronounced success. "Peter Tavey," the well-known West of England correspondent, who had become a convert at one of the earlier sittings, wrote in the *Western Morning News* of July 28th, 1876, that, although "great difference of opinion prevailed as to the cause of these wonderful manifestations, and some talked vaguely about conjuring and wires, all were bound to admit that they could not possibly find any clue to the 'tricks.' . . . If Mr. Eglinton is a conjurer, he is undoubtedly one of the very cleverest who ever lived. . . . Maskelyne and Cook are not a patch upon Mr. Eglinton. The Egyptian Hall exposure of Spiritualism is mere child's play compared with what we witnessed."

A long editorial report of his *séances* was inserted in the *Devonport Independent*, and caused much discussion from their sensational character. At these sittings he had the pleasure of meeting the Rev. T. Lemon, a gentleman who has since taken a most active interest in the movement in the West of England.

Saltash in Cornwall was the next resting-place. *Séances* were given at the house of Mr. Snell, the friend and coadjutor of Mr. Brunell, the famous engineer. The former had long been a Spiritualist, and used to obtain powerful physical phenomena in his own family.

At Torquay he was entertained by Mr. Glynn, of Abbey Road, one of the kindest-hearted of men, and an old and sincere Spiritualist, who passed away in 1878, deeply regretted. His daughter, Miss Glynn, recorded in the *Medium* the results obtained at the *séances* held in her father's house, the most noteworthy feature of these being, perhaps, the first instance of "direct writing" produced in sight of all the sitters. In the *Medium* of September 1st, 1876, occurs the following from Miss Glynn's pen:—"We imposed the same conditions as last time, viz., holding Mr. Eglinton's hands firmly, and turning the light down so as to enable us to see one another distinctly. We had sat some five or ten minutes when something seemed to take up the pencil and begin writing, which continued for five or six minutes. The paper was afterwards put into my hands, and on looking at it, I found that the sheet of paper contained six verses of poetry, descriptive of my departure from home (I was about to leave home). This poetry was written, as I before stated, in pencil, before our very eyes, and the writing is so small that only one who has good eyesight can read it. At the bottom was a foot-note, written by 'Joey' (one cannot mistake his writing), with the words, 'To Nellie on her departure from home'—and in the corner was a portrait in pencil of 'Joey.'"

Miss Glynn also gives a characteristic account of the materialisation phenomena then occurring through Mr. Eglinton's mediumship. She says (*Medium*, August 25th, 1876):—"I attended two or three *séances* at some friends' houses, and was greatly impressed with the extraordinary phenomena, but still I did not feel thoroughly satisfied until I had a sitting at our own house. The *séance* on the evening in question was attended by my father, brother, friend, and self (not Spiritualists). We sat round a small table, joining hands, and the light was turned down low. Almost immediately we heard loud raps all over the room, in answer to questions put by us. Mr. Eglinton by this time became unconscious (or in a trance state). We had not sat above five minutes before we heard 'Joey' speaking in the direct voice, but as yet, to my mind, this is a doubtful manifestation, which I must investigate further before believing. Not that I cast any doubts upon the voice, but whether he speaks through Mr. Eglinton or not I cannot as yet determine. Following the voice, we were suddenly startled and not a little amazed by seeing a shadowy form pass between Mr. Eglinton and myself. My father



fancying by the appearance and features of the spirit that it was his deceased mother, asked if it was so, and the immediate reply was 'Yes,' by three raps on the floor. Whilst she was in full view of us, another and smaller form came between the other spirit-form and myself, whom I immediately recognised by questions which I asked him, and which I afterwards saw was a brother whom I had lost twelve or thirteen years ago. Now, seeing these two forms with Mr. Eglinton by my side, and his hands being held also, was most convincing to my mind, for the conditions under which Mr. Eglinton sat utterly precluded the idea of any trickery or conjuring on his part. To see and recognise two of my dearest relatives, whom I had thought never again to see in this life, was naturally touching to me, and I honestly affirm that my scepticism at this point entirely vanished. The forms faded from our view, and all was quietness for some few minutes. We were startled from our lethargy by hearing the noble and manly voice of Mr. Eglinton's chief guide 'Ernest.' He took up the tube and spoke in a most impressive manner through it, coming round to each of us, and giving us an excellent address and splendid advice as to our future conduct in this life." These experiences were also repeated on other occasions.

In consequence of these and other equally successful *seances*, public opinion was much aroused in opposition; so much so, indeed, that the local clergy felt it to be their duty to warn their congregations against the wiles and snares laid for them by the devil through his vicegerent, Mr. Eglinton. The usual result followed. Defenders sprang up; inquiry was promoted; and an impetus given to Spiritualism not otherwise possible.

Returning to London for a time to resume the Blackburn *seances*, he, in October, went to Merthyr Tydvil. *Seances* were given at the residences of inquirers, amongst whom was Mr. J. T. Docton, 2, High Street. This gentleman sent a long report to the *Medium*, from which the following is extracted:—"The next form to appear was that of a lady. She announced herself as being 'Mrs Eglinton,' the mother of the medium, and in soft but impressive accents she thanked my wife for the care and kindness she had shown to her son. With a 'God bless you' she wished us adieu, and retired to the cabinet; and it was then we experienced the beauty of spirit communion, for we heard the mother invoking in solemn prayer heaven's choicest blessing and guidance over her (then) entranced son. The next form to appear was that of a man at least five feet ten inches in height, and of a very powerful build. He came towards us with a quick and heavy step, so heavy that the floor shook with his tread. 'Why, this is Captain Harding; we knew him well,' was the instantaneous and common expression of all the sitters, to which exclamation he gave his assent by three loud raps with his knuckles on the table. He gave a hearty shake of the hand to one of the company, and then left us. Directly he had reached the cabinet he sang out, in a voice like thunder, 'Eight bells, Docton,' addressing my brother. This materialisation was a very remarkable one, for it was beautifully complete, tall, powerful,—majestic in appearance, its features distinct and life-like, and consequently was instantly recognised, and, as a test, was satisfactory, for the somewhat stale insinuations of the sceptics that materialisations are only 'make-ups' of the medium will avail nothing in this case. Mr. Eglinton being scarcely five feet seven inches in height, it would be somewhat difficult for him to increase his height at least three inches, and even when that is done he must borrow a face and head of some one before he could have been recognised in a good light the instant he emerged

from the cabinet as Captain Harding, a man whom I and others of the company had known for years."

Here, as in other places, a good deal of interest was aroused, the *Western Mail* publishing amongst its reports a long and fair article, entitled "A Cave of Mystery at Merthyr." Swansea was the next place chosen, and success was also attained here, but it was accompanied with endless abuse. The Slade case was then being tried and popular feeling ran high.

From Swansea he returned to London for further *séances* with the B.N.A.S. In a report of a council meeting which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* of October 10th, 1876, it is stated that "the Scientific Research Committee had obtained direct spirit writing under absolute test conditions through the mediumship of Mr. W. Eglinton."

A visit to Malvern ensued, his advent at this place giving rise to much opposition and criticism. The editor of the *Malvern News*, in a long article of two columns, gave an impartial account of some striking phenomena he had witnessed, subsequently dealing with the question in a long leader pleading for free inquiry.

It was during this his first visit to Malvern that he met under the following somewhat peculiar circumstances, Mrs. Mary S. G. Nichols. Mrs. Wilkes, authoress of "Ur of the Chaldees," and an old friend of Mr. Eglinton's, was staying with Mrs. Nichols at the time. But as they were all vegetarians his friend was hardly in a position to entertain him. Her desire to see him, however, overcame her scruples, and, smuggling him in, a very pleasant day was spent, he being regaled with good things not altogether in the order of vegetarianism. Mrs. Nichols, who had known of Mr. Eglinton's presence in Malvern, hearing of his visit from the servants, sent for him late the same evening, and her acquaintance as well as that of Dr. Nichols, was made close upon midnight. Writing of this intercourse and their subsequent friendship, Mr. Eglinton says:—"Her kind greeting and sympathy with my work attached me very much to her, and from that moment I found the truest and best friend I ever had in my life. She was a mother in very name to me. To her I consider I owe the foundation of whatever there is of good in me. Her motherly care and guiding hand, during a residence with her of over six years, and an intimacy never once broken of over eight years, which lasted up to the day of her passing away, being very essential at this period when I was just entering upon manhood. Her splendid qualities of mind, her broadness of opinion, her largeness of heart, and, above all, her charity—I have frequently known her to give her last penny to those in need—endeared her to every one with whom she came in contact. She was a great sufferer during the latter period of her life, having broken her leg in 1880, which was never properly set, the broken edges causing exquisite agony; in addition to which she was suffering from an internal complaint of which not even her husband knew. Only I knew how much she suffered, and what she endured. After an immensely useful life she passed away peacefully on the morning of May 30th, 1884, and Dr. Nichols and I were the sole mourners at her burial on June 3rd, 1884."

In September, Mr. Eglinton received a very cordial invitation from the Oromase Society of Spiritualists at the Hague to pay them a lengthened visit; and arrangements being finally made, he arrived there on the 29th October, and gave his first *séance* on the 30th. M. de Bourbon (who claims to be the son of the Dauphin supposed to have died in the Temple, and therefore legal heir to the French throne) reports in the *Medium* (November 10th, 1876):—

"Mr. W. Eglinton has arrived, and has made a good impression." Mr. A. J. Riko, who has done so much to promote the cause of Spiritualism in Holland, favourably reported upon these *séances*, which were attended by the *élite* of Dutch society. On the 7th November he went to Leyden University, and gave a most wonderful sitting to the students there: their demonstrations after the success will long be remembered. He next went to Arnheim, but he had not such good results as at other sittings; the intense excitement the Slade trial was everywhere causing unfavourably influencing the requisite harmonious conditions.

On his return to London from the Continent a series of non-professional *séances* were commenced at the house of Mrs. Macdougall Gregory. This was in January, 1877. These gatherings were attended by Sir Patrick and Lady Colquhoun, Lord Borthwick, Lady Jenkinson, the Rev. Maurice Davies, D.D., Lady Archibald Campbell, Dr. Allmann, Sir William Fairfax, Lord and Lady Mount-Temple, General Brewster, Sir Garnet (now Lord) and Lady Wolseley, Lord and Lady Avonmore, Professor Blackie, and many others; indeed, the little *piéd-à-terre* off Park Lane became a well-known resort of distinguished members of society, and a centre from which was diffused a knowledge of Spiritualism amongst the highest in the land.

Mr. W. H. Harrison describes one of these *séances* in the *Spiritualist* for February 23rd, 1877:—"Last Monday evening ten or twelve friends sat round a large circular table, with their hands joined, under which conditions, Mr. W. Eglinton, the medium, was held on both sides. There were no other persons in the room than those seated at the table. An expiring fire gave a dim light, permitting only the outlines of objects to be visible. The medium sat at that part of the table which was nearest to the fire, consequently his back was to the light. A form, of the full proportions of a man, rose slowly from the floor to about the level of the edge of the table; it was about a foot behind the right elbow of the medium. The other nearest sitter was Mrs. Wiseman, of Orme Square, Bayswater. This form was covered with white drapery, but no features were visible. As it was close to the fire, it could be seen distinctly by those near it. It was observed by all who were so placed that the edge of the table or intervening sitters did not cut off the view of the form; thus it was observed by four or five persons altogether, and was not the result of subjective impressions. After rising to the level of the edge of the table, it sank downwards, and was no more seen, having apparently exhausted all the power. Mr. Eglinton was in a strange house and in evening dress. Altogether it was a test manifestation which could not have been produced by artificial means."

Miss Chandos Leigh Hunt (granddaughter of Leigh Hunt) had some interesting experiences at this time, which she has recorded in the *Medium*. Did the exigencies of space allow, there is much in these records which I should like to quote and allude to. A bare mention, however, must suffice. They very pointedly illustrate the remarkable superiority of the phenomena when conditions are harmonious, and thereby form a striking contrast to the result obtained when these are conspicuous only by their absence.

For a long time previous, fierce discussions had been carried on in the spiritual press as to the real nature of these form-manifestations, some writers asserting that there was no separate individuality as between the medium and form. Alive to the necessities of the case, Mr. Eglinton's guides were not slow to satisfy earnest inquirers, and to show that whatever other theory might be adduced with regard to these forms, it was clearly probable that medium and form were at times abstract and separate individualities. A case in point is that recorded by Dr. Carter Blake,



in the *Spiritualist* of April 6th, 1877. At a *séance*, at which were present, besides himself, Captain James, Mr. J. F. Collingwood, F.G.S., Mrs. Lewis, Mr. W. B. Mawson, Mr. W. Cutler, Mrs. Burton Burton, Mrs. Tennyson Ker, and Mrs. and Miss Falkiner, this fact was clearly demonstrated. "The medium, who wore black clothes, was placed loose in the cabinet, sitting on a chair, with his face in a westerly direction. The curtains being closed, and the musical box turned on, a long white figure, resembling that known as 'Abd-ū-lah' was seen at the centre of the curtain within one minute from the time of the closing of the curtains. After a few more minutes the form came out and walked into the middle of the room, eight times in all. The figure termed 'Joey' then appeared, and stepped to the front of the cabinet, where, after retreating several times, he stooped down to the ground, and covered his head with a fold of white drapery. He then rose up with the black beard attached to the cheeks (but not chin) of 'Abd-ū-lah,' and stood up to a greater height than that which the medium himself reaches. He further picked up the light round table and held it at arm's length above his head, trying (abortively) to place it on the top of the cabinet. After some time, a request was made by a lady and gentleman present that the medium and 'Abd-ū-lah' should be shown together. To this request 'Joey' acceded; and subsequently the following events took place: Mr. Eglinton sitting as before, the curtains were drawn, showing the figure 'Abd-ū-lah' standing up near and in front of the wire screen; and two patches of light which may be reasonably conjectured to have been Mr. Eglinton's face and left hand at the level which he would have occupied if he had been sitting in the chair. This not being, however, perfectly clear to all, the form 'Abd-ū-lah' took a step or two to its own proper right, keeping face to face with Eglinton, who rose from his chair, and raised both his hands with what appeared to be convulsive action. This time there was no doubt that it really was Eglinton standing up in front of, and about three and-a-half feet outside, the cabinet opposite to a form exceeding himself in stature, and dressed in white. This was clearly seen by all present during an interval of time which I estimate as six minutes, and in what has been termed 'quarter gaslight.' Eglinton then sat down in his chair, and the form 'Abd-ū-lah' appeared to vanish into Eglinton, appearing to unite with him about the breast. I then stepped into the cabinet, ascertained that Eglinton was thoroughly asleep, lifted him outside the cabinet, and examined the spot carefully. The voice called that of 'Joey' was chattering around and about the walls of the cabinet all the time. Eglinton subsequently woke up. I consider this to have been the most remarkable *séance* which I have seen in the presence of Mr. Eglinton, and to have been thoroughly conclusive to those present of his non-identity with the form which is called 'Abd-ū-lah.' It is the more remarkable, as on a previous occasion some very slight manifestations took place, though the conditions were similar and satisfactory."

On April 9th, 1877, Mr. Eglinton was invited by a "Mr. Fleming" to give a *séance* at 22, Finsbury Circus. On going there he was surprised to find several priests. They insisted on the most absurd conditions, with the result that no phenomena whatever were obtained. It was afterwards discovered that this sitting had been arranged for the Rev. Canon Gilbert, who subsequently made it the subject of an attack upon Spiritualism and Mr. Eglinton, in a course of sermons preached at St. Mary's, Moorfields. Not only was he vulgarly abusive as regards Mr. Eglinton in particular, but he thundered forth all the fire of his artillery against Spiritualists and mediums in general. It would be unprofitable to enter fully into all the details here and now: suffice it to say, that his temper and methods were so strongly disapproved, and the opposition to his diatribes so pronounced, that several sermons which he had announced to deliver in the same course were

abandoned. The congregation of the reverend prelate proved more liberal and just than the priest himself.

The *séances* given to Canon Gilbert seem to have had a prejudicial effect upon Mr. Eglinton's health. He became ailing, and after a short visit to Birmingham and Kingston, at the former of which the *séances* were not of a satisfactory character, his health finally gave way, and culminated on May 8th in a serious illness. All engagements had to be cancelled, and being invited by Dr. and Mrs. Nichols to spend the summer at their pretty place at the foot of the Malvern Hills, he accordingly left London for that town on June 2nd. He was so ill and altered in appearance that when met by his friends at the station they failed to recognise him.



## CHAPTER V.

### REMARKABLE SÉANCES AT MALVERN.



R. EGLINTON'S stay at Malvern under the hospitable roof of Dr. and Mrs. Nichols marks a new departure and distinct advance in the character and quality of his mediumship. In their pleasant home on the hills, and under their skilful treatment, he soon recovered his usual health and strength. Then commenced a series of most remarkable manifestations. The events of this period have been so carefully and fully recorded by Dr. and Mrs. Nichols—both trained observers—that I prefer their fresh unvarnished account to any second-hand summary that I might write, and, therefore, give the narrative in their own words. It appeared in a series of letters in the *Spiritualist*, extending from July to October, 1877.

On July 13th, 1877, Dr. Nichols gives evidence as follows:—"Your readers are aware that on the 2nd of June Willie Eglinton came to Aldwyn Tower, Malvern, very ill. He was so much changed by his illness, that when I met him at the Paddington station, I did not know him till he spoke to me. For two or three months he had not been able to sit for any manifestations. In the last week of June he had so far recovered, that we had some short but very satisfactory *séances*, though the power was soon exhausted. On July 1st we had a *séance* under strict test conditions, some account of which, I think, may be of interest. At our short *séances* the voice of 'Joey' had been firm, distinct, and loud, and there was very acute intelligence. To prove that the voice was not that of the medium, Mrs. Nichols mixed some dark wine with water, and Willie, though in deep trance, filled his mouth full of this liquid. I turned off the light, and 'Joey' instantly spoke in the best voice. I lighted the gas and the sleeping medium ejected the large mouthful of wine and water into a basin. I then covered Willie's lips with gummed paper, which I made adhere tightly to both lips. The voice came firm and full the moment the light was turned out. Quickly turning up the gas, I found the paper quite fast, and so dried that it was difficult to remove it. After this we had some slate-writing in the usual way. These experiments were made in a small room, the door locked, and no one present but Mrs. Nichols and myself. The next day we added another witness, a young officer of the English army. We four sat round a small table in the light. A large musical box was placed under the table. Mrs. Nichols secured Willie's feet, and all our feet were in contact. Mrs. Nichols held Willie's right hand, and Lieutenant I— held his left, and all our hands were joined. With feet and hands thus secured, the musical box under the table was wound up, and played, and stopped, and played again at our

request. Any number of notes were struck that we asked for. First three notes, then two, and so on, were struck as we requested.

"Next day we sat again. The voice of 'Joey' was heard firm and full as we turned off the light. It was simultaneous with the darkness. After a little conversation we were allowed a faint light. Mrs. Nichols held both Willie's hands in her right hand; all the other hands were joined. In this position, a hand appeared near to Willie, and went over to Lieutenant I——, and touched him in many places; the musical box was opened, and a large slate was brought from a distant part of the room, and thrown heavily upon the table, by the spirit hand.

"When the musical box was being played, and stopped, as we requested, Mrs. Nichols was anxious to know how it was done. I suggested that 'Joey' stopped it, as one of us might have done, with his finger. 'Joey' said that on this occasion he did so; but he said that when the power was full, it was stopped by a wave of a force under his control, and could be done as well when the box was shut as when open. We have now seen various test phenomena. In addition to the above, in a brilliant light, and in the presence of another competent witness, we have had slate-writing in the usual way, and writing done under the table-cover upon the table. This writing was in Greek, Italian, and French. Of these the medium knows only a little school French. Hands have been formed in our sight, when all our hands have been joined, and we have had gentle taps and hard blows from them. 'Joey' has played a good deal on a mouth organ, and the music is very fine, and would be creditable to any performer on this little instrument. Though Willie Eglinton's health is not yet restored, he is much better, and in a reasonable time we may hope to see him well. As it is, the manifestations could hardly be more satisfactory, though the *séances* are necessarily short. Mrs. Nichols is making careful records, and from time to time Willie's friends shall hear of his progress in health, and of the resulting phenomena. The pure air of Malvern seems to be as favourable to producing the phenomena, as it is to the health of invalids. The very genial character of those who have taken part in the *séances*, their fairness, and freedom from theories and preconceived opinions, and their obedience to the directions given by the spirits, all have conduced, we are told by 'Joey,' to our having the most satisfactory results. The tests we have used, the character of the phenomena, and the nature of the communications have, I believe, perfectly satisfied all the six persons who have attended these *séances* of the perfect good faith of the medium, and the verity and importance of the manifestations."

Mrs. Nichols continues the narrative in the following letter published in the *Spiritualist* :—

"The first materialisation *séance* that I ever attended was held in Malvern, with Willie Eglinton as medium. A cabinet was improvised by hanging two shawls before a window recess. Behind these Willie sat in an arm-chair. We had the light of one candle, shaded a little by Dr. Nichols' hand. Our number was seven, including the medium—Dr. Nichols, Mrs. Nichols, and four of our students, the eldest of whom was fifty-three, and the youngest twenty-five. All seemed to possess the true requisites for honest and careful inquiry. Our relation to each other was especially harmonious.

"The first person who appeared was an infant, apparently about two years old. The curtains formed from the shawls were apart, and the child stood in front of Willie, and very near him. This form soon disappeared, and another came and walked firmly before the curtains, which were now closed. This was a young Indian girl, who seemed about thirteen years old; she is called 'Daisy,' and is as well-known to Willie Eglinton and his friends as 'Joey' and

'Ernest.' I said, 'I wish she would come to me.' I was sitting on a sofa, a little removed from the wall. She came to the back of the sofa, and stood there, a profusion of white drapery falling around her. She took my hand and audibly kissed it; the hand was warm and soft; she said in a low, but distinct voice, 'I love you. I love the hand that gives.'

"Her face was broad, and her features were those of the Red Indian of my country, many of whom I have seen. The drapery had a hard feeling, though it was in appearance diaphanous muslin; I felt it as distinctly as possible. When Daisy disappeared, we were requested to extinguish the light. We did so, and soon we saw the head of a man, lighted up by a lamp, held under the chin; we saw nothing of the form, except the head, and a rather long, grey beard. The head came close to my face, and the dark eyes looked steadily into mine. I was awed and distressed by a sight so strange, and I begged the person to go away from me. The head went to a lady on the other side of the room, and kissed her forehead; she said it belonged to her husband, who had been four years deceased. After this we were again allowed our candle; it lighted the room pretty well. Presently the head appeared again on a solid-seeming form. The man was clothed in close-fitting white trousers and jacket, with no drapery; he went to a centre table and moved it forward, as if to show that he could do so, and he remained standing with his hands upon it. His wife sat on one side of the room, and I on the other. He again came to me and looked into my eyes, with his face very near to mine; his eyes seemed to pierce me. I begged him to go away. He went over to his wife at my request, and again kissed her. After some minutes he went to the cabinet, put aside the curtains, entered, and we saw him no more.

"A day or two after this *séance* I was in Willie's room, when I heard raps on the furniture. I put my hand on a small table near Willie, on which he laid his hand. The raps called for the alphabet, and I was told that Dr. J. B. Ferguson wished to hold a *séance* with Willie and me, when he would materialise. In his earth-life he was our very dear and intimate friend. We arranged a *séance* as before, with two shawls for a cabinet opening as curtains.

"I had said, after the first *séance*, that I wished to see the medium and one of the forms together. It was daytime, and we excluded the light, so that the room was pretty dark; we could see forms distinctly, but not features. Soon a tall man appeared. One of the ladies who sat beside me said she thought it was her husband, who was three inches over six feet in height in his lifetime. She had never seen materialisations, and the dim light made her uncertain of the identity, though the form was like. On the expression of her doubt, the form crossed the room to a front window; he raised the curtain, and let the light of day fall full upon him; the wife recognised him perfectly, and we were all entirely satisfied. After thus showing himself, and bowing gracefully several times, he stood in front of us, and slowly dematerialised, till there remained about twelve inches above his feet; this seemed to snap out at once, and all was gone.

"We were now allowed light enough to see the forms well. There was a heavy centre table and easy chair before the sofa on which I sat, between two ladies. My friend, Dr. Ferguson, now appeared, in exactly his own form and manner—a tall, broad-chested man, very erect and quick, and forcible in movement. He took up a large musical box, wound it up, and laid it down heavily; he then moved the very heavy table away from before the



sofa, and drew a heavy arm-chair up in front of me. He sat down in it, so near that he almost touched me. Every movement was in his own old manner. He has been in the spirit world six years. He took my hand, but I felt sure he could not speak. He was the dear friend of our daughter, who passed away nearly twelve years since, when he was in this country with the Davenport Brothers and Mr. Fay.

"I said, 'Dr. Ferguson, is Willie here?'" (our daughter's name was Wilhelmina, but we always called her Willie). He rose, and went towards the cabinet, rapped three times, and disappeared. Our daughter came forward from the place where he disappeared, a slight girl clothed in white, her golden hair flowing over her shoulders. She crossed the room, came close to me, and knelt before me; she took my hand, and audibly kissed it. She remained a little time kneeling, then rose, and went towards the cabinet and disappeared.

"'Joey,' now came, and took a musical box and wound it up; he made it go, and stop, at the word of command. He talked volubly; he put the musical box in my lap, and kissed the top of my head; he passed from one to another, with cheerful words for all. After a time the power became less, from the swinging open of the curtains of the improvised cabinet. 'Joey' said, 'I want a pin.' He looked about the room, and found a box of pins on the mantel-shelf; he took one, remarking that he might not have power to pin the shawls together; he, however, succeeded, still holding the box of pins in his hand. 'I must put this back again,' he said; 'a place for everything, and everything in its place. I like to see things tidy.' He crossed the room, and laid the pin-box on the mantel-shelf. He then disappeared, and the sonorous voice of 'Ernest' was heard saying, 'Mrs. Nichols, you said you would like to see a form and our medium at the same time.' 'I did say so,' I replied, 'but I have seen enough not to need such a test.' 'But we wish to give it,' said 'Ernest.' After a brief interval the medium came from behind the curtains, and stood before us, with a slight girl form beside him, that we were told was the young Indian girl 'Daisy.' This was the last manifestation of the evening."

The next two letters are by Dr. Nichols:—

"As the health of Willie Eglinton improves, the 'power' for manifestations seems to increase. But, until his health is firmly established, his 'guides' firmly refuse to enlarge the circle, and rarely admit any one outside our family, even of the inmates of Aldwyn Tower, without due probation and preparation. 'Joey' is peremptory. He watches over the diet, regimen, treatment, morals, and manners of those under his charge with fidelity and discretion.

"All our *séances* are under test conditions. They are held in a small upper room in my own house, with its one door locked, and its one window, thirty feet from the ground, fastened. The number of persons present never exceeds six, all of whom I know intimately. I know pretty accurately what can be done by sleight of hand, ventriloquism, 'palmistry or otherwise.'

"It is clear that darkness is not dark to 'Joey.' To prove this, he proposed that I should draw something on paper for him to cut out. I drew on a small piece of paper an obelisk on its pedestal, and wrote on it, 'Sacred to the Memory of "Joey,"' and placed it, with a pair of scissors, on the mantelpiece. While all hands were joined, we heard him by the fire-place cutting with the scissors. He said, 'There, I have partly cut out my monument; I will finish it some other time.' In the perfect darkness he had followed the outline about







two-thirds of the way. It was left on the mantelpiece. Last night he said, 'Now, doctor, I will finish my monument.' 'But there are no scissors in the room,' said some one. 'Never mind,' said 'Joey.' 'I will find a pair.' After a few moments I heard the clicking of scissors; then he came, and after pressing my hand two or three times with his fingers, he put the little paper, and a large pair of scissors, into my hand. When we got a light I found the whole outline neatly cut out; the pieces of paper cut off were lying on the carpet four feet in front of my chair, and the scissors were a pair kept in a box in a bedroom on the same floor. I cannot absolutely affirm that the scissors were not in the room; but there is no doubt that the cutting out of the monument was done in perfect darkness, for I had seen it on the mantelpiece partly done, just before the light was extinguished. It is certain also that the paper and scissors had been placed in my hand.

"The story of the ring is more satisfactory in one way than that of the monument. Mrs. Nichols has among her keepsakes a large gold ring in which is set a red cross, about half an inch long. This ring was placed in a little close-fitting drawer in her secretaire, which drawer I carefully fastened with gummed paper, on which Mrs. Nichols had written her name for identification. Could 'Joey' take the ring from the drawer and bring it to us in the little locked room upstairs? We asked him at two *séances*, but he was evasive, saying only that he would attend to it. About this time Willie Eglinton made a flying visit to his father, near London, and took the opportunity to call upon Mr. Fletcher, at 14, Southampton Row. Naturally a *séance* was proposed, and Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, their son, and Eglinton, sat round a table holding hands in the dark. The voice of 'Joey' said, 'I can only stay a moment, but I want to give you a manifestation,' and Mrs. Nichols' ring was dropped on the table, and Willie Eglinton put it in his pocket and brought it back to Malvern. There we carefully examined the fastening of the little drawer in which the ring had been placed. It was intact, firm, and had not been tampered with. I tore it off, and opened the drawer. No ring was there. *The* ring, which probably could not be matched in England, was on the owner's finger, but in the drawer was a wooden card-box holding a pack of cards, for which we had hunted over the house. Had the drawer been locked one might suspect some trick. Fastened as it was I have no doubt.

"And I have no doubt of the perfect genuineness of a manifestation we had a few days ago, involving the same kind of power over matter. Five persons, including the medium, were sitting in the dark, holding each other's hands. While the hands were so held 'Joey' was heard talking, playing the mouth-organ (which requires a hand), opening and winding-up the music-box, and making it stop and go on at command. Then he said imperatively to the lady holding the right hand of the medium, 'Hold his hand firmly now; all hold tight; don't let go for a moment. I will try to give you a manifestation.' In a moment more he said—'Now, Dr. Nichols, give us a light. All the rest keep hold of hands.'

"I lighted the gas. Mrs. Wilkes was firmly holding the right hand of the medium with her left; both were standing, and the cane-bottomed chair of the medium was hanging on Mrs. Wilkes's left arm, halfway between her wrist and elbow, hanging by the usual opening in the back of such chairs, like a needle on its thread.

"It may be difficult to believe such a fact upon *any* testimony; but, after what I have seen

for twenty years, and with my knowledge of the witness, I cannot doubt her perfect good faith. I shall, however, try and get this manifestation under absolute test conditions.

"The difficulties of mediumship have some illustration even in our small circles here. I believe there is never any hitch at the Egyptian Hall, but the most successful mediums I have known have been liable to frequent disappointments and failures, and those under inconceivable circumstances had they been impostors. The other night we had the trial of two sceptics. Both came from a distance; both were honest inquirers after the truth. One was a pupil of Robert Owen, but he did not follow him into Spiritualism. The other is a disciple of Mr. Bradlaugh. The Owenite had been somewhat shaken in his views of matter by taking his own book-slate to Dr. Slade, and having it written in under his eyes, we heard, while he was touched, and pushed, with his chair, back from the table, by some force invisible. At our *séance* the room and the medium were examined by the sceptics. When we were sitting with all hands joined we had the tests of our musical boxes being wound up and moving about us like winged creatures, being stopped, set going, and made to play fast or slow at request. Later, in a good light, a spirit form, fully draped in white, came before the curtain *eleven seconds* after the medium went behind it. Another tall and fully draped form dematerialised before our eyes, gradually shrinking from a good six feet high—a head taller than the medium—to a pigmy size, then melting into the air, leaving only a mass of gauzy drapery, which was held up and shaken before us to show that the form had vanished. The door and window were securely fastened. There were no such forms, and no such draperies, in the room. There were no means for producing optical illusions. Our two sceptics were very much puzzled, but they were not convinced. It is not easy to get out of the habits of a lifetime. And the contest of their unbelief, in spite of their good intentions, made the *séance* painful and very exhausting to the medium, and also, it seemed, difficult and aggravating to the controlling spirits. My Owenite friend returned to London next morning. He has thought it over, and is coming again. The lady who admires Mr. Bradlaugh sat in another *séance*, and got such close, tangible, personal evidence as left no room for doubt. Whilst her own hands perfectly isolated the works of a musical box, it stopped, went on, and answered her questions, and she was puzzled; but when, all hands being firmly held, her hands and face were touched by 'Joey,' who was talking with her all the while, and arguing every point of the previous *séance*, pointing out test after test, and when, finally, her cap was taken off and put on the head of a lady opposite, and that lady's put upon her head, and both nicely adjusted, what could she do but surrender? I have mentioned the lights brought by the spirits to enable us to see them in the dark *séances*. We had the opportunity a few nights ago to examine these very closely. First, at a distance of ten feet, crosses of intense white light, like starlight, were shown. The forms then came quite near, holding the crosses of light, so that they illuminated their faces, but were not visible to us. Then 'Joey' brought one and held it within a foot of my face. It was on a thick, brownish card, about the size of a common playing-card, the cross of light occupying three-fourths of the surface. The light-giving matter was even with the dark portion, and the whole surface, dark and light, was a little rough, like blotting paper. There was no flame, as with phosphorus, and no odour. It was held and rubbed against my cheek, and also before the eyes and against the cheeks of every person present, who described

the feeling as velvety. The light appeared and disappeared before our eyes, at the command of the very intelligent individual who brought it for our examination. Later 'Joey,' and his confederate 'Ernest,' brought quite close, but not near enough to touch us, masses of light of a globular form, flattened globes, shining all through the mass, which was enveloped in folds of gauzy drapery. 'Joey' brushed the folds aside with his fingers to show us the shining substance. It was as if a gem—a turquoise or a pearl—three inches across, had become incandescent, full of light, so as to illuminate about a yard round. This light also we saw come and go. 'Joey' allowed his larger light to go almost dark, and then revived it to its former brilliancy. I need hardly say that all the chemists of Europe could not, under these conditions, produce such phenomena, if, indeed, they could under any; and yet our Tyndalls and Huxleys think them quite unworthy of their notice, and our Lankestons prosecute at Bow Street for 'palmistry or otherwise.' In respect to the gold ring taken from a fastened drawer at Malvern, and dropped upon a table in London, I can only say that I carefully examined the fastening, and that 'to the best of my knowledge and belief' it had not been tampered with. But I do not expect my testimony will convince any one of the reality of what they consider impossible. For that, they must have the evidence of their own senses, and for many, even that is not sufficient."

The last letter was from the pen of Mrs. Nichols, and was published in the *Spiritualist* for October 26th:—

"On the 14th instant I sat with our circle, after an interval of some weeks, as I had been travelling in one direction, and Mr. Eglinton in another. I have been told that his *séances* in Wales and elsewhere were very remarkable, but I only write of what I see.

"'Joey' appeared as soon as we were settled. He seemed very glad to see me, and patted my head kindly, talking familiarly of our separation and of other matters. Twelve years ago I was told, in a *séance*, that the spirits would be able in the future to materialise gold and gems. Last summer 'Joey' told us the same. There were five of us in circle, besides the medium. 'Joey' said—'Remember that I now tell you we shall by-and-by be able to materialise gems and gold. Do not mention what I say, but remember.' At a subsequent *séance* I spoke to him of what he had said, and he replied—'Forbidden subject, mamma.'

"At our *séance* on the 14th instant 'Joey' said—'I am now going to keep my promise to materialise gold and gems.' He played his musical instrument and conversed with us nearly an hour, when 'Ernest' greeted us and asked that the medium should rest. We sat with Willie outside the curtain, with the light of our lamp. Willie seemed partially entranced, but sometimes spoke. He sat near the black curtains that are suspended before the sofa, on which he reclines, and which form the only cabinet we ever use. A tall female form, robed in white, put aside the curtains, and Willie seemed drawn to her. She did not take hold of him, but he moved to her, just as a somnambulist follows the mesmeriser. For a little time they stood together before us, in a good light; then Willie lay down on the sofa, and she stood alone. Soon she retired; the curtains fell together; but quickly the one-armed spirit, 'Abd-ū-lah,' came forward. We were directed to have more light. We turned on the gas, so as to have sufficient. He came very near, and allowed us to examine his jewels, which were amazingly rich. In my earnestness to see, and examine closely,

I pressed against his solid form, and said—'I beg your pardon,' as I would say to any gentleman. Twice I pressed against the form of this man. He gave each one of us the privilege of examining his jewels, one in crescent form, the other like a star. He wears diamonds, emeralds, and rubies. After him came 'Joey,' in a very becoming dress, which we had never seen him wear. He had a kind of hood upon his head. He sat at table, and asked for paper and a book, which were given him.

"For some time he moved his hands as if gathering something from the atmosphere, just as when he makes muslin. After some minutes he dropped on the table a massive diamond ring. He said, 'Now you may all take the ring, and you may put it on, and hold it while you can count twelve.' Miss M—— took it, and held it under the gaslight. It was a heavy gold ring, with a diamond that appeared much like one worn by a friend of mine worth £1,000. 'Joey' said the value of this was 900 guineas. Mr. W—— examined it as we had done. He now made, as it seemed, and as he said, from the atmosphere, two diamonds, very clear and beautiful, about the size of half a large pea. He gave them into our hands on a piece of paper. We examined them, as we had the others. He laid the ring and diamonds on the table before him, and there next appeared a wonderful cluster of rubies, set with a large ruby about half-an-inch in diameter in the centre. These we all handled as we had the others. Last there came a cross, about four inches in length, having twenty magnificent diamonds set in it; this we held in our hands, and examined as closely as we liked. 'Joey' took them all, and put them in paper and jingled them. He said, 'I might leave the ring as a keepsake for Willie, but it might make him selfish.'

"He told us that the market value of the gems was £25,000. He remarked, 'I could make Willie the richest man in the world; but it would not be the best thing, and might be the worst.' He now took the jewels in front of him, and seemed to dissipate them, as one might melt hailstones in heat, until they entirely disappeared. He talked all the evening, and some of his remarks went to my heart. I was begging, as I often have, for a piece of drapery that I could keep, and I said almost petulantly, 'You do nothing special for me.' 'Mamma, mamma!' cried 'Joey,' 'for what did "Ernest" come to you yesterday?' The fact was that the day before 'Ernest' had, unasked and unsought, given me information and counsel in a matter, the importance of which could not be expressed; as we say, it was emphatically a case of life or death. I was rebuked, as I deserved, and I said to 'Joey,' 'What "Ernest" told me yesterday was worth infinitely more than all the gold and gems in the world.' 'What do I come for?' said 'Joey,' and the thought pierced me that he had watched over our children and friends, that he had been the means of saving life, and of preparing souls for a holier and happier existence hereafter. How could I value gold and gems, or a paltry piece of drapery, when eternal interests are at stake? How poor we should be if our heavenly Father did not pity our weakness and folly, and send ministering spirits to help us. One feature of this *séance* was, that at the close 'Joey' brought Willie forward, and they stood side by side, Willie in deep trance. 'Joey' said, 'Now you see me with Willie.' We all responded that we saw both him and Willie. 'Well, perhaps you are all biologised,' said he. Many persons think that the medium personates the spirits dressed in muslin made in Manchester, and imported into the *séance*-room by occult or usual means. A few think the muslin is of spirit manufacture, but that there is no materialisation of forms. Four times I

have seen a white-robed form standing by Willie Eglinton. I have seen 'Joey' make yards of muslin. I have seen him standing beside his medium, and I have heard him speak in a brilliantly lighted room, when Mr. Eglinton was with us, and no more entranced than the rest of us. I have seen hands, and arms, and the face only, and I have seen full forms appear and disappear. I have seen a tall man appear, and after many minutes with us, and in a good light, I have seen him gradually sink down and become invisible, all but a few inches of form, and then that seemed to snap out. I have seen a full form dissolve, and leave the drapery suspended as if held up by a hand; and I have seen the form shrink away to nothing visible, and leave the garments lying along the floor. These not long after disappeared. All this and much more I have seen, and except for their use in converting people to a belief in immortality, all physical phenomena are to me insignificant as time compared to eternity, beside the spiritual truths given us from the invisible world, and which involve the everlasting destiny of the human soul."

These narratives need no addition of mine: they speak for themselves. Startling as were the facts recorded, they were, however, only the precursors of even more wonderful phenomena, and a gradual development may be traced in the strength and quality of Mr. Eglinton's mediumship.

Before closing this chapter, however, I must relate a somewhat amusing incident which Mr. Eglinton has told in reference to his sojourn at Malvern. I give it in his own words:—"During the Slade trial a most amusing incident occurred on my journey from Malvern to London. I was reading a comic journal in which poor Slade was cartooned. My only fellow-traveller offered to exchange his paper for mine, which I did. Upon seeing the subject of the cartoon, he turned to me and said, 'Have you ever seen anything of this humbug?' referring to Spiritualism generally. 'Yes,' replied I, 'a good deal.' He said, 'There is a man by the name of Eglinton at Malvern, who is creating a great stir in the town by his *séances*.' I asked if he had ever seen him. 'Yes,' he replied, 'I have often been at his *séances*, and he is as deserving of punishment as this man' (referring to Slade). I asked what Eglinton was like. 'Well,' said he, 'he is a man about forty years of age, very clever, and acquainted with all the subtle powers latent in man.' I knew of course that the man was lying, for not only did he not know me, but I had never met him at any of my sittings. I thereupon took a keen delight in drawing him out to the fullest extent; and we had an extremely pleasant journey up to town. When we got to Paddington he asked to exchange cards; and as I drove off, amidst his protestations of friendship and his desire to meet me again, I caught sight of his face as he read my name! I afterwards met him on more than one occasion in Malvern, but he fled from me as though he had a mad dog behind him. Such is the ignorance of some who aspire to act as judges!"





## CHAPTER VI.

### *PRIVATE SÉANCES AND SPIRITUALISM AT HOME.*



R. EGLINTON now found himself fully occupied. He received invitations from various parts of the country. These, as far as his London appointments would allow, he readily responded to, and in due course made another visit to Cardiff, proceeding from thence to Worcester on his way back to London. At the first-named place he had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Rees Lewis, who cordially invited him to attend a *séance* with Mr. George Spriggs, an excellent medium, who has since made such a reputation for himself at the Antipodes.

On his return to London he gave a *séance* (*Spiritualist*, December 7th, 1877) to Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace, the distinguished naturalist, Mr. William Tebb, and Mr. W. W. Clark, of Dorking, all of whom were very much pleased with what they saw, and united in describing the *séance* as perfectly satisfactory. Mrs. Anna Wilkes, the friend of Mrs. Nichols, also supplemented her previous testimony to the phenomena by another account of equally wonderful marvels she had seen.

A good case of direct writing is related as having occurred about this time by Dr. Nichols, who had removed from Malvern to 32, Fopstone Road, Earl's Court, S.W. It occurred on the 9th September. "At a *séance* last night, in the presence of three other persons and Mr. Eglinton, the materialised form of 'Joey' made in our presence about twenty yards of white drapery, which certainly never saw a Manchester loom. The matter of which it was formed was visibly gathered from the atmosphere, and later melted into invisible air. I have seen at least a hundred yards so manufactured. Then 'Joey' said, 'Dr. Nichols, I have got into a great row about that Greek, which you transcribed imperfectly.' He then selected two small slates from a pile of new ones lying on the mantel-shelf, and handed them to me to be cleaned. I rubbed them both thoroughly, and so did each of the three others—one of them using a wet cloth. 'Joey' then borrowed my knife, whittled a piece of slate pencil, bit off a piece of it, and placed it between the two slates, and then carefully wrapped up both in a piece of newspaper. This was all done in the centre of the small room, quite away from the medium, and in plain sight of all. Then, at his request, I moved my chair forward, and sitting facing 'Joey' held one corner of the slates with my left hand, as he did the other corner with his right, and I laid the fingers of my right hand on the fingers of his left. Instantly we heard the sound of writing on the slates. In a few moments three little raps told us the writing was done, and I pushed



back into my place, holding the slates. At the end of the *séance* we found on one slate a message for Mrs. Nichols from the late Dr. Ferguson, signed with his name in his well-known handwriting, and on the other, in a very neat and delicate hand, each letter almost separately written, the following:—‘The message in Greek has been imperfectly transcribed by you. Translate as written below, and you have the proverb in its correct and original meaning:—

“ ‘ Όταν δὲ λαίμων ἀνδρὶ ποροῦνῃ κακὰ τὸν νοῦν ἔβλαψε πρῶτον.’ ”

The fifth word is underscored, as you will see on the slate I leave for your inspection.’ Now, one fact, for what it is worth, is as good as a million. Here is a Greek sentence twice written under absolute test conditions, in the presence of several persons, by some invisible intelligence, between two slates closely bound and firmly held together. The medium was not near the slates. They were prepared by a human form, which was not that of any one of the five persons in the room. Not one of those five persons could write the shortest sentence in Greek. Not one of them knew that there was such a proverb in that language.”

A remarkably successful *séance* given to the Brixton Psychological Society, reported by Mr. W. Newton, F.R.G.S., in the *Spiritualist* for December 21st, and a flying visit to Brighton, for sittings in the house of a well-known lady of title resident there, completed this year’s work.

On New Year’s Eve, 1878, a *séance* of a most touching and sacred character was held at the house of Mrs. Macdougall Gregory, of 21, Green Street, Grosvenor Square. This *séance*, when described to Mr. Eglinton, was regarded by him as a most unusual one; but I have reason to believe that, given the same harmonious and sympathetic conditions as prevailed at that time, such sweet communion with the dead would become an every-day occurrence. I have myself had like experiences; and under the seal of confidence I have been told of similar instances, most of them of such a private and sacred nature as to preclude any account reaching the outside world. With many of these even Mr. Eglinton himself is unacquainted. These inner experiences, occurring exclusively in private families, constitute the (to neophytes) almost inexplicable strength of Spiritualism. It is the secret of the tenacity with which, in spite of fraudulent practices, and so-called “exposures,” those who have penetrated the intricacies and mysteries of the outer fringe of the subject, hold fast to their belief in the reality of spirit communion.

The events of this *séance* on New Year’s Eve will give a faint idea of what is possible under the highest and best conditions, the result of long continued experiment, and of friendship, trust, and appreciation on the part of those engaging in spirit communion.

There were eight or ten persons present. The manifestations at the preliminary dark *séance* were more powerful and instructive than usual. Afterwards the medium took his seat in the back drawing-room, being separated from the sitters by a heavy curtain, which was afterwards drawn aside. The gas was turned on until the room was pervaded by a dim religious light, when slowly the curtains opened, and from the cabinet came one, dearly loved, long known, and always treasured by the hostess—Lady G——, widow of the late Field-Marshal Sir W. G——. The form was no dummy dressed up to represent life, or Mr. Eglinton transfigured, which will be best evidenced by Mrs. Gregory’s own words:—“I have no hesitation in giving my testimony to the wonderful power and satisfactory nature of your mediumship. Indeed, I, personally, have never seen it surpassed. With many others, I have scrutinised

it carefully when it occurred in my house, and we have all been satisfied with its truth. Seven different times my friend Lady G— appeared to me fully materialised, when you were lying apparently in a trance on my sofa in the drawing-room, visible to five or six of my friends who were with me at the time."

What could be more beautifully impressive than this midnight scene on New Year's night? The spirit, after requesting cake and wine to be brought, tasted the cake, touched the wine, and then handed it to each of the sitters, that they might partake of this holy communion with her. After this those present were requested to kneel, and, in their midst, the spirit with bended knee poured forth a solemn invocation, asking Almighty God to bless each friend present, and to make the New Year one long to be remembered.

When Mr. Eglinton recovered consciousness, he was persuaded that the *séance* had been a failure, so rested and peaceful was his condition, and not until he saw the tearful eyes of his friends, and received their grateful thanks, did he fully realise this memorable event.

For some time the question had been discussed, as to whether "spirits" had the power to penetrate a locked and sealed box, and the Research Committee of the British National Association of Spiritualists, composed of professional and other gentlemen, under the presidency of Mr. Desmond Fitzgerald, had been sitting patiently at many *séances* for the development of the power to produce manifestations inside a nailed box placed near the medium. The conditions are thus described in the *Spiritualist* of January 18th, 1878 :—"The box is nailed to the inside of a cabinet, and has no aperture whatever inside the cabinet. It has an opening outside, in full view of the observers, but a board is screwed over that opening. Inside the box is an ordinary electro-magnet with its armature, and the depression of the armature completes an electrical circuit, and causes an electrical bell to ring in the usual way. The object to be achieved was, that the spirits should pass power enough through the wood to depress the armature. The connecting wires to the electric apparatus are all outside the cabinet, and in full view. Inside the cabinet with the medium, there is nothing but the smooth wooden outside of the box."

Under these conditions the bell was made to ring at will at two *séances*, held by Mr. Eglinton with the Research Committee. More force than necessary to depress the armature was used inside the box, for a spring was strained and an electro-magnet disarranged. As the recorder remarks, this was a valuable manifestation. Although not new, yet the conditions under which it was observed were exceptionally good. At this time a series of *séances* was given to the Psychological Society, of which the late Serjeant Cox was president. The results were, however, poor.

In the course of a *séance* held at Mrs. Macdougall Gregory's, in March, 1878, Mr. Eglinton was, at the request of Serjeant Cox, who was present, under strictly test conditions, carried out of a closed room into one on the floor above. This case of levitation is paralleled by others in the history of modern Spiritualism as well as by ancient church legends. On the occasion in question all present were satisfied that the phenomenon was genuine.

One of the Universities was the next stronghold to be stormed, and in March, 1878, Mr. Eglinton went to Cambridge, and had several really fine *séances*, which were attended by a great many undergraduates. This, therefore, seems a fitting place to introduce the following evidence of Mr. J. W. Campbell, then student of Jesus College.

"A *séance* was held on Thursday evening, March 21st. There were in all eleven persons present, of whom eight were undergraduates. Mr. Eglinton was the medium. An electric bell was fixed on the wall, a yard from the medium's seat, one wire being connected with the bell; the other hung over a nail fixed in the wall within about a foot of the bell itself. After sitting for half an hour or more, faint raps were heard on the floor, and places were arranged by 'Joey,' the medium being tightly held by two undergraduates, one on either hand, they also resting their knees against his. The light was then extinguished, and in about a quarter of an hour the medium was controlled by 'Daisy,' who told us to be very careful about conditions, especially the holding of hands, and presently 'Joey' greeted us in his pleasant little voice. He then rang the electric bell violently, took it up and carried it about for a few seconds in the air, ringing it at intervals, thus showing that he held bell and connecting wire in his two hands. He then laid it on the table, tapped out a little tune with it, still ringing the bell, and answered several questions upon it. Afterwards, he took it off the table, and laid it on the mantelpiece, below the nail from which he had at first taken it. A very heavy musical box was next wound up, and placed on the heads of several sitters; bells, tambourines, and tubes moved about freely, and spirit hands were felt by several of the sitters, 'Joey' out of gratitude to the one who had brought the bell, patting him on the head, hands, and knees, again and again. Both 'Joey' and 'Ernest' spoke to us several times. Then a heavy sofa-cushion was taken from the corner of the room behind the medium, and laid across the table on the hands of those sitting opposite; the fender was taken out and placed against the table, between two of the sitters; the sofa was turned over, four chairs were taken away, including the medium's, and one was laid on the top of the sofa-cushion on the table. The sitting was most convincing and satisfactory to those present. It ended shortly after ten, the actual manifestations having lasted under forty minutes." The subjoined attestation accompanied this letter:—"We, the undersigned, do solemnly, on our word of honour, declare that the hands of Mr. Eglinton were firmly held by us, and that our knees rested against his during the whole of the *séance* held at 10, King's Parade, on Thursday, March 21st, 1878.—A. HUNTER, Jesus College; A. KEIGHTLEY, Pembroke College."

On the night of April 7th, 1878, at the house of Dr. Nichols, 32, Fopstone Road, Earl's Court, in the presence of six persons, Professor Zöllner's experiment of tying knots in a cord, the ends of which were tied and sealed together, was repeated. Dr. Nichols still possesses the knotted cord, of which I give an illustration. What occurred is thus described by Dr. Nichols:—"I then cut four yards of common brown twine, such as I use for large book packets, from a fresh ball. I examined it carefully, tied the two ends together by a single knot (which included both ends of the twine), then passed each end through a hole in one of my visiting cards, tied another square knot, and firmly sealed this knot to the card. I then asked a gentleman to seal it with his signet ring. On the card I also put my signature and the date. Six persons sat round a small table (in the daylight); the sealed card was placed upon the centre of the table, and the fingers of each person present placed upon it, while the loop hung down upon the floor. This position was maintained for a minute, when raps were heard, and I examined the string. The ends were firmly fastened, and sealed as before, and five single knots were tied upon it about a foot apart—on the single endless string, observe I the perfect fastenings of which had never left my sight where they

now are." Dr. Nichols justly remarks:—"It is certain that no mortal man could have tied these knots—equally certain that all the philosophers and all the 'magicians' of Europe cannot now untie them under the same conditions. Here is a fact which can be proven in any court of justice, and for which any conceivable number of dimensions of space cannot account."

On April 17th occurred a phenomenon which, viewed as a contribution to the evidence for spirit identity, is valuable. It was observed and recorded by Mr. J. F. Collingwood, formerly Secretary of the Anthropological Institute:—"At a members' *séance* held at the rooms of the British National Association of Spiritualists, on April 17th, 1877, Mr. Eglinton was in the cabinet free, and ten persons formed the circle, among whom were Florence Marryat, Mr. Cornelius Pearson, Mrs. L—, and myself. After the appearance of two or three

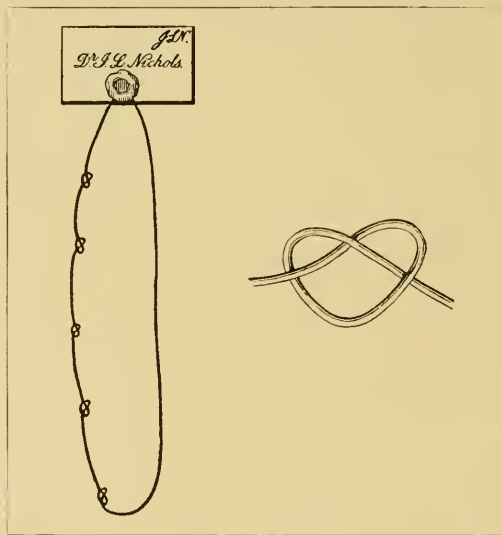


FIG. 1.—Knots tied on an Endless Cord.

forms that usually manifest through this medium, a face which was quite new to all the sitters was seen at the aperture, and drew forth spontaneous remarks from the circle generally to that effect. The face presented itself, full, to the middle of the circle where Mr. Collingwood was seated. He noticed the short hair on the head, the stubby beard and short cut moustache, the cadaverous and worn appearance of the features, the sunken eyes; but the face was not recognised then. It gazed for a second or two at Mr. Collingwood, then slowly turned the head to sweep the circle, and the instant that the profile was presented Mr. Collingwood recognised the likeness to a friend, Mr. Hammond, deceased eighteen months previously. At one end of the row of sitters was Mrs. L—, Hammond's sister-in-law. The face retreated immediately it had, apparently, seen Mrs. L—'s, and it re-appeared within half a minute,

drawing aside the curtain at the end of the cabinet nearest to her. A hand was held out, and beckoned with the forefinger in that direction. Some of the sitters said, 'The lady at the end is beckoned.' Mrs. L—— had by that time recognised the face as her brother-in-law, and the motion of the finger as his habitual mode of calling any member of his family. She went up close to the face, and exclaimed, 'You are Hammond.' The head bowed, and the face smiled. The likeness was complete; and when the smile was expressed by the tension of skin over hollow and bony cheeks, the recognition appeared almost absolute. *In life Mr. Hammond had lost his left eye; in this image of the living man the right eye was wanting.* It has been said that I did not recognise a likeness until the profile was presented. I was not then aware that in his last illness Mr. Hammond had his moustache and beard cut very short. That, with the wasted features, prevented an earlier recognition. In profile the features were more pronounced, and were accordingly at once recognised by me. This appearance was the fulfilment of a promise given to Mrs. L—— during Mr. Hammond's last illness, to 'come if it were possible.'

On the 19th April, Mr. Eglinton started on his second visit to the Hague. The *séances*, reported at the time by Mr. A. J. Riko, were eminently successful, and were attended by persons of the highest social rank. There, as almost everywhere, he gave the fullest satisfaction.

As an instance of the estimate in which his mediumship was held at that time, I may here quote an extract from the Fourth Annual Report of the B.N.A.S., issued in May, 1878:— "Turning now to the work of the *Séance* Committee, we find that the inquirers' circles have been continued throughout the year with the desired results; that is to say, under strict test conditions, subject to the scrutiny and expressed approval of the strangers present, and held in a moderate degree of light, certain simple physical manifestations have been produced, generally of the most satisfactory and convincing nature. The medium has been Mr. W. Eglinton, who has always shown the utmost willingness to submit to any test which has been proposed, and has, we believe, in all cases left the impression of his perfect good faith, and of the genuineness of the manifestations produced in his presence, on the mind of all witnesses. These *séances* have been attended by one hundred and thirty-five strangers, besides about the same number of members."

In May, 1878, he received a cordial invitation from Dr. B. T. Hutchinson, of Cape Town, South Africa, to pay him a visit. He had already decided to make a tour of the world, and as this seemed a fitting opportunity to carry out the plan, he accepted Dr. Hutchinson's invitation. Prior to leaving England, he went to Malvern for a short rest, and while there marvellous phenomena occurred, amongst which was the materialisation of spirits in the open air.

The recorder is Mr. A. Hildreth, LL.B., son of the American historian, and some time American Consul at Trieste. I quote his narratives *in extenso*.

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## I.

On June 10th, 1878, at about ten o'clock, p.m., I was sitting with a friend of mine (Mr. Eglinton) and another gentleman, in the drawing-room of Aldwyn Tower, Malvern, the then residence of Dr. and Mrs. Nichols. Raps came in different parts of the room, and the message was spelled out, "Watch and wait." The medium became entranced and walked the room with energy.



We saw in the twilight a white misty appearance accompanying him on the side away from us. "There is a materialisation," said the control, who gave the name of "Dr. Richards;" "we shall try to take the medium into the garden and cause the materialised spirit to go beside him. Follow at a respectful distance, and place your chairs in the middle of the lawn." The voice that spoke to us had the tone and some of the peculiarities of articulation belonging to the medium's natural voice, but there was a distinct quality unfamiliar to us, partly consisting of deliberation, precision, and authority. The spirit doctor now gave the signal for the descent into the garden. "Protect your lungs well," said he; "it is chilly." The medium crossed the room, unfastened one valve of the window, and stepped out upon the verandah. We each took a chair and followed, but were delayed at the window by having to open the other valve to admit the chairs, so that when we reached the verandah, the medium had already descended the stone steps and was in the garden. No form appeared beside him. We placed our chairs on the lawn as directed, while the medium took his seat upon the garden bench; but in a few seconds he came towards us, and, speaking in the now familiar voice of "Dr. Richards," directed us to change our position to a point where our line of vision towards the bench was interrupted by some bushes, which thus would serve instead of a curtain. The medium retraced his steps, and the clear small voice of a spirit known as "Joey" came from the direction of the bench, saying, according to his custom, "Holloa, Arthur!" Then all was silent. We presently heard the medium breathing heavily, and a mass of white drapery, such as is commonly seen at *séances*, emerged from behind one of the bushes to our right. It came further into view, and we distinguished two forms standing side by side, draped to the feet, and with conical caps on their heads. They remained half a minute, and then disappeared. White drapery again protruded, and remained quiet, projecting a little beyond the bush. The medium crossed over without speaking, and stood before us. Placing his fists together in front of him, he separated them laterally with a spasmodic jerk, and, after other movements, turned and walked away, *absorbing* the white drapery as he passed round the bush. This seemed to be an attempt, only partially successful, to show the form and the medium at the same time.

After a short interval, another form appeared on the left. This figure turned its profile, and showed that it was not surrounded by a skirt, but merely held a white gauze apron before it, two dark legs being visible. The form having retired, the medium again came towards us. "I do not think it wise," said the voice of "Dr. Richards," "to continue the materialisations longer; we must have darker nights. Follow the medium." We did so, and returned to the drawing-room. We thanked the spirit for our unexpected pleasure. "The thanks are not due," he answered; "on the other hand, we have to thank you for giving your attention; it was an experiment for our own satisfaction; we have been preparing this *séance* for two days past." He informed us that manifestations required thought, experiment, and perseverance on the part of spirits, and that not merely a few, but myriads, were associated to produce them. They liked to have their labours appreciated. Drapery served to protect the materialised form from the effects of light and of the human eye. He said he could explain the source from which the drapery was obtained, but did not think it wise.

## II.

On another evening, when the medium was seated at the piano in the twilight, the instrument "walked" out from the wall, and hats and other light objects leaped about the room. These



effects were attributed to "Joey." Afterwards the medium became controlled by "Dr. Richards." He said he liked these little conversations, and would answer our questions as well as he could, trammelled as he was by a "human case." He gave an impressive account of his passage into the other world; how, brought up in old orthodox views, he lay on his bed of sickness a prey to horrible anxiety; how, at the moment of his death, he seemed to be passing up through an interminable mist, still suffering mental agony, till the clouds parted, and he saw a group of spirits of exceeding beauty waiting to receive him. He found, however, that these spirits, who seemed to him so fine, were only of the lower order. He passed from sphere to sphere until he reached the fifth, where he now is. The various spheres might be compared to the ages of a man's life, except that a higher grade was reached by voluntary effort, not by mere growth. He said that the motives of spirits in communicating with mortals were mainly of a benevolent nature. They desired to elevate the minds of mankind by assuring them of their future destiny, and instilling into their minds some of the quiet harmony of their own existence; nevertheless, this intercourse largely benefits the spirits themselves, and tends to raise them to a higher sphere. As to human nature, it was substantially the same in the next world as in this, but the sentiment of malevolence, instigating us to inflict pain on others, which plays so large a part in this world, even with the most benevolent, grows weak in the other world, and finally disappears for want of use, because the causes exciting it do not exist to the same extent there as here. It was impossible for the highest spirits to communicate personally with those still in the body. The control spoke on many other subjects, sometimes showing great energy and warmth, at others becoming very ironical, especially when he spoke of our "poverty-stricken world," as he called it, and of our religious squabbles, "when the whole matter lies in a nut-shell."

### III.

On June 16th a twilight *séance* was held in the house. A female figure came from the cabinet. She passed close to the sitters, the drapery making a low incessant rustling. She passed behind one gentleman, placed her hands on his shoulders, and bending down, touched the side of her head affectionately against his. The face was not distinct.

"Joey," now preparing to materialise, talked constantly behind the curtain. Somebody crept up to listen outside the *séance* room. "Joey" gave the door a heavy thump, and told us with glee of other instances when he had thus scared away eavesdroppers. He knew of their approach, not by sight, but by feeling their magnetism, which was different in every person. "Joey" now appeared materialised, seated himself in a chair, and conversed upon spiritual physics. Spirits, he believed, would hereafter attain the power of materialising in full daylight, but they were prevented at present by the mental condition of mankind. If the eyes of the sitters were blindfolded they could even now come in daylight. No arrangement of mirrors for reflecting the spirit, instead of viewing it directly, would answer. If ink or other colouring matter were squirted into the face of a strongly materialised spirit, the marks would afterwards be seen on the medium's face, and would be no test whatever of dishonesty. If a sitter rushed at a materialised spirit and struck it, the magnetism of the former would instantly dissolve the form, which would return to the medium, carrying the blow with it. The medium would suffer as much as though struck directly. "But," said "Joey," and here his tone was unusually fierce, "if anyone should attempt such a thing, I should not scruple,

while the power remained, to snatch up the music-box and maim him before he could injure the medium;" and "Joey" gave the great music-box a swing. "Could a spirit materialise through a cage?" I asked. "I've got a good idea," said "Joey," "a very good idea—an excellent idea. Put the medium in a hen-coop; one of those long ones." In conclusion, he invited me behind the curtain. I felt the medium's head, and took both his hands in mine. They were quivering like leaves. The spirit meanwhile stood beside me, seen by all the sitters.

## IV.

On June 19th a *séance* was held in the garden. Having no hen-coop with which to follow out the suggestion of "Joey," we constructed a cage out of materials at hand. Two wooden frames hinged together were set upon the garden bench in the shape of a gable roof. Stout wire network was stretched over the two frames and spiked to it. [A portion only of this wire network is shown in Fig. 2.] A strong cord, without knot or splice, was wound round and round the frame-work, at each revolution passing through a mesh of the net. Thus every mesh which touched the frame was bound tightly down to it. The two

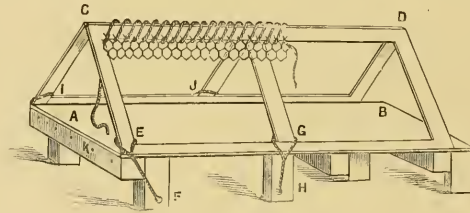


FIG. 2.—A Novel Test.

ends of the cord were finally made to meet on the top of the frame (C), were tied together, and sealed. Over one end of the cage (A) was spread another piece of netting, partly overlapping the first pieces, and bound firmly to the frame in the same manner, the ends of the cord being sealed together near the other seal (C). The other end of the cage was left open for the medium to enter. The contrivance was then fastened firmly to the bench. The test-fastenings, which alone will be described, consisted of four cords passing from the frame on each side (E, G, I, J) to spikes driven into the legs of the bench (as at F, H), and sealed to the wood. The netting which covered the end of the cage (A) was, moreover, nailed to the timber (K), each nail being sealed. Rugs and a pillow being placed in the cage, the medium, clad in his overcoat, crawled in, and the open end was closed by a fourth piece of netting, secured to the frame by another cord, the ends of which were sealed together at D. This netting was not nailed to the bench at B, but could not be raised more than two inches without violence to the wirework.

The modes of escape from this cage were as follows:—1. Break through the netting.  
2. Make an aperture between the netting and the frame:—(a) by untying the sealed knot, unravelling the cord from the meshes, and raising the netting from the spikes; (b) by breaking

the cord, unravelling it, and raising the netting; (c) by untwisting the wire meshes, and thus freeing them from the cord. In doing this, however, the coating of zinc put on in the galvanising process, and which filled the crevices of the twisted wire, must be broken. 3. Lift the cage from the bench:—(a) by breaking some cords; (b) by disturbing the knots sealed to the spikes in the bench-posts. As a last precaution flour was sprinkled on the ground for a considerable distance in front of the cage.

The medium was fastened in at ten o'clock, p.m., and we took our seats as in the first garden *séance*. After a short time a man's form, draped in white, appeared from behind the bushes, and bowed many times. A female figure afterwards approached us from the other side, heavily draped. These familiar manifestations were received with a murmur of pleasure. Upon examining the cage, the network was found intact; all the seals and cords were unbroken; none of the meshes had been untwisted; no tracks were in the flour. From the nature of the position a confederate could not have entered the garden undetected. This *séance* was a perfect test that the medium, in that instance, was not used, but it is chiefly interesting for a point of spirit physics, viz., that a wire network forms no obstacle to a materialisation. The spirits only complained of the wooden frame. A more commodious cage on a simpler plan without a clumsy wooden frame would thus seem one of the best tests for proselytising purposes.

## V.

On June 22nd, a farewell *séance* with Mr. Eglinton was held in the garden of Aldwyn Tower, Malvern, the residence of Dr. T. L. Nichols. Mrs. Nichols took a seat in the balcony (A), a position commanding a bird's-eye view of the whole field of operation. The rest of the party descended to the lawn, and at 10.45 p.m. it was judged sufficiently dark to begin.

Mr. Eglinton reclined on the bench (B), and was covered with a rug. He was presently controlled by "Dr. Richards," a spirit, who has often spoken through him of late, and who gave minute directions as to our conduct. "An experiment," he said, "is about to be tried regarding the distance from the medium to which a materialised spirit can attain. Spirits desire to experiment as well as you. It is, however, a matter of danger. A spirit will try to go up into the balcony where Mrs. Nichols is sitting. The farther he departs the more he must draw from the medium, whose safety depends upon the orderly return of the spirit, and hence upon the strictness with which you keep the conditions." He then indicated the place for our seats, and requested us to join hands as soon as seated. When the spirit had passed us we were scrupulously to refrain from turning our heads to view it, for the magnetism from the eyes has a strong tendency to dissolve a materialised form, as heat melts a snow man, and hence the spirit might not be able to reach his destination. Above all, we were to show no signs of alarm, as this would throw the spirit suddenly back and harm the medium. These directions were made known to the sitters, and we took our seats at C, a point distant about 37 feet from the bench, which was directly before our eyes. Where we sat the light was sufficient to enable us to read the figures on a white-faced watch. The corner where the bench stood, being shaded by trees, was much darker. Immediately after

taking our seats we observed a thin, whitish cloud forming over the spot where the medium lay. This cloud grew larger, was taller than broad, but exhibited no more definite shape. Presently, moving to the right, our view of it was cut off by a bush (1). Fifteen minutes had elapsed from the time the cloud first appeared, when a black-bearded figure, clothed from head to foot in snow-white drapery, stepped out from behind the bush (1). He retired, came forth, and retired again. Suddenly, when the white appeared a third time, and we were expecting the same figure, the shrill and well-known voice of "Joey" broke on our ears. "Holloa, Arthur! Holloa, Doctor! I'm coming. Don't you want to see me?" He then emerged from behind the bush (1), and stood manufacturing drapery by shaking it in a multitude of waves, a custom common with him. He was distant from the bench 25 feet, and from us 12 feet. He gambolled about, went back, and we heard him calling for help, saying he was caught in the bush and could not get out. He now informed us that our eyes injured the medium, and we must retire to the position D, so that a bush would intercept our view.

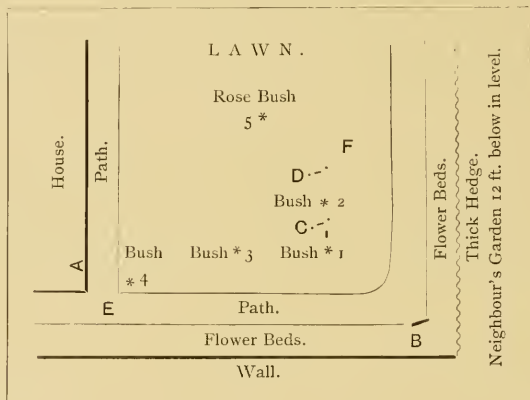


FIG. 3.—Plan of the Garden Scence.

This being accomplished, we heard "Joey's" voice drawing near. "The birdies among the leaves won't keep still," he said, and appeared at F, about 7 feet from us, having come 25 feet from his first position. Here he stood, strongly materialised, with arms akimbo, against the dark background, and the folds of his garment clearly visible.

"Don't take cold, Joey," said one of the sitters. "If I do the medium will," replied he. "And your feet are bare, are they not?" "Of course they are," said "Joey." He retreated behind the bush, but still we heard his voice. "Did you see us forming?" he asked. "I saw a white cloud," I answered, "if that was what you wished me to see." "I did not want you to see more than the others; don't be conceited," shouted he sharply. He now informed us that he was going back to the medium for more power, and that the next spirit we saw would be the one who would make the attempt to reach the balcony. We were so absorbed in watching this astonishing act, that we became silent. "Joey" called

out to us to keep up the conversation, and we discussed the stars, which were shining plentifully overhead. In returning to the medium, "Joey" must have traversed 34 feet. He next appeared from between the bushes (1 and 2), passed our right, walked over the lawn between bushes 3 and 4, gained the path, and stopped at the corner E, having passed over 75 feet. According to our directions, we did not look after the spirit when he had passed us, but we could judge of his position by his voice, and Mrs. Nichols, from her elevated seat, saw his entire course. Standing under the balcony, the spirit hailed Mrs. Nichols. "Is that you, Joey?" asked she. "Yet (yes), of course it is," answered "Joey." Mrs. Nichols then besought him not to tax the medium by advancing further, and the spirit turned, crossed the lawn, constantly repeating, "I'm coming, I'm coming," passed close behind our chairs (D), grabbed the stove-pipe hat from Dr. Nichols, placed it upon his own head, and danced backwards till he disappeared behind the bush (2) amid the laughter and clapping of the spectators. The spirit then returned to the medium, having traversed 99 feet from the corner (E). He appeared again at F (34 feet), saying he must bring back the hat, passed behind our chairs (20 feet), replaced the hat on Dr. Nichols's head, and crossed on the grass to the rose bush 5 (15 feet). We heard him plucking stems. He returned, and passing again behind us, placed a rose on the shoulder of each sitter, and once more disappeared behind the shrub in front of us. "Now," he said, "stand up and see me go back to the medium." Looking over the bush, we saw "Joey's" form change to a shapeless cloud, grow thinner, and finally disappear before our eyes. He had come from the rose bush 69 feet. The voice of the control, "Dr. Richards," called me to the side of the medium. He spoke in a gasping manner. "I congratulate you," he said, "upon the success of this experiment, a manifestation surpassing any we have hitherto attempted. We have greatly exhausted the medium. Take care that he does not sit in the garden after he awakes. Good night." The *séance* had lasted about half an hour. Mr. Eglinton awoke in a very weak condition—every garment soaked with perspiration. We conducted him to the house. The ground under the rose bush where the spirit had been at work was covered with petals. This *séance* is remarkable—first, for the novelty of being in the open air; secondly, for the absolute test it afforded of the medium's sincerity, since he was under our eyes until the spirit appeared, while the witness from the balcony had him constantly in view as well as the boundaries of the garden, rendering apparent the approach of a confederate, even if such a person could have come over the wall, and through the thick hedges without a sound, when even the movement of a bird in the branches was audible; thirdly, from the absence of a cabinet, the materialisation being, nevertheless, as strong as that obtained in a room, though at the expense of a greater draught upon the medium; fourthly, from the fact that the *formation* and *disappearance* of the figure took place before our eyes; fifthly, on account of the distance from the medium attained by the materialised spirit, being 66 feet in a direct line; sixthly, because of the long journey accomplished by the spirit, who traversed some 400 feet from the time he first left the medium to his final return.



## CHAPTER VII.

### SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIENCES.



HAVING decided to visit the Cape, Mr. Eglinton made the necessary arrangements, and left London on July 5th, 1878, *en route* for Dartmouth. This was thought to be a fitting occasion on which to present him with a testimonial, in slight recognition of the esteem in which he was held by all who had had relations with him, and of the value of his services for the cause of Spiritualism. A meeting was therefore held at the Beethoven Rooms, Harley Street, on July 2nd, and a large and fashionable audience assembled to do him honour. A handsome testimonial, in the shape of a purse of money, was presented to him; and in the course of the evening, Miss Emily Kislingbury, secretary of the B.N.A.S., observed that she would be omitting a great duty if she allowed the opportunity to pass without giving her testimony to the work Mr. Eglinton had achieved. Though not speaking officially, she wished to give public testimony to Mr. Eglinton's integrity. Spiritual phenomena had been observed through his mediumship under the most trying and unfavourable circumstances; she alluded to the many *séances* which had been given at the rooms of the National Association, when Mr. Eglinton had been put under the most severe tests, varying every week, a certain proportion of the sitters being either strangers or inquirers into the subject. In these respects Mr. Eglinton had given the most perfect satisfaction and had borne all the very trying remarks and difficult tests with perfect good humour. From time to time most striking proofs had been afforded of the agency of unseen powers, and a great number of persons had been convinced through the opportunities thus afforded. In concluding her remarks, Miss Kislingbury said: "I have much pleasure in tendering my personal thanks for the very kind manner in which Mr. Eglinton has acted on private and other occasions."

A large company of friends assembled at Paddington on the morning of the 5th July, to bid him "God speed." He went to Torquay, *en route*, and was the guest of an old friend, Mr. W. T. Rossiter, who reported a few *séances* in the *Spiritualist* of July 19th. On the occasion in question, he was entertained by the Mayor of Dartmouth, who very kindly accompanied him on board the *Balmoral Castle*.

Cheered by the presence of several West of England friends, he left England on the morning of the 12th July. The voyage was a very eventful one for him, there being on board a man who had had a sitting with him in London, and who prejudiced his fellow-passengers against him by spreading rumours that were absolutely untrue. Madeira was reached on the



16th, and after the customary call of a few hours, the voyage was resumed, Cape Town being reached on the Sunday morning. He was met on board by Dr. Hutchinson and Mr. and Mrs. Marshall.

Mr. Eglinton went to the Cape as the guest of Dr. Hutchinson, and solely at his expense. The devotion of this gentleman to the cause of Spiritualism, and the self-sacrifice he has displayed in many ways to extend a knowledge of its truths, is beyond praise. Mr. Eglinton writing after his visit says: "I owe to Dr. Hutchinson, to Mr. and Mrs. Marshall, and to Mr. and Mrs. Darter much that was pleasant during my stay at the Cape; and my acknowledgments are due also to many other kind and considerate friends."

Dr. Hutchinson kept copious notes of all that occurred during the nine months Mr. Eglinton was his guest, and prepared a very careful summary of them, which I shall presently give. The daily press freely criticised his advent in a half-bantering tone, and expressed a hope that he would not "fail to give a few public performances of his so-called superhuman skill."

This was not to be, however. Mr. Eglinton, fortunately, was in judicious hands. At no time did he give professional *séances*. Dr. Hutchinson's idea was rather that he should sit for the Cape Town Psychological Society. After a few *séances*, however, this plan was abandoned owing to dissensions; and Dr. Hutchinson thereupon decided to study the phenomena under his own roof, inviting such guests as he saw proper.

In the meantime, having little or nothing to do, Mr. Eglinton studied dentistry under Dr. Hutchinson, and was enrolled on his return to England in 1879 as a duly qualified practitioner.

The *séances* were very remarkable. One in particular bears off the palm for originality, as having taken place with his friend, Mr. Marshall, on the top of Table Mountain. I now give Dr. Hutchinson's narrative.

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When in England in 1877, I heard a great deal about Mr. Eglinton's psychical powers, but although I endeavoured on several occasions to see him I failed to do so. When, however, I returned to Cape Town, I did not rest until I had induced him to make a special visit to South Africa in order to afford my friends and myself an opportunity of investigation.

He arrived in Cape Town in August 1878, and took up his quarters at my house, where for more than nine months I saw him daily. I had every opportunity for careful study, and was able to watch and scrutinise all his actions, until I had witnessed such astounding manifestations as none but a fool or a prejudiced bigot could ignore.

The excellent results I obtained are, I believe, clearly traceable to the harmony existing between us, and to reciprocal feelings of friendship and esteem; also because he felt himself thoroughly at ease and at home in the presence of myself and family.

Having proved my friend an honourable, just, and upright man, and of good report, he was, at his request, proposed for initiation in the Good Hope Lodge of Masons, and in due time was crafted, raised, and finally turned out a brother of the mystic tie—a step, I believe, he has never regretted.

Often in the presence of brother Masons, I have heard him declare solemnly and sincerely, that as a man and a master Mason he was innocent of any guilty complicity in producing

the phenomena, and many Masons are also able to testify having seen, felt, and conversed with materialised Masonic spirits.

I will now describe some of the phenomena I have observed in his presence. Some three years previously I prepared an instrument for spirits to work, but not having a good physical medium was compelled to put it on one side until a favourable opportunity occurred. Mr. Eglinton having come to the Cape, he gave me an opportunity of trying my apparatus. A disk made of galvanised sheet iron, eighteen inches in diameter, had white paper pasted over the upper part, and around the edge were arranged the letters of the alphabet, together with the words "Yes" and "No." (Fig. 4). In the centre a small round hole, about half an inch in diameter, was cut, and a pin about three inches long by one-eighth of an inch thick put through; on the top of this was a wooden pointer, arrow-shaped, fixed on so that by having a small cross-piece of wood fixed to the under part, a materialised spirit hand could move the arrow round

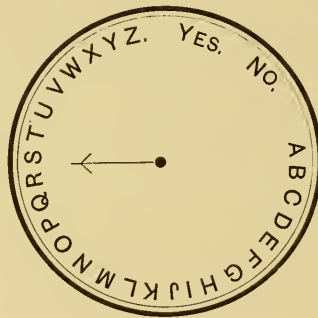


FIG. 4.—Dr. Hutchinson's Dial.

to any letter. In the centre of my *séance* table I had cut out a small circular piece (which I leave in when not wanted), so that spirits might project their hands; the space immediately beneath the wood of the table made a sort of camera, which prevented the light falling on the spirit hands, and thereby dissipating the material molecules collected over them. Having taken out the circular piece of wood, I placed the circular disk over the hole, and then fixed the cross-piece to the portion of the pin that was beneath the table. The apparatus looks very much like a telegraphic instrument I have seen, where the operator moves the key round to the different letters. Having first reduced the light fairly low, for the purpose of strengthening the power, the invisible spirit operator told us, by raps, that he wanted the light turned up, which I at once did. It was only two or three feet above the table. The room was now quite light, and with nine persons present, besides the medium, we had every opportunity of closely watching his hands and feet, but in order to leave not a shadow of doubt that the sensitive was only a passive agent in the matter, I decided that it would enhance the value of the experiment if both his hands and feet were securely held, a proposal in which he readily acquiesced.

Mr. Eglinton was grasped firmly by both hands by an investigator on each side, with

one of their feet over each of his feet; all their hands and feet were in full view. After sitting for a short time, all the other sitters having their hands, palm downwards, flat on the table, and their feet drawn under their chairs, the medium began to tremble and shiver, owing to power or heat being extracted from his body, causing the temperature of his body to decrease considerably (as experiments have shown). He then became partly entranced.

At this stage we were told by the spirit that he would try to communicate, if possible, in full light, by means of the dial. The arrow of the dial began to oscillate and revolve alternately, first one way and then the other, and finally becoming steady, it pointed to the following letters: "*God understands iloveyoualljoeyiswithyou*"—"God understands. I love you all. Joey is with you." This proved to our minds that the same intelligence who spoke to us by means of the raps was the invisible operator, as no blind force could act on the apparatus, and make it spell out intelligent messages; and we could not come to any other conclusion than that the spiritual hypothesis is true. The medium began to show symptoms of great nervous exhaustion, when the arrow moved to the following letters: "*Isolatethemedium*"—"Isolate the medium," which I did by letting the friends holding him move away from him about two feet, but having a full view of his feet and hands. The arrow now began to spin round at a very rapid rate, then stop, and oscillate, and vibrate strongly; the sensitive shivered, and was much agitated whilst the arrow was in motion, establishing the statements of the spirits that the power used for producing the manifestation was extracted from the body of their medium, as in the case of full form materialisation, during which the weight of the medium varies whilst materialised forms are in view.

Mr. Eglinton then suggested that his eyes should be blindfolded and his hand be allowed to guide the arrow; and with eyes tightly bandaged, the pointer was guided to these letters: "*God understands iloveyoualljoey*"—"God understands. I love you all, 'Joey'." The message was word for word like the one we obtained by the pointer moving without mortal intervention in the previous experiment, except that "*is with you*" was left out. When the eyes of the medium were unbandaged, I remarked that, speaking from a sceptical point of view, the experiment was not altogether satisfactory, as I thought the bandage did not fit down closely under his eyes owing to the prominence of the nose, whereupon he solemnly declared that he could not see a ray of light. To leave not a shadow of doubt that he did not see, Mr. Eglinton said he would try for another message blindfolded, but, in addition, somebody should press a finger tightly over each of his eyeballs at the same time, to keep the folds of the handkerchief well under, so that all the sitters in the room could know for themselves. Accordingly, I appointed one of the sitters to place a finger over each eyeball, and at the same time to keep the handkerchief well down; under these conditions it was simply a physical impossibility for any human being to see anything normally. The medium's hands were then placed on the arrow; it began to rotate and pointed to these letters: "*Your medium istrue iloveyoualljoeyiswithyou*"—"Your medium is true. I love you all. 'Joey' is with you." Thus the same intelligence who gave us the former manifestations sent this last message indirectly by mesmerically guiding the hand of the sensitive to the letters. Any practical mesmerist will understand the process. To dispel any doubts which my previous remark might lead the listeners to think I had, the intelligence wrote, "*Your medium is true;*" and again, for the third time, under different conditions, repeated his message, "*I love you all. 'Joey' is with you.*"

The communication itself is neither good, bad, nor indifferent, but simply an experimental message from a spirit, who, at our special request, succeeded in communicating in such a way that no *savant*, conjurer, or other person, could, by trying from now till doomsday, account for the phenomenon on any other than the spiritual hypothesis. Where there was no confederate, scientific mechanism, or a properly arranged platform or apparatus with secret machinery, nothing would make the simple apparatus act as I have stated, except guided by supernatural means. To make the proof even more positive, I subsequently had another *séance*, when I asked "Joey," the spirit (who I have often seen materialised and speaking to us, with his medium in view of all at the same time), if he did it. He told me point blank, with a clear and distinct voice, "*Why, certainly I did; who else do you think it was? I did it to convince you that spirits can and do communicate with mortals, but there are other ways of doing so that do not tax the energies of the medium so much*"

After the experiment with the dial, we had a short sitting for materialisation, during which the spirits materialised as far as the waist, floating all over the room, and coming within a few inches of our faces. The beautiful cross was shown to us all. On several occasions it has been brought and held for some time against the foreheads of different sitters, who have seen spirit forms holding it, one on each side. One lady, who had never before witnessed the spirit forms, became rather alarmed; and "Ernest" remarked, quite audibly, that if she were afraid, they would refrain from manifesting, but parenthetically added that she need not have the slightest fear, for the cross (alluding to the luminous one we had seen) we had just before been shown was a sufficient passport; where that was borne by spirits no harm would befall any of us. After this the *séance* went on, and the medium on recovering from his trance, remarked that he would rest for a short period and then try the dial again, by placing his hand on it in his normal state, as there were some strange spirits wishing to communicate. This he did, and becoming partially entranced, he directed the arrow to the following letters, which being properly grouped made, "*I am Rosina Anna Philippa Henrietta. I died 16 years ago to-night. Your sister Louisa — (I leave out surnames, as I have no permission from the person who read the message to make it public), afterwards Mrs. — —, is with me. Do you want tests? She laid me in my silver and blue coffin; she is with me, and though two years have elapsed since she died, I have come back to cheer your lonely hours. I join with her in sending dear love, and also to E— and C—. Cancer cannot kill her now, and her left breast is now healed. God is with you.*" Here ended a most useful test message to a lady present, who became greatly agitated, and acknowledged everything said to be literally correct.

At one improvised sitting, we received several messages by the aid of the dial, the hand of the medium directing it. To get messages by direct agency is too trying for the sensitive; hence, when his hand is used, it greatly economises power. One message ran, "*Yes, I will do as I am requested. When you write say that there is a probability of his request being carried out. Your state of mind is our first consideration. We intend giving spirits opportunity to speak in this simple way.*" This was understood by one present, who said the message was relevant to certain questions which had been previously put to the controls. Two or three other spirits gave full details of their names, ages, and cause of death.

At another *séance*, also an improvised one, Mr. Eglinton, two ladies (one a medium), and myself were engaged in a rubber at whist at my house, when, as usual, "Joey" made himself

known by raps on the polished drawing-room floor, some distance from the medium. Whilst we played we kept up a lively conversation with "Joey," who seemed to enjoy selecting, in some mysterious manner, all the best cards for Mr. Eglinton, although I repeatedly endeavoured to thwart him. We had played about an hour, when an arm-chair, placed about five feet from the table, and known as "Joey's" seat, was seen to move. We closely watched it, and found it was first moved one side forward, then the other, as if some one was pulling it near the table. Shortly afterwards the influence seemed to have gained sufficient power, and a direct forward movement was given to the chair, and eventually it was run up close to the table. We put it back again, but "Joey" emphatically demanded his seat at the table by again moving it into position. We were naturally delighted with our good friend "Joey's" presence. Shortly afterwards, as we were taking some refreshment, the table began to rock and bump about in a most curious manner. Mr. Eglinton suggested that we should sit for further manifestations. "Joey" hammered out his approval of this, and we cleared for action. We lowered the light a little—it had hitherto been burning brightly—the table was at once taken up, turned over, and evidently handled with the greatest ease by the controls. A fancy cover on one of the chairs at some distance from the table was taken off and thrown in my face, our chairs were grasped and pulled about, and each sitter was touched with hands of different strength and size. Two large volumes of *Punch* were taken up in the air, and one dropped flat on Mr. Eglinton's head and the other on my hands; the grips we frequently got were particularly strong, and the hands were larger than those of any one present. Cushions were drawn from our chairs and thrown at us; a large chair was laid across the table, and, at our request, again taken off with ease and placed in a distant part of the room. Indeed, our friends appeared to be having a grand field day of it. The table was now drawn nearer the piano, and also nearer the light, which was still burning sufficiently for us to distinguish each other plainly. I distinctly saw a coated arm and large muscular hand stretched out from the medium's body, and grasp the piano leg and draw it nearer the table; so plain was this that I did not think of materialisation until I felt the medium's hand on my own. I again and again saw the same hand and arm draw the piano until it was quite close to me; then it flashed across me that the arm which completely intercepted the light of the lamp was not mortal. Mr. Eglinton also saw this arm and hand raised behind the piano; the instrument now began to play, and during the evening "Joey," with single notes, played correctly four or five different tunes.

When we received the signal to break up, and had turned on the full light, what a chaos the room presented! Portable couches were turned up and doubled into their smallest dimensions; cushions, cards, etc., etc., strewed the floor. We got things ship-shape again, and in the light my pipe was visibly brought across the room to me through mid-air, and another object thrown at someone else. Shortly afterwards, going upstairs to view some birds, a pack of cards, which I had left downstairs, was thrown violently against the wall opposite one of the ladies.

On Tuesday, the 9th December, my wife, mother, niece, and myself had a special sitting in my private *scance* room, commencing at 8 p.m. After being properly seated, without hands being joined, seven spirit forms showed themselves, three of whom came so near to us that we could distinguish their features. "Abd-ū-lah" came within two feet of me, and as the gas was burning in a line with his head close to him, I had a good opportunity of scrutinising his features. His nose was quite different to Mr. Eglinton's, and unlike those of the other



forms, who came to within six inches of my eyes. The latter had flattish noses, were said to be Turks, and looked like them. The spirit in question came out, went to the table in front of us, then to the mantelpiece some eight feet from the cabinet, and hurriedly grasping some blank cards I had left there, returned to the table, deliberately took a chair, moved it up to the table, sat down, looked at some paper, and finally took one of the blank cards it had brought from the chimney-piece, and began writing something on it with a lead pencil we had left on the table.

We all saw the motion of the pencil and of the hand guiding it, and I immediately remarked that the noise made by the pencil was exactly like the sound of a telegram being transmitted by the Morse telegraphic code. I knew this, as I was connected with the electric telegraph in America some fifteen or twenty years ago, and was, and still am, able to read messages by what is termed "sound," without the aid of a registering apparatus with paper. The form remained writing sixty or ninety seconds—a long time if one watches the minute hand of a watch—then quickly rose up from the chair, turned towards us, bowed, and retired. After it had gone, one of Mr. Eglinton's guides remarked that we had just seen a spirit of a very high order. This was said whilst the second spirit was in front of the cabinet, materialising himself in front of our eyes, and producing out of apparently empty space yards of some sort of whitish material.

I must here remark that at one time Mr. Eglinton was led into the middle of the room, within two feet of me, by a spirit form, who left him sitting on a chair, but who waited at the entrance of the cabinet till he returned, and then took him back. The spirit had white garments, whilst Mr. Eglinton had his ordinary dark-brown clothes on, and both being seen together, left us nothing more to desire as a test.

After the *séance* had ended, I went up to the table and looked at the card I had seen the form writing on, and to my great surprise I found it filled with characters which I at once recognised as those used in the Morse code of signals when I was in America. There was a cross underneath, in the centre of which, on looking closely, I saw a miniature head.

Being able to send a telegram at any time, I thought I would compare the transmission with the time the spirit did it in. With an improvised "key," at a moderate rate, I did it in one hundred seconds; if I manipulated quickly I could do it in less than sixty; but it would be next to impossible for one without years of practice to do it under these conditions. I know that the form was not Mr. Eglinton, and that he has no knowledge of telegraphy. I heard the synchronous action of the sound of writing, and the motion of the pencil, and to prove that my sense of hearing and knowledge of telegraphy were not wrong, on examining the card I found the characters were not in the code used to-day in England and here, but in that of my time, twenty years ago in America.

This must suffice, although there is much more in Dr. Hutchinson's narrative I should like to present to the reader.

Public opinion in Cape Town was much exercised about these *séances*, and no opportunity was lost by opponents to vilify and slander both Mr. Eglinton and his host. This feeling culminated in a direct attack upon both men, the chief offenders being the editor of the





A SPIRIT HAND



*Cape Times*, an ex-reverend, and a Mr. Geary, the editor of a satirical paper—the *Lantern*—to whom Dr. Hutchinson, honestly courting investigation, had extended an invitation to a series of *séances*. They repaid this courtesy by violating all the usages of civilised society, and the conditions which they had pledged themselves to observe. One of them attempted to simulate the phenomena, and, when detected, created a disturbance, in the course of which he accused the other members of the circle of imposture. Garbled accounts of the affair were subsequently published in the columns of their respective journals, but the *Cape Argus*, coming to the defence of Dr. Hutchinson and Mr. Eglinton, thoroughly exposed the discreditable conduct of these men, and further proved the enormity of their offence by showing that on the occasion in question, they were not in a fit state to associate with gentlemen.

The year 1879 opened very darkly indeed for Spiritualist workers. The state of public opinion against Spiritualism at this time determined Mr. Eglinton, if possible, to abstain from mediumship as a means of living. His projected tour round the world was therefore abandoned, and finding it impossible to remain any longer in South Africa, with any interest to himself, he returned to England in May, 1879.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE STORY OF A HAUNTING SPIRIT.



ON returning to England he at once gave a series of non-professional *séances* at the house of his old friend, Mrs. Macdougall Gregory. He adhered to his resolution, if possible not to allow himself to be drawn again into the arena of public work. In this resolve he was very materially helped by a friend, whose kindness and consideration are the same now as then.

In June, 1879, business called him to Rouen and Paris, and on his return a *séance* took place at Mrs. Gregory's, at which the late Serjeant Cox was present. In the presence of Mr. Eglinton and a non-professional medium, two chairs were threaded at the same moment of time upon the arms of two sitters, each of whom was then holding the hand of a medium. Mr. Serjeant Cox was holding the hand of Mr. Eglinton, and the back of the chair passed through his arm, giving him the sensation of a blow against the elbow when it did so. When a light was struck, the chair was seen hanging on Mr. Serjeant Cox's arm, and his hand was still grasping that of Mr. Eglinton. An immediate examination of the chair showed that the back of it was in good condition, with none of the woodwork loose or broken. This is only one instance of a manifestation which has been often repeated, but I mention this as the evidence seems all that can be desired.

Desiring a change of scene and air, Mr. Eglinton, in July, 1879, accepted an invitation from his friends Colonel and Mrs. Lean (*née* Florence Marryat) to accompany them to Belgium, on a visit to her sister at Bruges. Whilst there an exceedingly novel and interesting experience befell him, the account of which I cannot do better than give in Florence Marryat's own words:—

“BRUGES, *July 18th*, 1879.

“At last the dry bones in this world-renowned old city have commenced to shake. A lady who is resident here, whilst on a visit to England last month invited Mr Eglinton to pass a short time in Bruges whenever it might be most convenient to himself, and he crossed in the same boat with us yesterday (Wednesday). His hostess met him at the station and took him direct to her house, whilst we came on to the one from which I write, which is situated in another part of the town. Our first ‘conference,’ as they call the *séances* here (and I think, since the latter term has fallen so much into disrepute, that it would not be a bad idea to introduce the word amongst our English Spiritualists), was held the same evening at the house of Mr. Eglinton's hostess, Mrs. M——, where we imagined all our sittings would take



place. But in the course of it 'Joey' informed us that on the following night we were to sit at the house of Mrs. B——, the friend with whom we are staying. I must premise that this house is so ancient that the date of its original building has been completely lost. A stone let into one of its walls bears an inscription to the effect that it was restored in the year 1616, and an obsolete plan of the city shows it to have stood in its present condition in 1562. Prior to that period, however, it is supposed, with three houses on either side of it, to have formed a convent; but no printed record remains of the fact. Beneath it are subterranean passages, now choked with rubbish, which lead no one can tell whither. I have stayed in this house many times before, and have always felt strange and unpleasant influences from it, especially in a large room on the lower floor, now used as a drawing-room, but which is said originally to have formed the chapel of the convent. Others have felt the influence besides myself, but we have never had reason to believe that there was any particular cause for it. On the evening in question, however, when we expressed curiosity to learn why 'Joey' desired us to hold our next 'conference' in Mrs. B——'s house, he told us that the medium had not been brought over to Bruges for our pleasure, or even edification, but that there was a great work to be done here, and that Mrs. M—— had been expressly influenced to invite him over, that the purposes of a higher power than his own should be accomplished. Consequently on the following evening Mrs. M—— brought Mr. Eglinton over to our house, and 'Joey,' having been asked to choose the room for the 'conference,' selected an *entresol* on the upper floor, which leads by two short passages into the bedrooms. The bedroom door being locked, a curtain was hung at the entrance of one of these passages, and 'Joey' declared it was a first-rate cabinet.

"We then all assembled in the drawing-room for some conversation and music, for the time appointed for the 'conference' had not arrived. The party consisted only of Mrs. B—— and Mrs. M——, the medium, my husband, and myself. After I had sung a few songs, Mr. Eglinton became restless, and moved away from the piano, saying the influence was too strong for him. He began walking up and down the room, and staring fixedly at the door, before which hung a *portière*. Several times he exclaimed pointedly, 'What is the matter with that door? There is something very peculiar about it!' Once he approached it quickly; 'Joey's' voice was heard from behind the *portière* saying, 'Don't come too near.' Mr. Eglinton then retreated to a sofa, and appeared to be fighting violently with some unpleasant influence. He made the sign of the cross, then extended his fingers towards the door, as though to exorcise it; finally he burst into a scornful mocking peal of laughter that lasted for several minutes. As it concluded a diabolical expression came over his face. He clenched his hands, gnashed his teeth, and commenced to grope in a crouching position towards the door. We concluded he wished to go up to the 'conference' room, and let him have his way. He crawled more than walked up the steep turret stairs, but on reaching the top came to himself suddenly and fell back several steps. Luckily my husband was just behind, and saved him from a fall. He complained very much of the influence, and of a pain in his head, and we went at once into the 'conference' room, and sat at the table. In a few seconds the same spirit had taken possession of him. He left the table and groped his way towards the bedrooms, listening apparently to every sound, and with his hand holding an imaginary knife, which was raised every now and then as though to strike. The expression on Mr. Eglinton's

ton's face during this possession is too horrible to describe. The worst passions were written as legibly there as though they had been labelled. There is a short flight of steps leading from the *entresol* to the corridor, closed at the head by a padded door, which we had locked for fear of accident. When apparently in pursuit of his object the spirit led Mr. Eglinton up to this door, and he found it fastened; his moans were terrible. Half a dozen times he made his weary round of the rooms, striving to get downstairs to accomplish some end, and had to return to us, moaning and baffled. At this juncture the medium was so exhausted that 'Daisy' took control of him and talked with us for some time, during which we procured the writing on the arm. 'Daisy,' having taken off Mr. Eglinton's coat and bared his arm, asked me to write the name of the friend I loved best in the spirit-world on a piece of paper. I left the table, and not thinking the injunction of much importance, wrote the name of a dear friend now long passed away, but who is much with me, and folded the paper. The medium took it as I gave it, and holding it in the flame of the candle burned it to ashes, which he gathered and rubbed upon his arm. In another minute there stood out in bold characters the words '*Florence is dearest,*' and which I find was a gentle rebuke from my dead child that I should have written any name but hers upon the paper.

"We asked 'Daisy' what the spirit was like that had controlled her medium, and she said she did not like him; he had a very bad face, no hair on the top of his head, and a long black frock. From this we concluded he must have been a monk or a priest.

"When 'Daisy' had finished talking to us, 'Joey' desired Mr. Eglinton to go into the cabinet, but as soon as he rose the spirit which had first controlled him got possession again, and led him grovelling, as before, towards the bedrooms. His own guides therefore carried him into the cabinet before our eyes. He was levitated far above our heads, his feet touching each of us in turn; he was then carried past the unshaded window, which enabled us to judge of the height he was from the ground, and finally over a large table into the arm-chair in the cabinet.

"Nothing, however, of consequence occurred, and after a few trials 'Joey' told us he had been advised to break up the sitting, and we were to take the medium downstairs into the supper-room, which is on the ground floor, divided by a marble corridor from the drawing-room before mentioned.

"We accordingly adjourned there, and during supper Mr. Eglinton appeared to be quite himself. As soon as the meal was over, however, the old restlessness returned on him, and he began pacing up and down the room, walking out every now and then into the corridor. In a few minutes we perceived that the uneasy spirit had again controlled him, and we followed him into the corridor. He went steadily towards the drawing-room door, but on finding himself pursued turned back three times and pronounced emphatically the word 'Go!' He then entered the drawing-room, which was in darkness, and closed the door behind him, whilst we waited outside. In a little while he reopened it, and speaking in quite a different voice, said, 'Bring a light! I have something to say to you!' When we reassembled we found Mr. Eglinton controlled by a new spirit, whom 'Joey' has since told us is one of his highest guides. Motioning us to sit down, he stood before us and said, 'I have been selected from amongst the controls of this medium to tell you the history of the unhappy spirit who has so disturbed you this evening. He is present now, and the confession of his crime through my lips will help him



to throw off the earth-bound condition to which it has condemned him. Many years ago the house in which we stand was a convent, and underneath it were four subterranean passages running north, south, east, and west, which communicated with all parts of the town.'

"(I should here state that Mr. Eglinton had not previously been informed of any particulars relating to the former history of this house, but that Mrs. B—— has told me since that, many years ago, some one said in her hearing that, at one time, there were four passages excavated beneath it.)

"In this convent there lived a most beautiful woman—a nun; and in one of the neighbouring monasteries a priest, who, against the strictest laws of the Church, had conceived and nourished a passion for her. He was an Italian, who had been obliged to leave his own country for reasons best known to himself, and nightly he would steal his way to this house by means of one of the subterranean passages, and attempt to overcome the nun's scruples and make her listen to his tale of love; but she, strong in the faith, always resisted him. At last, one day, maddened by her repeated refusals and his own guilty passion, he hid himself in one of the northern rooms in the upper story of this house, and watched there in the dusk for her to pass him on her way from her devotions in the chapel, but she did not come. Then he crept down stairs stealthily with a dagger hid beneath his robes, and met her in that hall. He conjured her again to yield to him, but again she resisted, and he stabbed her within the door, on the very spot where the medium first perceived him. Her pure soul sought immediate consolation in the spirit spheres, but his has been chained down ever since to the scene of his awful crime. He dragged her body down the secret stairs (still existent) to the vaults below, and hid it in the subterranean passage. After a few days he sought it again, and buried it. He lived many years after, and committed other crimes, but none so foul as this. It is his unhappy spirit which asks your prayers to help it to progress. It is for this purpose we were brought to this city that we might aid in releasing the miserable soul that cannot rest.'

"I asked, 'By what name shall we pray for him?' 'Pray "for the distressed being." Call him by no other name.' 'What is your own name?' 'I prefer it to be unknown. May God bless you all and keep you in the way of prayer and truth, and from all evil courses, and bring you to everlasting life. Amen.'

"Mr. Eglinton then walked up to the spot he had indicated as the scene of the murder, and knelt there for some minutes in prayer. If I have failed to impress you with an idea of what a solemn scene this was it is the fault of my pen, for it was the most thrilling manifestation that any of us have ever witnessed. In order that the medium might be rested we did not hold a 'conference' the next day; but as we sat at dinner together loud raps came on the back of his chair, and on our calling the alphabet the name 'Benedetta' was rapped out. We concluded it must have been the 'distressed being' who could not pronounce the sacred name. In the evening I sat alone at the table with Mrs. B——, where the name 'Hortense Dupont' was given us, and the following conversation ensued:—'Who are you?' 'I am the nun. I did love him. I couldn't help it. It is such a relief to think that he will be prayed for.' 'When did he murder you?' 'In 1498.' 'What was his name?' 'I cannot tell you.' 'His age?' 'Thirty-five.' 'And yours?' 'Twenty-three.' 'Are you coming to see us to-morrow?' 'I am not sure.'

"The next evening, by 'Joey's' orders, we assembled at seven. Mr. Eglinton did not feel the influence in the drawing-room, but directly he entered the 'conference' room he was possessed by the same spirit. His actions were still more graphic than on the first occasion. He watched from the window for the coming of his victim through the courtyard, and then recommenced his crawling stealthy pursuit, coming back each time from the locked door that prevented his egress, with such heartrending moans that no one could have listened to him unmoved. At last his agony was so great as he strove again and again, like some dumb animal, to pass through the walls which divided him from the spot he wished to visit, whilst the perspiration streamed down the medium's face with the struggle, that we attempted to make him speak to us. We implored him in French to tell us his trouble, and believe us to be his friends, but he only pushed us away. At last we felt we must pray for him, so Mrs B—— and Mrs. M——, with myself, kneeled down and repeated all the well-known Catholic prayers. As we commenced the *De Profundis* the medium fell prostrate on the earth and seemed to wrestle with his agony. At the *Salve Regina* and *Ave Maria* he lifted his eyes to heaven and clasped his hands, and in the *Paternoster* he appeared to join. But directly we ceased praying the evil passions returned, and his face became distorted with the thirst for blood. It was an experience that no one who has seen could ever forget. At last I begged Mrs. B—— to fetch a crucifix, which we placed in his breast. It had not been there many seconds before a different expression came over his face, and he seized it in both hands, straining it to his eyes, lips, and heart—holding it from him at arm's length, then passionately kissing it, as we repeated the *Anima Christi*. Finally, he held the crucifix out for each one of us to kiss—a beautiful smile broke out over the medium's face, and the spirit passed out of him! Mr. Eglinton awoke terribly exhausted. His face was as white as a sheet, and he trembled violently. His first words were, 'They are doing something to my forehead; burn a piece of paper and give me the ashes.'

"He rubbed them between his eyes, when the sign of the cross became distinctly visible, drawn deeply on his brow. The spirits then said that, exhausted as he was, we were to place him in the cabinet, as their work was not yet done. He was accordingly led to the arm-chair behind the curtain, whilst we formed a circle in front of him. In a few seconds the cabinet was illuminated, and a cross of fire appeared outside of it.

"This manifestation having been twice repeated, the face and shoulders of a nun appeared. Her white coif and chinpiece were pinned just as the *religieuses* are in the habit of pinning them, and she seemed very anxious to show herself, coming close to each of us in turn and reappearing more than once.

"'Joey' said, 'That's the nun; but you'll understand that this is only a preliminary trial, preparatory to a much more perfect materialisation.'

"I asked her if she were the Hortense Dupont who had communicated through me, and she nodded her head several times in acquiescence. She was succeeded by a very perfect materialisation that has appeared before through Mr. Eglinton, although we have not yet recognised it. It is the spirit of a dark man, apparently an Indian, with a short black beard and moustaches, who is said to have come for my husband, and to have been connected with him in some way when on foreign service. He returned three or four times on this occasion, and made himself distinctly visible to all, seeming to be anxious to be examined and recognised;

but we have not yet discovered his name, and 'Joey' can tell us nothing about him. This ended the 'conference,' and I only mention it to show what powerful sittings we are having here. During this evening a watch, which had been missed the day before from Mrs. M——'s hands, came floating from the ceiling down into her lap; and we were touched at the same time by materialised hands."

*"July 22nd, 1879.*

"There is a little band of Spiritualists at Ostend, who were very anxious to secure Mr. Eglinton's help for their circle, and yesterday afternoon we went by appointment to hold a 'conference' with them. It was a pelting wet day (for the deluge is not entirely confined to England), and most unfavourable weather for physical manifestations. They had arranged their meeting to take place in the room of an hotel, with three staring unshaded windows. Added to which about twenty good people had been invited, and under such circumstances it is needless to add that it was found impossible to hold a sitting, and it was put off to another day, when they should be able to make a better preparation. We came back together to Mrs. B——'s house to supper at about ten o'clock. During the meal loud raps were heard about the room, and on giving the alphabet 'Joey' ordered us to go upstairs and sit, and to have the door at the head of the staircase (which we had hitherto locked for fear of accident) open, which we accordingly did. (I had remarked privately to Mrs. B—— the day before that I felt sure the spirit of the monk would not feel satisfied until it had enacted the whole of the murder, which he had probably not confessed before his death; but I had not mentioned my surmises to Mr. Eglinton.) As soon as ever we were seated at the table he became entranced, and the same pantomime, which I have related, was gone through. He watched from the window which looks into the courtyard, and silently groped his way round the room, until he had crawled on his stomach up the stairs which led to the padded door. When he found, however, that the obstacle that had hitherto stood in his way was removed (by its being open), he drew a long breath and started away to the winding turret staircase, crouching at the doors he passed, in order to listen if he were overheard. When he came to the stairs—in descending which we had been so afraid (notwithstanding 'Joey's' assurances to the contrary) that he might hurt himself—he was levitated down them in the most wonderful manner, only placing his hands twice on the balustrades, and being carried as in a flight to the bottom without any noise of footsteps. We had placed a lamp in the hall, so that as we followed him we could observe all his actions. When he had gained the bottom of the staircase he crawled on his stomach to the door of the drawing-room (originally the chapel), and there waited and listened, darting back into the shadows every time he fancied he heard a sound. Imagine our little party of four in this sombre old house, the only ones waking at that time of night, watching by the ghostly light of a turned-down lamp the acting of this terrible tragedy. Mr. Eglinton's face during the possession was a perfect study, from which Irving might have taken a lesson; but it was so awful to think that there we actually witnessed the revival of a crime that has held its perpetrator in the continual bondage of sin for four hundred years, that we had no thought for anything but the solemnity of the scene. We held our breaths as the murderer crouched by the chapel door, opening it noiselessly to peep within, and then retreating with the imaginary dagger in his hand, ready to strike as soon as his

victim appeared. At last she seemed to come. In an instant he sprang towards her, stabbing her once in a half-stooping attitude, and then, apparently finding her not dead, he rose to his full height, and stabbed her twice straight downwards. For a moment he seemed paralysed at what he had done, starting back with both hands clasped to his forehead. Then he flung himself prostrate on the supposed body, kissing the ground frantically in all directions. Presently he awoke to the fears of detection, and raised the corpse suddenly in his arms. He fell once beneath its weight, but staggering up again he seized and dragged it, slipping on the stone floor as he went to the head of the staircase that leads to the 'cave' below, whence the mouth of one of the subterranean passages is to be seen. The door at the head of this flight is modern, and he could not undo the lock, and we, believing that if it were advisable for him to descend his controls would open it, thought it best not to interfere. Prevented in dragging the body down the steps, he cast himself again upon it, kissing the stone floor of the hall and moaning. At last he dragged himself on his knees to the spot of the murder, and commenced to pray. We knelt with him, and as he heard our voices he turned on his knees towards us with outstretched hands. I said, 'He wants the crucifix again; I will go upstairs and fetch it.' As soon as I left the hall the medium rose and followed me. I found what I wanted in the 'conference' room, and returning, met him at the head of the stairs. He seized it from me eagerly, and carrying it to the window whence he had so often watched, fell down again upon his knees. When he had prayed for some time he tried to speak to us. His lips moved and his tongue protruded, but he was unable to articulate. Suddenly he seized each of our hands in turn in both of his own, and wrung them violently. I fancy he tried to bless us, but the words would not come. The same beautiful smile we had seen the night before broke over his countenance; the crucifix dropped from his hands, and he fell prostrate on the floor. The next moment Mr. Eglinton was asking us where he was, and what had happened to him, as he felt so queer. He declared himself fearfully exhausted, but said he felt that a great calm and peace had come over him, notwithstanding the weakness, and he believed some great good had been accomplished. He was not again entranced, but 'Joey' ordered the light to be put out, and spoke to us in the direct voice as follows:— 'I've just come to tell you what I know you'll all be very glad to hear, that through the medium's power, and our power, and the great power of God, the unhappy spirit who has been confessing his crime to you, is freed to-night from the heaviest part of his burden—the being earth-chained to this spot. I don't mean to say that he'll go away at once to the spheres, because he's got a lot to do still to alter the conditions under which he labours; but the worst is over. This is the special work Mr. Eglinton was brought to Bruges to do; and 'Ernest' and I can truly say that during the whole course of our control of him we have never had to put forth our own powers, nor to ask so earnestly for the help of God, as in the last three days. You have all helped in a good work—to free a poor soul from earth, and to set him on the right road, and we are grateful to you and to the medium as well as he. He will be able to progress rapidly now until he reaches his proper sphere, and hereafter the spirits of himself and the woman he murdered will work together to undo for others the harm they brought upon themselves. She is rejoicing in her high sphere at the work we have done for him, and will be the first to help and welcome him upwards. There are many more earth-bound spirits in this house and the surrounding houses who are suffering as he was, though

not to the same extent, nor for the same reason. But they all ask for and need your help and your prayers, and this is the greatest and noblest end of Spiritualism—to aid poor unhappy spirits to free themselves from earth and progress upwards. After a while, when this spirit can control the medium with calmness, he will come himself and tell you, through him, all his history, and how he came to fall. Meanwhile, we thank you very much for allowing us to draw so much strength from you, and helping us with your sympathy; and I hope I shall see you to-morrow night, and that you will believe me always to remain your loving friend,—JOEY.”

Such is the touching story of an earth-bound spirit, for whom the hearts of the medium's guides went out in human compassion and sympathy. *Shells! reliqua! elementals!* Such narratives as this, and there are hundreds on record, give the lie direct to such monstrous perversions of the truth, born in most cases of ignorance. I have often been puzzled to account for the obliquity of vision displayed by some Theosophists in face of such unimpeachable testimony to the humanity of returning spirits, and only lately has the problem been solved for me. Talking with a prominent Theosophist one day, I soon discovered that the range of his vision, as regards Spiritualism, did not extend beyond the floating guitars, the musical boxes, and buffoonery of the worst type of *séance* prevalent in the past. He knew nothing of that higher Spiritualism, of the cherished communion of thousands of private family circles, where of a truth the real fruits of the spirit are seen—in the joy, the love, the happy reunion of soul with soul. I felt I could not disabuse him—he was not prepared. It is this hidden knowledge of the secrets of the Holy of Holies of Spiritualism that forms the real strength of the movement. Theosophists may talk of “shells” and “elementals,” and Psychical Researchers of their “unconscious secondary selves,” and so-called “scientific” methods, and both may render themselves a laughing-stock alike to the world and Spiritualists. But, in the speech of One of old, may we not exclaim that it is “easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle” than for those lacking a child-like thirst for knowledge and a receptive and sympathetic mind to pass the threshold of the Unseen?





## CHAPTER IX.

### SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION ON THE CONTINENT.



HOLIDAY visit to Mrs. Nichols followed the return from Ostend and Bruges, which was, however, soon curtailed; the success attending his public work having become the subject of much interesting speculation in scientific circles in Sweden, he received and accepted, shortly after his return, a very pressing and cordial invitation to visit that country. The *séances* there caused no little sensation amongst the general public, and particularly in scientific circles, the experiments taking place at the houses of the *élite* in Stockholm. A very cordial welcome was extended to him by, amongst others, M. Pilo, Herr Schildknecht, the Countess Pöhlmann, Miss Valerius (an eminent painter), and the Countess Wachmeister. Reports by well-known scientific men, such as Professors Törnebohm, Edland, Berlin, and Commander Lindmark, in favour of spiritual phenomena, were communicated to the higher class papers. Nineteen *séances* were given without any intermission of rest—all of them extremely satisfactory to those who attended them; the sitters including, besides those already mentioned, many Swedish literary men, artists, and poets.

The testimony borne by Professors Törnebohm and Edland is especially noteworthy, inasmuch as prior to Mr. Eglinton's visit they were both entirely sceptical as regards spiritual phenomena. Their report appeared in the *Aftonblad* (*Evening Post*) of the 30th October, which is one of the best daily papers in Sweden. After calmly and dispassionately pleading for candid inquiry in the matter, and pointing out that although humbug and charlatanry are sometimes associated with the subject through fraudulent mediums, they insist that in spite of the prevalent idea that deceit and hallucination are at the bottom of spiritual phenomena, such hypotheses are not in accord with a judicial survey of all the facts and the circumstances surrounding them. They then proceeded to substantiate their argument, first, by alluding to the investigations of Wallace, Crookes, and Zöllner, and many more. These men, undertaking to examine seriously and without any preconceived opinions these inexplicable facts, which were again and again occurring, had come to the decision that such things really take place. "These investigators," say Professors Törnebohm and Edland, "were at last quite convinced that things could happen impossible to be explained by the science of our day, and quite incredible, if there had not been indisputable facts to prove them."

Having thus cleared the ground, they then relate the results of their own personal experience:—  
"The *séances* were given at the house of an honoured family here. The room in which they took place was closely inspected before the beginning of the *séance*, but nothing unusual was discovered. The circle was composed of ten persons, including the medium. Everybody sat down at the table, the conversation going on all the time, without any mystical preparations whatever. On the table

were placed a guitar, a musical box, and a small bell, all of which had been procured at a music shop in town. All hands were put upon the table so as to form a chain, nobody being able to move a finger without his neighbour noticing it. The persons sitting next Mr. Eglinton were closely observing his slightest movements. The lights were extinguished, but as the adjoining rooms were lighted up, which could be clearly seen through the crevices of the door, nobody could enter the room that was being used for the *séance* without being observed. After waiting for a few moments, the conversation still going on, the things lying on the table began to move about. The guitar was touched, and, to judge by the sounds proceeding from it, was hovering about the room near the ceiling. In returning to its former place, several persons were lightly touched by it. Then the musical box began playing, and was carried over our heads to a corner of the room, till it stopped; when it came back to the table and began playing again. The key was to be heard winding up the box. At that moment one of the Swedish persons present asked if the musical box would stop playing, which it immediately did. He then asked it to go on playing at a lively rate, and he was at once obliged, the box playing even much faster than its usual time. After the *séance* was at an end, it was observed that a large sofa standing near the wall had been moved nearly one yard from its usual place, and, when the candle was lighted, many things had been displaced in the room. During all this time the medium's hands were not let loose for one moment.

"The great question now is, how are we to explain satisfactorily the strange proceedings here related? The circumstances under which they took place wholly exclude all thoughts of conjuring. No conjurer would consent to play his tricks without an assistant, or apparatus of any kind, in a room where he had never been able to make any preparations whatever, and with both hands held fast. Some other explanation must be given: probably long and difficult researches are necessary. By people in general it is justly considered a great deal easier to laugh at what one cannot understand than to discover the cause of it; therefore the greater number choose the former way, although it explains nothing. When something strange and inexplicable occurs, the first thing to do is not to find out if it is possible or not, but to get proofs that it really has been done. If we have tangible facts to put forward, everybody must admit the possibility of the thing, although they cannot explain it. Only those deny the reality of spirit phenomena who have never examined them, but profound study alone *can* explain them. We do not know where we may be led by the discovery of the cause of these, as it seems, trivial occurrences, or to what new spheres of Nature's kingdoms they may open the way; but that they will bring forward important results is already made clear to us by the revelations of natural history in all ages.—  
TÖRNEBOM AND EDLAND."

During his stay in Sweden he visited, professionally, the University of Upsala with marked success; and he was also entertained by the Countess von Platen, at her castle in Orbyhüs, where he gave many sittings. After an extremely eventful series of *séances* lasting upwards of a month, he left his Swedish friends, from whom he had received much kindness, for Denmark, and at Copenhagen gave one *séance*, and then, travelling through Germany to Bohemia, he met with a cordial reception at the residence of Herr Schmidt, of Annathal, where he stayed for a fortnight or more, giving *séances* daily to those friends of his host who resided in the vicinity. Some, however, drove thirty and forty miles to be present, so keen was the interest evinced

by them. The records of these *séances* appeared in the German Spiritualist paper, *Licht Mehr Licht*, then partly edited by Herr Christian Reimers. From Annathal, Mr. Eglinton went on to Prague, where he was the guest of the late Prince Thurn and Taxis, an old Spiritualist. Many excellent results were obtained here.

From thence, in October, 1879, he travelled to Munich, in Bavaria. Here the *séances* were given at the residence of Gabriel Max, the eminent painter; they were attended by many well known in scientific circles. On leaving, a letter, of which the following is a translation, signed by Gabriel Max and fourteen others well known in science, literature, and art, was handed to Mr. Eglinton:—"Munich, October 29th, 1879. We beg to thank Mr. W. Eglinton for his kindness in giving us two *séances* at the house of the artist Gabriel Max, during his visit to Munich. They were of the highest interest, and convinced us of the genuineness of these wonderful phenomena."

One incident, the outcome of Mr. Eglinton's *séances* with Gabriel Max, must be mentioned here. Shortly after his visit to Munich, the celebrated artist published a picture entitled, "Geistesgruss" (Spirit Greeting)—a remarkable addition to the world of art from the study of manifestations of spiritual power.

This composition discloses a girl verging on womanhood, seated at a piano, on the music desk of which lies open the "Moonlight Sonata," of Beethoven. In the act of playing she has been arrested by "the touch of a vanished hand." This spirit hand, materialised from the wrist, is represented as gently resting on the girl's shoulder. The sad, startled young face, filled with emotion, gazes upwards, evidently seeing what, to the spectator, is invisible. Her hands are clasped together with agitation. Her dark, prophetic eyes dilate; her childish lips are opening with a cry of surprise. She is listening, all ear, to the spirit's utterances. Astonishment as yet overwhelms her—joy has yet to come.

A more thoroughly realistic treatment of a Spiritualistic subject—of one of the not infrequent experiences of the believers in "modern spiritual manifestations"—could not be imagined. It is itself a reality. You see before you a young "medium" receiving a communication. The story is beautifully told, and simple as truth itself. Though a lady, and educated, you see that this young girl is poor; the extreme simplicity and worn appearance of her dress tell you this much. That she is an orphan, its heavy deep mourning suggests to you. She is probably a teacher of music—has to be her own bread-winner. Her face informs you at once that her temperament is that of a "sensitive." The picture is solemnly tender, earnest, and pathetic. Though we behold the *spirit hand*, there is nothing "sensational" in the picture. A psychological experience is here, with an earnest and sympathetic treatment, set before us by the genius of a great artist.

From Munich Mr. Eglinton proceeded to Strasburg and Paris, in neither of which cities, however, did he give any *séances*. In Paris he was cordially received and entertained by M. Leymarie, of the *Revue Spirite*.

Shortly after his return to England, Dr. Robert Friese, a distinguished *savant* of Breslau, was present at a *séance* at the house of Dr. Nichols, and an account of the results obtained will be found on page 80.

One of the many interesting *séances* given by him to Florence Marryat, was held at that lady's residence on Sunday, January 4th, 1880. On that occasion there were present her

husband (Colonel Lean), George Cruikshank, George Grossmith, and Rutland Barrington. Seated in the dim light, with Venetian blinds drawn, Mr. Eglinton was seen by all present to ascend and float across the window.

In January, 1880, he was invited to read a paper upon "Mediumship," before the Dalston Association of Spiritualists. The Rev. W. Miall took the chair. The paper dealt chiefly with the unsatisfactory relationship then existing between mediums and the Spiritualistic public, and a full report appeared in the *Spiritualist* for January 16th, 1880.

In February of this year (1880) he again went to Cambridge University, and, under the auspices of the Psychological Society of that town, gave *séances* at which striking results were obtained, while he was handcuffed to one person, and held by another.

It was in this month that Sir George Sitwell and Mr. Carl von Buch "exposed" Mrs. Corner. I need not refer more particularly to this affair, except to say that the last word of this, as of most other "exposures," has probably not yet been said. Time brings its own revenge in most things, and Spiritualism is no exception to the general rule. It is to be hoped that when maturer experience has shown these youths the folly of their hasty and precipitate action, and their consequently fallacious conclusions, they will be honourable enough to publicly confess the error into which they, no doubt, unwittingly fell. So much at least is due to the medium most concerned.

After this affair Mr. Eglinton, in a spirit of loyal devotion to truth, immediately wrote to the exposers, offering to give them a *séance* at the residence of Dr. Nichols, but although they came, nothing was obtained.

At that time arrangements were being made for a more extended continental trip, and on March 4th he left London, with two friends, for Holland, *en route* for Leipsic. Here he became the guest of Baron von Hoffmann, and was engaged to give *séances* to Professor Zöllner and others connected with the University. Work was commenced on the 8th of March, two *séances* being given daily, or twenty-five in all. This was his first meeting with Zöllner. Writing of this, Mr. Eglinton says:—"I fell in love with him at once, he was so genial and open-hearted. We had a continuous series of marvellous successes. Zöllner had intended writing a volume of his experiments, many of them novel and striking, but death intervened."

Mr. A. J. Riko, of the Hague, writing in *Spiritual Notes*, May, 1880, says, referring to these *séances* in Leipsic: "Zöllner has also written to me. He is very satisfied with his experiments with Mr. Eglinton, from which he learned very much—*Sie waren lehrreich*—as he says." As a proof of his appreciation and satisfaction, I may say, he and Professor Thiersch—another convert—presented Mr. Eglinton with a handsome cameo pin, which is one of the most valued of the many pleasant *souvenirs* received by him. Herr G. C. Wittig, editor of *Psychische Studien*, gives a long account in that journal of the satisfactory manifestations occurring in the presence of himself and friends during Mr. Eglinton's stay in Leipsic. It is only possible, however, for me to refer to some of these reports.

On the 22nd March he left Leipsic for Zwickau in Saxony, Professor Zöllner coming to the train, and bidding him farewell. The experiments at Zwickau took place at the residence of Dr. Kellner, in the presence of eight or ten scientific men, all of whom were entirely new to the subject. Great interest was taken in the experiments, and many converts made. Dr. Kellner gave an entertaining account of the results in *Licht Mehr Licht*.

From Zwickau, where he ſtayed for a few days only, he went to Dresden, gave a private *séance* there to a diſtinguiſhed perſon, and left on the 25th for Prague, Bohemia. There he held ſeveral *séances* at the reſidence of Dr. D. Schubert. They were attended by ſeveral literary, medical, and ſcientific perſons, but the reſults were not, on the whole, ſatisfactory. On the 2nd April he arrived in Vienna, as the gueſt of Baron Hellenbach, whoſe fame as a metaphyſical author is well known; he has alſo written ſome ſtriking works upon Spiritualism, and kindred ſubjects, and is a leading member of the ariſtoꝛacy. Over thirty *séances* were given to the higheſt members of ſociety, including Princeſs Dietrichſtein, Prince and Princeſs Khevenhüller, Counteſs Clam-Gallas, Princes Alfred, Louis, and Heinrich Lichtenſtein, Count Zichy, Prince and Princeſs Batthyany, Profeſſor von Moſetig, the diſtinguiſhed anatomist, T.H.R. the Duke and Ducheff of Cumberland, Count Schönborn Princeſs Hatzfeld, Count Wilezek, Prince and Princeſs Metternich, Baron Hoffman (Finance Miniſter), Baron and Baroneſs Rothschild, Counteſs Almaſſy, Count and Counteſs Taaffe (Foreign Miniſter), Marquis and Marchioneſs Pallavicini, Prince Berghes, Count Feſtetch, Colonel Primroſe (Military Attaché, whom he had met previously in London at the Duke of Cleveland's), Sir Henry Elliot, Prince Hohenlohe, Prince Ratibor, and many others equally noted. The Ducheff of Cumberland ſpecially ſingled out Mr. Eglinton at a reception at Prince Metternich's, and held a converſation with him of over half an hour, during which time he learned much of Spiritualism in Royal circles in England. The *séance* with the Duke of Cumberland was a very remarkable one, and Mr. Eglinton wrote a full account of it for an early number of *Light*, but I regret to ſay I have to omit it here for want of ſpace. Slade had viſited Vienna a ſhort time previously, but his ſtay was of ſhort duration, the police objecting to his preſence. They attempted the ſame intolerance with Mr. Eglinton, but the latter having powerful friends at his back, they did not ſucceed. Theſe *séances* created a great ſenſation, cauſing many eminent perſons to change their opinions, and Spiritualism from this time took firm hold in the capital of Auſtria. The ſittings were held at the reſidences of the perſons named, and accounts of the phenomena are given in Hellenbach's various books, eſpecially in the "Prejudices of Mankind." The following brief extracts from this volume will ſhow the general nature of the teſtimony.

"Eglinton came to Vienna on my invitation, not for my own ſake. . . . I myſelf needed no further experiments to convince me of the exiſtence of other kinds of beings. . . . I have held ſeveral *séances* with Eglinton, in which the experiments took place in the light. . . . I have learned more through Eglinton than anyone, and eſpecially through the unſucceſſful *séances*. The phenomena may be divided into ſix claſſes; the moſt ordinary occurrence is the floating about of objects, guitars, heavy clocks, glaſs tubes filled with quickſilver, which through friction are illuminated by their contents, alſo the moving of diſtant objects, ſuch as books, pictures, and even chairs and *fautouils*. Now as to the explanation of theſe occurrences I will not enter into a diſcuſſion of the ingenious ſuggeſtions I have heard offered, as, for inſtance, that Eglinton makes the inſtruments float about by the aid of an india-rubber hand, or that he, or ſome confederate, cauſes the inſtruments to fly about like bats among the heads of the company, ſome of whom they touch, as though through deſign, etc., and are occaſionally even ſeen under favourable circumſtances.

"On the 4th April, 1880, a dark *séance* took place. It was held in the middle of the



room, between the stove and the harmonium, with only five persons present. There was a difference between this *séance* and the preceding ones, in the fact that one of the shutters did not shut closely, and allowed a ray of light to enter from the lighted street outside, which glimmer, though not sufficient to illuminate the apartment, threw a considerable amount of light over part of the room, especially over the table, and made it possible for me and my neighbour not only to hear the guitars floating about, but to *see* them as well; besides a clock which was moved from one place to another with marvellous rapidity. It, therefore, was certain that Eglinton in order to do all this himself, not only must have been quite free, but must have passed frequently in front of the ray of light, and must have been more visible even than the guitars. Later on, we shall come, as before said, to describe *séances* which took place in a sufficient light.

“The second kind of experiment was noticeable from the fact that after the *séance* the furniture in the room was found moved about, sofas and chairs being upset or placed one upon the other. Those who allege, as aforesaid, that Eglinton gets free will find nothing wonderful in that; there are even men who go so far as to say they have seen Eglinton, with both hands held fast, raise with his foot an easy chair at seven feet distance, and passing it above our heads place it on the table, although the room was quite dark and I felt his knees all the time, for it must be understood that during the first *séances* I always managed, when I sat next him, to touch his foot or his knee.

“The third kind of manifestation is that of a feeling of being touched. Those who have experienced these contacts, which often occur in the presence of mediums, know that it is quite a peculiar and distinct sensation, produced as though by the touch of a human hand, on the uncovered skin or through the clothes, generally on the knee; sometimes it has happened that those sitting next the person touched, have likewise felt the sensation and spoken of it, at the same time asserting that they could see some sort of form.

“As to the appearance of lights, sparks and points of light were undoubtedly frequently seen at an unattainable distance from Mr. Eglinton, besides which on one occasion a bluish cross was seen, though in this case he was standing outside the circle, but had he been able to place such a phosphorescent light there, the riddle remains why the room should not be lit by it. Sulphide of calcium, barium, and strontium illuminate very powerfully, and Professor Balmain has constructed a safety lamp for the use of miners, of this phosphorescent quality, which though throwing a weaker light than those in ordinary use, yet gives sufficient for the purpose. This, however, was not the case with this appearance; the cross, which of itself was much brighter and of a far deeper blue than quicksilver in an air-exhausted receiver, which gives sufficient light of itself to show the outline of a hand—notwithstanding which the blue cross gave no light whatever, the room remaining as dark as before. The time of day made it impossible that rays of sunlight should by any means penetrate into the room, for the *séance* took place at eight o'clock in the evening, and since four o'clock, Eglinton and I had been constantly together. . . .

“The valuable results arising from the partly or wholly unsuccessful *séances* induced me to hold a sitting with him by myself alone, with only the companionship of a young relative of mine. The *séance* took place in the library; Eglinton sat with his back to the bookcase, I opposite him, and to my right my young friend. We felt a cool breeze over the backs of

our hands, and about two minutes after the lights were put out the musical clock began to play. The objects on the table moved, but did not fly about, and Eglinton said in a low voice that he had an impression that we should have the appearance of lights and a materialisation. He asked for a comfortable seat, and received from us an arm-chair. It is clear, that as he was free, though we could hear him breathing, he was in a position to do all himself, and only the nature of the manifestations could determine whether they were accomplished through his physical powers or not. One must recognise the fact that we had possibly to do with an artist of the first rank, of high physical and mental gifts, even leaving out of consideration his youth, knowledge, and individuality.

"I saw first a bluish light, by which a human head was illuminated, though indistinctly. Almost directly afterwards the same apparition was repeated, only this time the light was so strong that the head of an Oriental, with a thin waving beard, white turban and drapery, was distinctly visible, about a foot and a half distant from me and the other spectator. This appearance vanished, and after some time the same head, even more distinct, showed itself, approaching me within four or five inches. The form stood on the table, as though the under part of the figure was cut off by the level of the table. I saw this apparition about twenty seconds, and I can most emphatically declare that from the likeness and the whole nature of the appearance, it could by no possibility be Eglinton's head. I sought curiously for the light coming from below, by which the face and the rich folds of the white drapery were beautifully illuminated, without, however, throwing a ray of light into the room, and discovered the blue cross. The cross was then, as it were, absorbed into the drapery, and the figure disappeared, or, to speak more correctly, faded away. As it vanished slowly, the blue cross appeared again, suspended for a short time, after which the *séance* terminated. My companion was much impressed; he saw the same as I did, only that he recognised the blue cross at the second appearance of the figure and saw the eyes move, and look steadily at him.

"We will first weigh all the circumstances which could account for such a manifestation by ordinary physical means, and which, in common parlance, would be described as suspicious. The medium was quite free, and could, without chance of discovery, do many things unseen by us. He asked us to converse, and the musical box was often playing, although very softly; besides which we could sometimes hear the rustling of his garments. We will likewise discuss the probability of producing such a kind of light and the placing there of such a head. Before we examine, however, this difficult question, we will weigh the obstacles in the way of any deception being practised.

"The *séance* was held in my library; any preparations for optical apparatus were therefore impossible, and there was nothing the least remarkable in Eglinton's dress, either before or after the *séance*. It is inconceivable that any apparatus could have been enclosed in a large cigar case, and the time to perform any such mimicry was very short. He had about five minutes only before the first manifestation took place, and, at the outside, two minutes after the last, to replace everything in order.

"All this, however, is not decisive. The appearance of the head, and of the clothing, without any preparation, the disappearance of all this without a trace being left, incredible as it appears, especially as the work of a young man of three-and-twenty who, except in his

*séances*, spends little time in physical studies and practice, is not altogether to be described as absolutely impossible. The crucial tests for the solution of this phenomenon lie in the lights and in the head itself. I have discussed the question with a practical physicist, who manages a warehouse for scientific apparatus, and who is a great specialist for every kind of optical instrument, with a view to discover if the effect is due to a cunning arrangement of mirrors. We agree that the presence of such a head, or such a figure, is quite impossible without a place where the original could be put, and of a large mirror which could reflect the objects; therefore, as every expert will confess, there can be no thought of that theory, inasmuch as the phenomena occurred in a room closely locked, with no other entrance, and where every preparation was impossible. Such optical illusions could therefore by no means be carried out.

"The assumption that Eglinton might have such a mask in readiness, and be provided with means to obtain certain lights, is likewise inadmissible. Such a dummy could not have living eyes and movements; there is therefore nothing left to be suggested except that *he himself* personates the apparition. I will leave out of the question how Eglinton could illuminate his face so brightly, and yet everything else in the room remain in total darkness, and place before the reader the following questions:—

"Can the reader believe that I could fail to recognise a face which appeared twice very distinctly before me, and remained for many seconds, only about four inches distant from mine?

"Can the reader believe that a beard, each separate hair of which I could see to the roots, could be made away with, together with all the other paraphernalia, in the space of two minutes?

"And can the reader credit that Eglinton, for years, should be able to perform these optical wonders in the presence of such men as Zöllner, and also in that of others, and yet at other times could not perform them?

"These arguments are absolutely unanswerable; not, however, from the circumstance that Eglinton was free. I am not justified in calling that an impossibility, simply because it is utterly beyond my conception. In so doing I should be guilty of the same error as our scientists. I, therefore, believe the head I saw to be a psychical apparition for the following reasons:—That, in the presence of three different mediums, under the most stringent test conditions, I have seen and felt hands not mortal, is as certain as that there exist comets and meteoric stones. That Zöllner, under the same test conditions, felt the presence of feet, is equally well authenticated. I ask, therefore, if hands and feet are thus projected (materialised) why should there not be materialisation of heads? Have such not been observed by Wallace and Crookes under the most rigid test conditions? Is it more difficult to believe that Eglinton is a trickster, or that hands have been materialised under strict test conditions? There is a scepticism which surpasses in imbecility the obtuseness of a clod-hopper.

"A young and gifted friend of mine, who was much interested in obtaining genuine proofs, wished to have a *séance* with me and my afore-named relative alone. Eglinton himself proposed a light *séance*, such as he had formerly held, if I am not deceived, with Wallace. For this purpose two towels were hung over the open door between the middle room and the library, so as to form curtains. Eglinton sat in this doorway on a chair, so that his knees and feet were in one room and the rest of his body in the library, behind the improvised curtains.

The room in which Eglinton sat was quite dark, the other in half light, sufficient, however, for every object to be visible. At Eglinton's expressed wish, both his hands were sewn together behind his back, in such a manner that the most extraordinary skill could not disengage them, or, if disengaged, fasten them together again unaided. Eglinton likewise requested my friend, after the first manifestation, to make sure again that everything was secure. The guitar, musical box, etc., were placed about half a yard from the curtain on the floor, and subsequently even nearer, and on his knees was laid a heavy volume, the curtains being arranged so that the book was quite visible. Although this *séance* lasted nearly an hour, nothing took place except that the cover and several pages of the book were opened without anyone touching it, and the book itself after some movements was thrown behind Eglinton's chair. Some motion of the curtains was also observed, as though a hand was trying to pull them back. The *séance* terminated; my friend took his leave, and we three remained some time longer drinking tea. Suddenly Eglinton drew himself together and asked for paper and pencil, with which, after making several strokes, he began to write in English from right to left. We had to place it before a mirror to read it, and there we found written that we might see still further manifestations at that time, only that the medium should be allowed to move about. We were overjoyed and much surprised, and occupied the time in the following experiments:—Eglinton placed himself on four strong drinking glasses on the top of the closed piano, and requested us to ask for certain raps in rotation. These were correctly given as though they were struck from under the lid of the piano. Eglinton then descended from the piano and asked that the knockings should be repeated on the floor, and under the thick Persian carpet. This also was accomplished. Eglinton then made us sew his hands together behind his back, and everything was arranged as it had been before. The table stood this time only a foot distant from his knees, and we placed ourselves from five to six feet from the table, one to the right the other to the left. I sat on an easy chair by the window; my relative stood by the piano so that we could see everything both above and below. Scarcely had we taken our places than the book sprang violently from the table, and opened as it had done before, the guitar was taken by an unseen hand from the table, flung through the curtains into the next room, where it floated about playing (at least so it sounded); a violin which I had purposely placed behind Eglinton in the dark room flew through the curtains at my feet; the guitar, after it had audibly manifested its presence in the dark room, sometimes by playing, sometimes by knocking against things, returned to its place on the table, and a long and large hand took the musical box from the table and carried it into the next room, where it commenced playing. All this happened at the outside in five minutes, at the expiration of which time I entered the dark room to convince myself of the security of the sewing. But admitted as it must be that it would be perfectly impossible for the sleeves of a coat which were securely sewn together behind the back to be unsewn and resewn in so short a space of time, the disappearance of the guitar without hands, the removal from the table of the book which was visibly lying on it, and lastly, the long form of the hand and arm, must be perfectly convincing proofs for anyone of common understanding that there could be no question of ordinary physical phenomena or of jugglery.

“The second of this kind of *séances* took place in the presence of a lady and two gentlemen, besides myself and Eglinton. The same manifestations were repeated, only rather more

quietly. The only new thing was that not only were Eglinton's hands sewn together behind his back, but his coat was likewise securely sewn up in front, so that his getting out of it was a matter of utter impossibility; he likewise allowed one of the spectators to place his hand on his head so that he could, in close proximity, observe the book opening of itself. We must likewise remark that at one time Eglinton's knee was buckled to his chair, and at another was held by a band fastened to it by my sceptical friend.

"The third and last *séance* took place one forenoon at my house, in the presence of a gentleman and lady, at which there was this variation, viz., that a small greyish hand appeared through the curtains, without, however, taking hold of anything, and that the small table near the door, on which some albums were placed, was drawn suddenly towards the door.

"I imagined that the two albums might be carried into the next room in the same way as the book, therefore, while sitting in the arm-chair, I kept my eyes fixed on the albums; and, in fact, one of the albums slowly raised itself from the table, and apparently carried itself through the curtains, for not the shadow of a hand was to be seen, and I found it, later on, with the heavy book, on the writing table in the library. Both the folding doors behind Eglinton were pushed to, and without rising from his seat he could not possibly have reached them.

"It gave me particular satisfaction that this same lady and my young relative should have been present at a light *séance*, because they both, after some dark *séances*, declared that they had seen Eglinton's hand on the table. Had they been persons of less good breeding they might have professed to have unmasked an imposture. I explained to them that the fact of their seeing a hand on the table did not prove that the hand was Eglinton's. It is, indeed, a *hand* that performs all these movements, only it is not *always* visible to *everyone*. I can assert this with confidence, because, while sitting with Slade in full light, I have both seen and felt hands which could not possibly be those of Slade, as the latter were too far off, besides being visible to me. These two sceptics were obliged to confess after the light *séances* that they had arrived at a false conclusion. Still I repeat once more, it is not a question of my subjective opinion as to the character and honesty of Eglinton, but solely one of facts."

As usual, the extraordinary success attending his mediumship excited ire and jealousy. It appears that after the series of successful *séances* described by Baron Hellenbach had terminated, Mr. Eglinton went a second time to Munich, where he had engaged to give twelve *séances*, and it was at the eleventh that a *contretemps* occurred, which had an unfortunate issue for him. Ten *séances* had been given with great success, in the presence of many eminent persons of the University and others, but the eleventh ended in a different manner. He was sitting as usual with both hands held. At the termination of the *séance* a mechanical frog was discovered in the corner of the room, but no one owned to having brought it. When he got back to his hotel, he discovered, to his surprise, black upon his face and hands, but suspecting nothing, he went to the twelfth *séance*, being called for as usual by a person who professed great esteem for him. When he got into the room, instead of the usual circle, he found fifteen or sixteen persons, some of whom were strangers. One man acted as spokesman. He said Mr. Eglinton was a fraud, desired him to take £25 (his fee was sixty guineas), and leave the city at once, or take the consequences. Mr. Eglinton demanded an explanation, but could get none other than that the mechanical frog had been used by



him for some purpose or other, and that the musical instruments having been blackened, and black having been found upon him, he must necessarily be a fraud. He wished to be allowed to give further *séances*, but all his offers were rejected; and they in turn again insisted on the conditions which they had settled on beforehand. He refused the twenty-five pounds, feeling it would be blood-money if he took it, and returned to his hotel. Having two ladies under his charge, he decided not to run the risk of any unpleasantness, and left the city the next day. Rumours spread; some got hold of one tale, some of another, but all agreed that he was "exposed" and "smashed up." To show how everything was distorted, the *London Globe*, with its usual mendacity, described him as an "acrobat" caught in his performances; but opinion was unanimous that "mechaniches werks" (poor inanimate frog!) had been discovered upon his person. It was not until three months after the events narrated, that Herr Levey, director of the Royal Opera House (who was present when Mr. Eglinton was accused of having used the frog at his *séances*), confessed to having brought it himself to the sitting in question to see if anything would be done with it!

This injustice quite unnerved him for a time, and he returned to Paris, when after a long stay there, for rest, he came to London, and did not give any *séances* until November. Professor Zöllner took up his cause warmly, and in a letter to one of the principal persons connected with this shameful treatment of Mr. Eglinton, he "warns him of the fallacies of evidence against a *proved* medium;" and the *Psychische Studien* said, "There appears to be a general feeling among German Spiritualists that the Munich investigators acted precipitately and on insufficient grounds." Baron du Prel told him recently (in 1885), that only *two* out of the large number of persons attending the twelve *séances*, and who swayed the remainder, believed him guilty.

He gave no more professional *séances* that year, but a great number of most astounding sittings took place at the residence of Dr. Nichols. These the latter gentleman published at various times in the spiritual press; but he recently collected, revised, and re-published them in the *Spiritual Record*.



## CHAPTER X.

### *DRAWINGS AND WRITINGS PRODUCED BY ABNORMAL MEANS. CASTS FROM MATERIALISED HANDS.*



SOME of the best results of Mr. Eglinton's mediumship during the period with which I am now concerned, were obtained in the privacy of home life. For a long period he was living *en famille* with Dr. and Mrs. Nichols, and under exceptionally favourable circumstances for practical and systematic research. Dr. Nichols has prepared a connected account of his experience, and I cannot do better than give his testimony first hand. How careful an investigator he was, and how little prone to be led away by mere sentiment, the following collection of facts will show.

No kind of spirit manifestations seems to me more satisfactory and convincing than direct writings and drawings, whether done on slates or on paper, if under test conditions, or when tests in themselves. Of course we must be certain that the writing or drawing was not done by any person "in the body;" we must take precautions as in other cases, against the possibility of fraud or delusion; and when we have done this, the evidence is of a very striking and permanent character. "The written word remains."

I have in a drawer of my writing-desk a collection of about twenty examples of direct spirit-writings and drawings, which I have shown to many persons, who, when able to accept testimony as to the conditions under which they were produced, have found them most convincing documents. Of course it comes, like all other testimony, to be a question of personal veracity. In every case I can support my own testimony by that of three or four witnesses, who could swear to the documents and the mode of their production. Two witnesses are required to a will which may dispose of millions. I shall state no fact which cannot be as well proven as a will. The documents were all drawn and written in my own house, in my presence, and in that of members of my family, and the operation of writing or drawing was generally heard, and was done on my own note paper, initialled for identification, or on blank cards, with a torn-off corner in my pocket, afterwards so applied as to give perfect assurance of identity. The handwriting of some of the manuscripts, and of the signature to all the drawings, is as familiar to me as my own.

In every instance the work has been done either in obscurity, as in a dark corner of

the room, or in total darkness—on the table with the gas turned off, in a closed box, in the space between two slates, or between the leaves of a closed book—always in positions and conditions where writing or drawing seems to us impossible, and in a space of time to be counted in seconds rather than minutes—an elaborate drawing and letter of more than a page being produced in certainly less than two minutes, and I believe less than one.

Fig. 5 is an imperfect representation of a pencil drawing made upon a blank card, the roughly torn-off corner of which was in my pocket. It was done in a small room of my house, used as a *séance* room. The door was locked, and the key in my pocket. The four or five persons present, including the medium, were members of my family. The card was laid upon the centre of the table with a lead pencil. I turned off the gas, and we all sat holding hands in silence, hearing the rapid ticks of the pencil upon the card for perhaps half a minute. Then came three distinct raps, the signal for a light. I turned on the gas, and found the drawing on the card, which I at once identified by the torn-off



FIG. 5.—A Direct Drawing.

corner in my pocket. It is very certain that no mortal hand could have done it in the dark, nor in the time occupied in its production. The sound of the pencil upon the card was like that of very rapid machinery.

Then four lines of German verse, signed "Goethe," were produced under somewhat different conditions. It was in the same room, and upon a blank card, selected from a number lying on the table, a corner being torn off to identify the card, which was dropped into a small empty work-box, about 10" × 6" × 3", with a bit of lead pencil. We sat in the full light, with my hands upon the cover of the box. I was then asked by the medium, sitting opposite me at the table, with his hands held by two ladies, what I wished to have written on the card. I said, "We have had writing in English, Latin, Greek, French, Italian; I should like something in German." In a moment I heard the sound of writing—that is, of a pencil on hard paper, inside the little box under my hands. Then three little raps. I opened the box, and found the card, with four boldly written lines, and the name of the great poet. I am ashamed to confess that I only know German by sight.

No one present could read it. Yet there it was, written under my hands, and in my hearing, in a closed wooden box. The fact is certain, and it is stupendous! No theory but one will account for it, and the reader is forced to one of two conclusions: either I am writing deliberate lies, or these four lines were written in that closed, dark box by spirit-power. No other hypothesis will explain it. "Electricity" does many curious things, but it cannot of itself write German. Whatever the force employed, it was directed by mind. And it was not the mind of any visible body then present. Not one of them could even read the writing. No theory of chemical writing, invisible ink, etc., will do, because the original card lying before me, with its corner torn off, is written upon with a *black lead pencil*. And until I asked for German, after the box was closed and under my hands, how could any one know what would be required? Does any one believe that Maskelyne and Cooke, or all the so-called conjurers in the world, could produce such a writing under identical conditions?

Happy Gods! And  
 both their loves  
 and their joys in  
 the same day,  
 with happy will  
 if they went  
 together to the  
 same place:  
 line 18. n. 245

FIG. 6.—Writing with Ink on a Card Inside a Closed and Weighted Book.

The third example of spirit-writing is, perhaps, more wonderful, more impossible than either of the preceding. The drawing (Fig. 5) was done in total darkness, but upon the centre of the table, where action was free. The German writing was done in a small closed box, in a confined space, as well as total darkness, and in a language entirely unknown to any one visibly present. The bold writing of Fig. 6 was done in the same room as the others, in presence of the same medium, and with nearly, if not precisely, the same circle. As in the other cases, a blank card was taken at random from a quantity lying on the table, and then placed between the leaves of a thick book, which chanced to be lying on the sofa. It was a copy of a translation of the "Decameron," of Boccacio, from the Grosvenor Library. The card, first examined by all present, was placed in the centre of the book; then a heavy cut-glass inkstand, which weighs about two pounds, was placed upon the book, and beside it was laid a steel pen. The room was well lighted, and, of course, the book carefully watched while we held each other's hands round the table. In about a minute signal raps

were heard, the inkstand and pen were removed, and the card taken out of the book, when we found written upon it the words:—

*“Happy souls! to end both their loves and their lives on the same day. More happy still if they went together to the same place.—(Line 13, p. 245.)*

Turning to page 245, where I suppose the card had happened to be placed, and counting down to line 13, I found the passage, which had been accurately copied in fresh ink on the card—the closing words of one of the curious mediæval stories whose beautiful style is said to have perfected the most melodious of European languages. I narrowly examined the two leaves to see if there was any stain of ink, and did not find a trace. Carefully watching in a good light no movement was seen of book, pen, or inkstand.

Who can explain it? No doubt it seems wildly “impossible”—but it is, nevertheless, *absolutely true*. The writing lies before me—and Fig. 6 is a good photographic facsimile. I have several examples of writing in closed and weighted books with bits of lead pencil—but with ink! It is an astonishing manifestation of an almost inconceivable power. All I can do is to describe accurately the conditions. I cannot explain the way in which spirits deal with matter, which is evidently quite a different thing to them, from what it is to us, so that their operations are, as Bow Street magistrates and philosophers alike aver, quite “contrary to the well-known laws of Nature.”

The most sceptical can see, hold in their hands, and carefully examine the work of materialised spirits. This work is real, visible, tangible, and not produced by their imagination or by mine. The only question is as to the credibility of the testimony and as to the manner in which it is produced. For both of them there is my statement, which can be confirmed at need by the testimony of four or five credible persons. The conditions forbid any idea of the possibility of fraud.

I must explain, in regard to the examples of direct writing, and that of drawing and writing (Figs. 7 and 8) that they have been a little marred in the process of reproduction. In Fig. 7, the heading of my note paper, and my initials and date, written in ink, are clearly given; but all the rest, the four different handwritings, not written by the hands of persons living in our world—written by the hands of materialised spirits, were in pencil, and of too light a colour, I feared, to transfer by any process by which they could be printed with type. I therefore took a fine black pencil and carefully deepened the colour of every line. This process has given a little roughness to the writing. It is not as smooth and clear as the original; but it has not marred the distinctive individuality of each hand, and has made them more legible.

The same defects have still more marred the combined drawing and writing of Fig. 8, which was remarkable for the perfection and delicacy of the seven circles. The words between the circles and the Lord's Prayer in the centre circle were too finely written for me to venture to touch, and they are but imperfectly given, but can, I find, be read with a magnifying glass of moderate power. Now for the conditions under which these two examples were produced. In the case of Fig. 7, six persons were sitting round a table in a small, locked and darkened room in my house, 32, Fopstone Road, Earl's Court, London, S.W., February 2nd, 1878. These persons were Mr. W. Eglinton, Mr. A., Mrs. Wilkes, Miss Merriman (a young American lady), Mrs. Nichols, and myself. I turned off the gas light,









a sheet of your note paper, and mark it so that you will know it, and then lay it with a lead pencil on the centre of the table, and put out the light. We want to do some writing."

I lighted the gas, got the paper, wrote my initials and the date upon the corner, laid it upon the table, as desired, turned off the gas light, and took the hands of the two persons nearest to me. A moment after I heard the sound of writing with a pencil on paper, on the centre of the table. This continued for perhaps half a minute. Then there were three raps upon the table, and I lighted the gas, and took up the paper.

It contains three complete signed messages, a brief one unsigned, and the beginning of another left incomplete. The communications are in entirely different handwritings, and were



FIG. 8.—Direct Drawing and Writing.

apparently written from different positions relative to the paper. The handwriting of the three that were signed was instantly recognised. That signed "J. Scott" was recognised by Mr. A. and Mrs. Wilkes; that signed "Aimée" was recognised by Mr. A. and Mr. Eglinton; the longest message, signed "Willie," was recognised, beyond all question, by Mrs. Nichols and myself as the handwriting of our daughter, Mary Wilhelmina Nichols, who departed this life in 1865 at the age of fourteen. No one comparing it with her papers preserved by us could question its genuineness; and the words in the corner—"There shall be no parting there," are in the familiar hand of our spirit friend "Joey."

As far as I can see, there could be no more satisfactory test conditions. The sheet of note paper laid blank upon the table, and perfectly identified by the initials and date. The handwriting of the three signed messages was certainly not upon it before the *séance*, and



certainly could not have been written by any one bodily present, in total darkness, and the handwritings were identified and could be proven in any court of justice.

The example of combined spirit drawing and writing, Fig. 8, was done under precisely similar conditions in my own house, in a small circle of intimate friends sitting round a table holding hands, in total darkness. It is upon a sheet of my note paper, initialled like the other for identification, but for economy of space not included in the reproduction. The handwriting of the motto, "I am THE light," and of the signature "Willie," a short pet name for "Wilhelmina,"



FIG. 9.—A Direct Drawing Executed in Total Darkness.

will be recognised at once as the same as that of the longest message in Fig. 7. How those circles, originally perfect, but marred, as I have explained, by my efforts to make them more distinct for reproduction, could be drawn without instruments, in total darkness, and these and the writing all done in a few seconds, passes comprehension. All I know is that both these examples were done in the time, and under the conditions I have stated. They are solid, permanent facts, and wonderful evidences of spirit power.

The wonderful "Ecce Homo" (Fig. 9) was done in my presence, under conditions I wish to describe accurately. I sat opposite Mr. Eglinton at a table in a room in my own



house, with several friends. He asked me to select a blank card from a parcel, and examine it. He tore off a large corner, which I put in my waistcoat pocket, and then he laid the card, with a lead pencil, on the centre of the table, and asked me to turn off the gas. We held each other's hands round the table, in total darkness and perfect silence. In a few moments I heard the sounds of a lead pencil on paper, but moving so rapidly that its strokes resembled the beating of rapid machinery. It was like the rattle one can make in the mouth—the long roll of an *r* when the end of the tongue is free. In about a minute—certainly less than two minutes, and, I think, less than one—the sounds ceased, and a light was called for by raps upon the table. I lighted the gas, took up the card, and fitted it to the torn-off corner. Upon it was the "Ecce Homo"—the head surrounded by a full triple halo, drawn with wonderful power, and with a number of pencil strokes and touches impossible to count, and but imperfectly indicated in this engraving. Portions of the halo became damaged by careless fingers, but in a good light the three circles of beautiful cones can be made out on the pencil drawing; each cone requiring many strokes of the pencil. Considering that the whole was done in about one minute and in total darkness, it seems to me one of the most wonderful things I have ever seen. The engraving shows but one full circle of the middle of the three halos, and a few cones of the outer one; but the original drawing, spoiled as it was before I protected it with a wash of gum tragacanth, has three distinct circles. The signature, "Willie," is the same as the others.

I do not pretend for a moment that these are perfect drawings. They are the work of a self-taught little girl, who departed this life in her fifteenth year. In her last days she amused herself with drawing trees she could see from her window, and portraits of children she loved. When she became too weak for this exertion, she held the pencil, and her hand, she said, drew of itself, and with no conscious effort on her part, very strange and beautiful things, which she looked at with great interest and enjoyment. They came to her as beautiful poems came in her sleep. Since she left us, she has appeared to cheer us whenever she has had the conditions which have enabled her to do so. With different mediums, and when there has been no one but her father and mother in the room, she has come in her materialised body, so that we have seen, and heard, and felt her, beyond the possibility of doubt. We cannot be more certain of anything in this world, than we are certain that our child has many times appeared to us in her own bodily form, and made herself evident to us by all the senses with which we usually become conscious of objective realities. We are as certain of her continued existence, and of her occasional visible and tangible presence, as we are of any of the persons and things we daily see, hear, or feel, and in the same way and with the same certainty.

We can form so little idea of the mode of writing on carefully enveloped slates, or on paper enclosed in the space between them, or on cards laid between the leaves of a thick book, and while pressed with a heavy weight, that very good testimony is required to make credible such seeming impossibilities; and I never unlock the drawer of my writing-desk to show these evidences of spirit power without the uncomfortable feeling that I raise a question of personal veracity, and run the risk of being considered—not a fanatic, but a deceiver—a teller of untruths. The hypothesis that I have been a victim of deception—fool instead of knave—does not fit the case. The circumstances compel the belief of one of two things.

If I tell the truth, and if the witnesses I can summon are worthy of belief, here are convincing evidences of spirit-life and spirit-power.

Here, for example, is a case of slate-writing, which I will describe in detail, but as briefly as I can. The back-room on the ground-floor of my house was converted into a *séance* room, by closing the shutters and locking the door opening upon the garden, and drawing a curtain across that end of the room, behind which lay the medium on a couch. The other door, opening into the hall, was locked, and the key in my pocket. My chair was also placed against the locked door. The seats of others present were ranged in the same line, opposite the medium. The gas in the centre of the room was lowered, but it still lighted the room. The medium, Mr. Eglinton, is lying on the couch, behind the curtain. This is drawn aside, and from behind it comes into the centre of the room a man, clothed in white, taller than Mr. Eglinton, more slender, speaking with a different voice, and in an entirely different manner—a spirit-form, calling himself "Joey," who has many times, and in many ways, demonstrated his distinct individuality. For example, he has talked with me when the lips of his medium were tightly closed with gummed paper. He has dipped his finger in purple ink, and I have found the medium's fingers clean. When Mr. Eglinton sat in full sight before the curtain, I have seen "Joey" come from behind it, and lead him to the couch. He has taken great pains to demonstrate his distinct individuality.

On this occasion, after saluting the seven persons present, he came near me, and said: "Dr. Nichols, I want two slates." "You will find some slates on the mantelpiece, 'Joey,'" I replied. "They are a rather shabby lot, but you can take your choice."

"Joey" rattled them over, and picked out two of the same size, which he brought and placed in my hands, asking me to carefully clean them, which I did by the same process I used when a schoolboy. "Joey" took them, and said: "Now I want a slate-pencil. Who has got a slate-pencil? Floy!" addressing a young lady present, "have you got a pencil?" "Yes, 'Joey;' but it is at the top of the house, in the pocket of my dress. Shall I go and get it?" "Never mind," said "Joey," "I will get it;" and going near the gas-light, he held up one of the slates horizontally higher than his head. We heard the sharp "click" of something falling on the slate. "Joey" took it and held it up for us to see that it was the needed pencil.

Standing thus near the light, so that we could all distinctly see him, he put the end of the pencil into his mouth, and we all heard him bite off a piece of it. At this we naturally made some exclamations of wonder, and he deliberately repeated the operation, and then placed one of the bits between the slates. "Now, Doctor, I want some twine," said "Joey." I told him there was some on a shelf, which he found and proceeded, as skilfully as if he had been a shopman, to tie the two slates together, by passing the twine round the ends and sides. As he was doing this he said: "Dr. Nichols, get ready to lend me your knife." I took out my knife and opened one of the blades. He came to me, took the knife, cut the twine close to the knot, and returned it into my hand.

But his wants were not yet satisfied. "Now for a stick of sealing wax," he said. "Who has got some sealing-wax?" "'Joey,'" I answered, "the only stick of sealing-wax I know of in the house is in Mrs. Nichols' study, on the second floor." "I will get it," he replied, and in a moment he had a stick of red sealing-wax in his hand, of the same size as the one I had seen on the writing-desk two stories above.

He went to the gas-light, held the sealing wax in it until it caught fire, and filled the room with such a blaze of light that we all saw him with great distinctness. Then he carefully sealed the cord with which the slates were tied, at the end and side—where the red wax still remains. After this deliberate, careful preparation, "Joey" said: "Now, Doctor, bring your chair forward toward the centre of the room." I did so, and he brought another chair and sat facing me so that all could see us both. Then he made me take hold of the slates with my left hand, he holding the other end with his right, while I laid my right hand upon his left, with a fold of the thin gauzy drapery between them.

Sitting thus in the centre of the room, face to face with a materialised spirit, I heard and felt writing going on between the slates. When it ceased, "Joey" placed them in my hands, saying, "Hold them fast until the *séance* is ended; then you can see what is written."

When "Joey" retired, another, a graver spirit, came and spoke to us. I cannot remember all he said. "Ernest" always had some words of wisdom for us. I have heard him recite one of the most impressive poems in the language with great feeling. What I remember was this. He said: "We have tried to give you a good manifestation. I think you will find, on opening the slates, a message in three languages. Good night, and God bless you!"

When we heard the three loud raps upon the floor, the signal that the *séance* was over, I turned the gas on full, cut the strings, and examined the slates. On one of them was, and still is, a brief message, signed "J. B. Ferguson," in his own handwriting, exactly as he wrote in life. Never was a more perfect autograph. This was the writing of our old friend, the Dr. Ferguson who came to England with the Brothers Davenport, and who had died, some years before this *séance*, in America.

The inner side of the other slate was found covered with fine, beautiful writing, in an entirely different hand—first a message in English—then a few lines of a quotation in ancient Greek, closing with another quotation from La Rochefoucauld, in French. Thus we had our message in three languages.

In copying this writing for a newspaper, I made a mistake in one of the Greek words (referred to on page 31). At a later *séance* the process I have described was repeated, with the exception that the two slates were wrapped in a newspaper. On one of the slates was written a second message, signed "J. B. Ferguson," and in the same handwriting, and, on the other, after some lines in English, a sentence in Greek, with the word I had imperfectly transcribed accurately written and underscored.

The points to be considered in regard to this *séance* are:—

1. That the room in which we sat, a small room in my own house, could not conceal or admit any person unknown to us.
2. That "Joey" was another and very different person from the medium or any of the sitters.
3. That the slates were quite new and carefully examined and cleaned, and never out of our sight.
4. That all I have described as said and done was said and done in a good light, and satisfactory to all present.
5. That the messages were such as none of us could have written—quite beyond the power of the medium, and free from the least suspicion of any kind of fraud. No one who ever had

a letter from Dr. Ferguson would hesitate to swear to his handwriting, and, in regard to the whole matter, fraud was "impossible."

In the garden room, used as a *séance* room, I was sitting one evening with Mr. Eglinton and a young man who was encountering the usual difficulties of the beginning of a literary career. Eglinton took up a blank card from several lying on the table, showed us both sides of it, and then threw it into a corner of the room, under some book shelves, where the light was obscure. With the card, or directly after it, he threw a stump of a lead pencil, and instantly said to me,—“Doctor, please pick up the card!” I sprang and got it. It might have lain two or three seconds. On one side of the card we found the following:—

*“Mons. Hargrave :*

*“La bonne fortune et la mauvaise, sont nécessaire a l’homme, pour le rendre habile ; et aussi la patience est amere, mais son fruit est doux.”*

My readers will pardon me for giving a translation for the benefit of some who may possibly have forgotten their French. It is,—“Good and bad fortune are necessary to man to develop his talents (to make him clever); moreover, patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet,”—probably a quotation from “Ernest’s” favourite author, La Rochefoucauld.

On a blank portion of this side was also written the word “*renverser.*” Turning over the card, we found ten words in a language none of us knew, even by sight, though I recognised a likeness to some of the Slavonic tongues, and thought it might be Czech or Hungarian. A German gentleman, who visited me lately, told me it was Hungarian, but he could not translate it.

Of course I have no idea why a spirit should occupy two or three seconds in writing a few lines of French and Hungarian on a card thrown into a corner of the room, except to give us a demonstration of spirit-power. No doubt, receiving a message in an unknown tongue, may make it more impressive. I remember an instance. The Countess Wachtmeister with us one evening and wished to get a message. She was quite familiar with three languages—Swedish, French, and English, and naturally expected one of these. A blank card, which she carefully examined, was laid in the centre of a thick book taken from the shelf for the purpose, on which she laid her hands. In a few moments she took out the card, and found it written all over in German, which neither she nor any one present could read. So she was obliged to take it next day to a German friend, or one who understood German, and get it translated. Of course it was all the better as a test, which was, perhaps, what she most needed.

When a spirit materialises so that we can see him, there must be matter solid enough to reflect the light. When spirits can grasp you by the hand, and hold up a chair or table, exercising, as I have seen them, more force than is possessed by ordinary men, they give proof that their bones, muscles and tendons, are as solid as our own. I have calculated that one spirit, whom I have many times seen and felt, has exercised a muscular power three or four times greater than my own.

A spirit-hand that you can see, and feel, and grasp, can of course be moulded like any other object. The Hon. J. L. O’Sullivan, a well-known American publicist and diplomatist, whom I have known for some thirty years, has given in English and American Spiritualist journals an

admirably clear account of casts from spirit-hands, and busts, taken in the *séance* studio of the Count de Bullet at Paris, where I had the pleasure of seeing both the original casts and their photographs.

My own experience in obtaining casts from spirit-hands is much less remarkable, in some respects, but such as it is, it may be worthy of the attention of candid readers who wish to know the naked facts of spirit-life and spirit-power. While Mr. Eglinton was an inmate of my house in South Kensington, we tried the experiment of getting casts from spirit hands. My daughter "Willie," of whose writings and drawings I have given some examples, promised to try and give us a mould from her hand, and we made the requisite preparations. We bought two pounds of solid paraffin, such as is used for making candles, a white waxy substance, but more brittle than wax. I melted it in my study, and poured it into a zinc pail half filled with hot water to keep it liquid. I then filled another pail with cold water.

We invited a select circle of about twelve persons, the only stranger being a German physician interested in Spiritualistic investigations—Dr. Frieze. A curtain was drawn across one end of our *séance* room, and Mr. Eglinton sat behind its centre, where the two halves came together, and there in front of him sat the German doctor, holding his hands. The gas was alight—every one fully visible. When all was ready, I brought from my study the two pails, one of cold water—one of hot melted paraffin, and set them in the corner of the room, behind the curtain, and about six feet distant from Mr. Eglinton, whose hands, as I have said, were held by those of Dr. Frieze, thus—

OO Pails.

Mr. Eglinton.

Curtain.

Dr. Frieze.

Round the room, and as far as possible from the curtain, sat the invited guests. Every one was distinctly visible; no one was near the pails of water and paraffin or could approach them. In a few moments we heard voices from the corner by the pails, and *splashes in the water*. Then came signal raps, and I went and removed the two pails from behind the curtain. In the cold water floated two masses of solidified paraffin. One resembled a thick white mitten of alabaster—the other was like it, but much smaller. Taking the larger mass from the water I found it hollow, and saw that it had the form of a human hand. The smaller mass was a mould from the hand of a little child. A lady present recognised a peculiarity, a slight deformity, which belonged to the hand of her daughter, who had been accidentally drowned at the age of five years in South Africa. I carried the two pails to my study, and left the moulds floating in the water, locking the door, and retaining the key.

In the morning we got some plaster of Paris, which we mixed and poured into the larger mould. To get a cast this had to be sacrificed. A mould of a human hand, with the fingers all separated, would require to be in twenty pieces, and every joining would show on the cast. What I did was to let the plaster of Paris set and harden, and then sacrificed the mould by melting it off with hot water.

The beautiful hand of my daughter Willie, with its long, tapering, artistic fingers, and its graceful pose, just as she held it into the hot paraffin—almost as hot as boiling water—stands now under glass on my mantel. When I hold my hand in the same position



the likeness of the cast, though about a third smaller, strikes every one who sees it. It is not like the conventional hands of statues. It is a purely natural, anatomical hand, with every bone and tendon, and the finest skin marks distinctly visible. It is the hand I knew so well in its mortal life, and which I have so often seen and felt since when materialised.

The little mould was given to the mother, who had it cast, and she has no doubt that it is the hand of her child. I know as absolutely as I can know any fact, that the cast upon my mantel is from a mould formed upon the materialised spirit-hand of my daughter. The whole process was in my hands, and there could not be more stringent test conditions. Had the mould been formed upon any human hand, it could never have been removed. The circumference at the wrist is an inch and a half less than the smallest compass of the palm and thumb. To disengage a hand from such a mould would break it into many pieces. The only explanation that can be given, or that suits the case, is that the hand which formed the mould must have dissolved, or dematerialised, to get out of it.

On the mantel, under a second glass shade, is another cast of a hand, entirely different. It came from a mould procured under precisely the same conditions at a subsequent *séance*. It is the broad, square hand of a man, which I think I recognise but cannot identify with the same certainty as in the case of the other. It is like my father's hand. I inherit the form of mine from my mother. But there it is, a solid human hand, but most certainly not a cast from the hand of any one living in the flesh. The curved lines on the inside of the fingers and the palm are very clearly given. There are hundreds of skilled Italian moulders in plaster of Paris in London, but no one of them can make such a cast of a hand as either of these, and no one can imagine how these could be done, except in the way they were done.

There have been speculations about the use of some elastic substance in making the moulds, like india-rubber or glue; but there is no known method of working either—besides, the moulds in which *these* hands were cast were solid paraffin, which I had melted, and were floating in the pail of water I had placed to cool the paraffin. The difficulty was to produce the mould, and remove the hand when the paraffin was hard and brittle. Only one way to do that is conceivable, which is the partial, if not complete, dematerialisation, or dissolution, of the hand enclosed within the hard, inflexible mould.

In the second, as in the first experiment, I found two moulds floating in the pail of water. When I had poured the liquid plaster of Paris into the smaller mould, let it harden, and then melted off the paraffin, I found a curiously deformed little foot. The size is that of a child six months old, but it is cramped, distorted, deformed, as I have never seen in a living child. Yet there it is, in every bone and tendon, and the five cramped little toes, a child's foot. It is not pretty as an object of art, but as a test it is better than the most perfectly formed foot or hand could be.

This ended our experiments with moulds and casts. The results are very solid facts which will trouble any sceptic to explain. When I show my plaster hands to anyone, the more he knows of such work, and the more clever and ingenious he is, the more he is puzzled to account for them. Were I able to pay a thousand pounds, I would offer that reward to any one who would show me how such hands could be produced in any way but that in which they were produced, viz., from moulds in one piece, from the hands of materialised spirits.

There is nothing I can profitably add by way of comment to Dr. Nichols' narratives. I have, however, before me a considerable amount of other testimony to similar marvels. I will now quote what is a mere fractional part of the whole. Mr. Blackburn says:—

"Whilst I and my daughter were at Brighton on the 1st of January, I wrote to Mr. Eglinton for a *séance* as we passed through London. This he kindly granted, although he was not then giving professional sittings. The cards enclosed herein, and numbered 1, 2, 3, are in the order in which the operations took place, and I have written exactly how they occurred. I have also submitted them to Mr. Crookes, F.R.S., who was surprised at Mr. Eglinton's power.

"*Card No. I.*—On Monday evening, January 3rd, 1881, at about eight o'clock, at the house of Dr. Nichols, of Earl's Court, London, this perfect card, uniface except by a corner torn off for identification by myself, was placed by Mr. Eglinton, the medium, inside a lady's small empty wooden workbox, together with an opened penknife, in the presence of Miss Blackburn and half-a-dozen others. On shutting down the lid, our hands were instantly placed on its top. Miss Blackburn was asked by a spirit-voice, in an interval during which the gas was turned out, what figure she would prefer cut on the card—a diamond, triangle, hexagon, or what. She replied, 'Hexagon.' The gas was then lighted, and after a few convulsive shudders on the part of the medium, whilst pressing his hands heavily all the time on ours on the top of the lid, he suddenly stopped, and on opening the box the hexagon was found evenly and neatly cut in the centre of the card."

"*Card No. II.*—Again in the full light Mr. Eglinton asked Miss Blackburn to select a clean card out of a number, to place it inside a book lying on the table, and to notice the page; she was also to put a mite or point of lead pencil on the card, and to shut up the book. She did so, and kept both her hands on the book. The medium came close to her; and put his hands heavily on hers. After a few convulsions he took away his hands and asked her to look at the card, on which this writing was found:—

"*Sir,—Do not despair. Hope is even sweeter when sorrow and pain overtake one: and you, who have a certain knowledge of a glorious immortality, should therefore allow Hope, and the magic attending it, to be uppermost. 'Hope deferred maketh the heart sick.'—Prov., S. J.*"

"*Card No. III.*—This card also was perfectly clean, and I was asked where I would have it secreted with a lead pencil, away from the light of the gas. I said, 'Inside the musical box.' This was instantly done, and Mr. Eglinton removed the box, with its lid shut, to a sofa five feet distant; he turned the box upside down, and came back to the table. Several of us put our hands on by his request; he then put his hands on ours, and after a few convulsions as before, the blunted pencil was found to have written the following:—

"*The manifestation we have just produced is, we think, an ample answer to the query, Is there room for scientific investigation?*"

Another remarkable *séance* is related by Dr. Nichols, and corroborated by Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, of Rose Villa, Church End, Finchley, the latter remarking, "I have much pleasure in bearing testimony to the perfect genuineness of the manifestations described by Dr. Nichols, and which were given under circumstances peculiarly satisfactory. I am quite familiar with the tricks by which chosen cards are changed by professional conjurers. But in the present instance there was no room for deception. The card which I selected, and which was then

perfectly plain on both sides, was certainly the card which was placed in a book under my hand, and on which, a few seconds afterwards, I found the written message quoted below."

The circumstances, as published in *Light* by Dr. Nichols, are as follows:—"While the facts are fresh in my mind, I hasten to record for you and your readers the particulars of a very impressive *séance* held at my residence on Saturday evening, February 5th. Mr. W. Eglinton, who is to leave us on the 12th for America, wished, or his guides wished, to give us some parting words and manifestations. There were present Mrs. Fletcher, Mr. A. (a graduate of Cambridge), Mr. H. Bastian, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, Mrs. Nichols, and myself, making, with Mr. Eglinton, seven persons, three or four of whom are known as powerful mediums. The chief manifestations, however, were recognised as given by the guides of Mr. Eglinton, aided, no doubt, by the united forces of the other mediums.

"First we sat, just in the order in which we happened to be standing, around a circular table, when raps came, and in answer to our questions rearranged us. The gas was then turned off, and in a moment we heard the deep voice of 'Ernest,' who spoke to each one present, and then said that with the strong mediumistic power in the circle he hoped they would be able to give some good manifestations. 'Joey' followed him with friendly salutations and lively remarks. While all our hands were united he wound up a large musical box and set it going. Later, while Mr. Dawson Rogers and Mrs. Fletcher placed their hands upon the glass cover, perfectly excluding all access of human hands to the machinery, 'Joey' made the box stop its movement in the midst of a tune, go on, play three notes, stop again, etc., etc., at the request of persons in the circle. This is a common, but, as any one acquainted with such instruments will see, a very remarkable manifestation.

"The gas was now lighted, two burners being regulated to give a soft but sufficient light. Mr. Eglinton was entranced and possessed by 'Daisy,' who directed the next proceedings. Three large blank cards were selected from a parcel lying on the table, by Mr. Dawson Rogers, Mrs. Fletcher, and Mr. A. That selected by Mr. Dawson Rogers was, at his suggestion, placed, with a small bit of black lead broken from a pencil, in the centre of an octavo volume, which was shut, and then firmly pressed down by him upon the table, Mr. Eglinton's hand being laid above his own. In a few seconds the book was opened, and one side of the card was nearly covered with the following message, apparently dictated by, though not in the handwriting of, his beloved daughter:—

*"Dear Papa,—I am so glad I can come to you. Your belief, oh, how glorious it is! but still more glorious to know those you love are with you. Please give my dear love to mamma, and assure her I am ever round her, and with dear love for yourself, I am your spirit-child, KATHLEEN.*

"On being asked where she would have *her* card placed, Mrs. Fletcher chose to have it put between two slates. It was so placed, but without any bit of pencil, and the slates were firmly pressed together by Mrs. Fletcher and Mr. Dawson Rogers. In about the same period as in the former case the card was taken out, and found to contain in a very bold and rapid hand, and in lead pencil characters, the following words:—

*"My dear friend, although the world condemns, we understand. Hope must comfort you more than your innocence. 'The mind shall banquet though the body pine.'*

"The third card, selected, and of course carefully examined by Mr. A., was then thrown,

with the piece of lead pencil from which the point had been broken for the first experiment, into the farthest corner of the room, about seven feet from the nearest person. We kept our seats, with joined hands, but a moment, when Mr. Eglinton, or the spirit through him, asked Mr. A. to go and pick up the card. He found one side of it covered with a very neatly written message, as follows:—

*“Your wife, who is here in spirit, will manifest when you make the necessary conditions; but rest assured of her complete happiness and continued existence.*

“After these astonishing and most satisfactory manifestations, we had caressing fingers making, in some cases, I know, and perhaps in all, familiar signs of spirit-presence, and giving as good proofs as we can well have of personal identity. ‘Ernest’ talked with us again, and answered questions, and then proposed that they should use the power of so strong and harmonious a circle for some materialisations. First we had spirit-lights of great brilliancy—especially a cross of the purest white light, like starlight. Then a delicate female form came bearing a broad strong light, which made her features visible, which were shown in different parts of the room, even as high as the ceiling. We had plenty of evidence that the lights were not made by phosphorated oil, or the materialised forms simulated by masks, false beards, and draperies.”

This closed Mr. Eglinton's series of *séances* in England for a time, as he was on the point of departure for America on a professional tour. With this I must deal in another chapter.



## CHAPTER XI.

### AMERICAN EXPERIENCES.



R. EGLINTON had for some time contemplated a brief visit to America. This was in response to long standing and pressing invitations from many quarters. He accordingly sailed for New York on the 12th February, 1881, and after a terribly long passage of no less than sixteen days, he arrived in that city. It was not his intention to stay there more than a few hours, and proceeding direct to Boston he was cordially welcomed by Messrs. Colby and Rich, of the *Banner of Light*, the oldest established paper in the world connected with Spiritualism. Staying first with his old friends, Mr. and Mrs. Hildreth, for a few days, he finally settled down at the St. James's Hotel, where also resided Mr. Rich of the *Banner* house.

The first impressions of a new-comer in a strange land are always of interest, and this is especially the case with a country like America. Mr. Eglinton writes thus:—"I was sadly disappointed with the moral condition of Spiritualism in Boston. On looking over the pages of the *Boston Globe*, and other second-class papers for March, anyone may see a whole column devoted to the advertisement of quack 'mediums,' mostly *clairvoyantes* and healers, there being such announcements as, 'Mademoiselle Marguerite, the charming young brunette, is at home daily to give clairvoyant descriptions relating to birth, marriage, and deceased friends. Fee, two dollars. Walk up, don't ring.'"

One need not say what in many cases these announcements mean. Spiritualists are powerless to prevent the evil so long as the public press insert such advertisements, and so the leprosy is foisted on the movement without any countenance whatever from Spiritualists themselves. Fortunately, through the strong measures adopted by some of the Spiritualistic press—notably the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* of Chicago—the evil has now diminished.

Mr. Eglinton writes of this paper:—"Colonel Bundy deserves the most unbounded praise for his untiring efforts for the purification of the movement; and most, if not all, of the fraudulent practices one reads of in connection with Spiritualism in America are the work of these *pseudo* mediums, who are gradually being unearthed and exposed." All true Spiritualists and mediums will devoutly pray for the final consummation of this object.

The *Banner of Light* was most kind to Mr. Eglinton. On March 19th, 1881, the whole of its front page (the *Banner* is a sheet nearly as large as our *Daily News*) was devoted to a biographical account of him and his work for Spiritualism. It also contained an admirable portrait.



Bearing in mind the enormous amount of testimony with which I have yet to deal, and the manner in which I have already largely exceeded the limit of space allotted to me, I must perforce pass many of the accounts before me of the *séances* given by him during his stay in the States with a bare notice. Suffice it to say that the phenomena observed differed little in many cases from those already abundantly described in these pages.

He made many acquaintances, and has still, and will ever have, a lively remembrance of the courtesy shown him by many friends. While in Boston he had a very remarkable *séance* with Mrs. Thayer, the flower medium, "whose powers," he says, "I consider to be of the highest. In her presence, whole plants, some from six to twelve feet high, with roots and earth attached, flowers, fruits, birds, and animals, are brought into closed rooms in the house in which she may be invited to give a *séance*."

He gave *séances* in Quincey, Massachusetts, at one of which Mr. Adams, a descendant of President Adams, a Spiritualist of long standing, was present. He was also instrumental in converting the celebrated Boston divine, the Rev. J. Minot Savage, although Slade, who visited Boston during his stay there, may fairly claim to have finally removed the reverend gentleman's scepticism. He was not quite free from attack in the United States, an account of which I briefly give. He made an appointment with some men who were not introduced to him, and the *séance* passed off satisfactorily. They asked for another, which he consented to give. On the day, however, upon which the *séance* was to take place, he had been speaking at the Paine Memorial Hall, where a large audience had assembled to celebrate the Anniversary of modern Spiritualism, and he afterwards accompanied his friends, Mr. and Mrs. Woods, to their residence. When there he was asked by his guides not to give the *séance* that evening, as the sitters were an "exposure party." He got Mr. Woods to go to his hotel, and leave a note to say he was unable to give the sitting. On arriving home at 10.30 p.m., and just when he was on the point of undressing, his rooms were invaded by a party of eight or ten men—the previous sitters—and they professed to be indignant at his having falsely represented himself as unwell, and wanted him to give them the *séance* then and there. To this he objected, and to pacify them, entered into a long conversation upon Spiritualistic matters. To his surprise, the next morning he found himself the object of much curiosity on the part of the visitors at the hotel, and soon discovered the reason of this to be a long article in the Boston *Globe*, with headings in large type, announcing "Eglinton! Another Spiritualistic Humbug, Well Ventilated at the West End. The Wonderful English Medium Exposed," etc., etc. The "exposure" consisted in their construing his conversation of the previous night into an attack upon Spiritualists, and their theories as to how the manifestations at the *séance* had been produced. But as this paper only circulates among the lower classes, it caused no very great interest among the educated public. He afterwards went to Melrose, Massachusetts, and was the guest of his honoured friends, Mr. and Mrs. Hildreth, for two weeks, and whilst there had some very remarkable experiences, of which Mr. Hildreth gave a concise account in the *Banner of Light* for April 30th, 1881.

He says:—"During the stay of Mr. Eglinton in Melrose a number of very successful *séances* were held. Some of these were ordinary dark circles, where, the medium's hands being held on both sides, the furniture was violently moved about the room, drawers and other articles being piled on the table. It is the peculiarity of Mr. Eglinton's dark circles that his

hands are held. Any one who voluntarily lets go his hand, and, having thus deprived him of the main evidence of his honesty, asserts that the manifestations were produced by the medium himself, is little better than a thief.

"At a sitting in the light I took a sheet of writing paper, and piercing one end of it with a match, gave the match to Mr. Eglinton to hold. His fingers were thus isolated from the paper, and could be seen by everybody. Under these circumstances small but distinct raps came on the paper, answering questions. On holding the lower part of the paper I could feel the vibrations.

"Still in the light, the name of a deceased person was written on a paper, which was folded so as to conceal the writing. The paper was given to the medium, who set fire to it with a candle. When burned to ashes he took it in the palm of his hand, and suddenly rubbing it on his bare arm there appeared a short message, signed by the person whose name had been written on the paper.

"At another sitting in the light a blank card, the corner being previously torn off for identification, was placed in a book, together with an atom of lead pencil. The hands of all present being placed upon the book, a peculiar ticking noise was heard proceeding therefrom, and directly afterwards the card was taken out covered with writing, being a message from a relative of mine. *The handwriting was distinctly hers.* The next day I visited a lady, formerly an intimate friend of my relative. This lady is not a Spiritualist, and was ignorant that Mr. Eglinton was at my house. In the course of conversation I took out the card, and covering the signature with a piece of paper, ostensibly to keep her fingers from rubbing the pencil marks, asked if she knew the handwriting. She had no sooner set eyes on it than she recognised it as that of the person from whom it purported to come.

"Subsequently at a dark circle, after several materialised forms had appeared, bearing their own lights, the figure of a lady, said to be the same relative who had written the message, approached within a foot of my face. The light in its hands glowed with more than usual brightness, so that I was able to obtain a perfectly distinct view. White drapery was over the head, brought round and seemingly held together by the mouth, as is often the case with these figures. Though the mouth was concealed, the forehead, eyes, and nose of the figure, which were of peculiar character, bore the most remarkable resemblance to the person it purported to be, and not the slightest likeness to Mr. Eglinton."

From Melrose he went to Phœnix, Rhode Island, and had the most pronounced success. He held four *séances*, which resulted in the complete satisfaction (though it involved their discomfite as regards their previously entertained opinions on the subject) of forty seepies. At Fall River, the next stage, he gave other *séances*, at one of which, held at the residence of Augustus Chase—a noted mill-owner there—after obtaining a long message from Mr. Chase's son, on a card placed between the leaves of a book in the light, the daughter of Mrs. Lyon, "Phœbe," came out fully materialised and shook her mother's hand. The mother declared she was ready to go into a court of law and swear to this fact. And thus the evidence in favour of his powers—and of the verity of the manifestations—daily accumulated.

He left for New York on the 18th April, at the invitation of Mr. C. D. Lakey, proprietor of several newspapers—the *Builder and Woodworker*, *Insurance*, etc.—published in that city. Mr. Lakey describes several circles held with him as being very satisfactory, the phenomena

consisting of those usually witnessed at Mr. Eglinton's *séances*, including materialisations. Among various things the following is narrated:—"Mr. Eglinton suddenly called for a card. While Professor Rice still held the card in his hand, the medium told him to tear off a corner for identification, which he did. Then he seized the torn card, and opened a book, placing the card so that we saw both sides were unwritten on, closed the book, and asked Professor Rice to place his ear on it and listen. 'Do you hear the pencil writing?' 'Yes,' said Rice. On opening the book there was the card written full, signed by a dead friend of Mr. Rice. This all took place under absolutely test conditions."

On another occasion, writing to the *Banner of Light*, Mr. Lakey gives the subjoined account: "This is Sunday night; Mr. Eglinton has been to church, and his invisible attendants rapped assent occasionally to the utterances of the preacher—sometimes dissent. An hour ago we sat in the parlour talking over these wonderful manifestations of the immortal life. The white cambric curtains were drawn, but the blinds were not all closed. From without the gaslight drifted into the room. There were myself, wife, daughter, and this wonderful medium. He sat about eight feet from us, just across a passage of light which came in from the street. We had been talking of our 'dead' Suddenly we heard the quick breathing that indicates trance. In just a moment there was a white cloud around the medium, whose hands and face we could see, as he had no cabinet or curtain of any kind. Then advanced a female form, clad in white robes. She came forward to where the passage of light was; she seemed self-illuminated. Then she vanished. We sat in silence at the very gateway of the eternal city. In a few moments there came another form, not so tall, marvellously beautiful, for we could see her face in the light. She came close to us, and then vanished. Then 'Daisy,' one of the medium's guides, gave us a beautiful address, and said her good-bye. I should have stated that the second form was draped in glorious white. Here was materialisation truly, beyond any possibility of doubt. I cannot write more. I can say, however, that believers must stand by this medium. He has wonderful powers; he is real, he is true."

Mr. Stephen Massett, the celebrated newspaper correspondent "Jeems Pipes, of Pipesville," gave a long account of some remarkable *séances* in the *Daily Evening Post* of New York; and the same gentleman also introduced him to Madame Anna Bishop, the once celebrated singer, who had long been a Spiritualist. New York friends vied with each other in making his stay a happy one. Amongst these may be specially mentioned Mrs. Upham, the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, Miss FitzMaurice, Prof. Kiddle, Judge Cross, and Mrs. Billing, to which charming lady and wonderful medium he owes much. Perhaps what was the most descriptive account of his American *séances* appeared in the *New York Tribune*, written by the editor, a critical and persistent investigator. For a daily paper of so much power as the one just mentioned to devote a column and a half to a narration of Spiritualistic phenomena is surely a sign of the times, even for America.

Calls from home on urgent business, however, once again compelled him to say "good-bye" to the many warm friends he had here, as in every quarter of the globe, gathered around him, and he sailed for the Mother Country on May 14th. Many came to the steamer to see him off, and the saloon was one vast flower garden, filled with the choicest offerings of friends known and unknown.

## CHAPTER XII.

### VISIT TO INDIA.



It had long been a cherished desire on Mr. Eglinton's part to visit India—the reputed home and birthplace of the occult sciences. Theosophy and its alleged marvels were then just coming to the front, and, in common with many others, he wished, if possible, to come to some definite conclusion with regard to the subject. The general verdict was then, and for the matter of that is still, the old Scotch one of “Not Proven,” but the glamour of mystery thrown around the phenomena, and the unbounded promises which had drawn many into Theosophist circles, did not escape Mr. Eglinton, and he was naturally anxious to find out all he could. His desire for investigation on the spot, seemed likely to be granted when he accepted a pressing invitation from Mr. J. G. Meugens, a wealthy Indian merchant and Spiritualist, to go to Calcutta as his guest. Although, however, he took with him several warm letters of introduction to Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky, they never extended any invitation to him to meet them; and it was not until the summer of 1884, three years after his return from India, that he met the latter, who, attended by Babu Mohini Chatterjee and Miss Arundale, had a most wonderful *séance* with him. With Colonel Olcott he has never come in contact.

Several noteworthy private farewell *séances* were given prior to sailing from England on the 12th October, 1881. At some of these, incidents occurred which conclusively proved the separate individuality of his controls.

Leaving London on the 12th October, 1881, he proceeded to Liverpool to spend a few days with relatives residing in that city. The voyage to India turned out an extremely pleasant one, and the calls made at Port Said, Suez, and Colombo, allowed him to see a little of those places. Calcutta was reached at noon on the 17th November, when Colonel and Mrs. Gordon, and Mr. Meugens met Mr. Eglinton at the steamer. Little time was lost in getting to work, for on the succeeding evening his first *séance* in India was held at the residence of Mr. Cheetham. At no time during his sojourn in this country was he idle; the interest was too great to allow of this. Successful sittings were held at the residence of the Maharajah Sir Jotendro Mohun Tagore, K.C.S.I., most of which were reported in the *Indian Mirror*, a daily newspaper, published in the interests of the native classes, owned and edited by Babu Norendro Nath Sen, a Spiritualist of some standing, and cousin of the well-known Keshub-Chunder Sen, the founder of the Brahma-Somaj. The following extract from a mass of editorial reports is

characteristic, and must serve to illustrate the general quality of the testimony thus rendered. It occurs in that journal for January 4th, 1882, and is written by the editor:—"Two slates were put together with a crumb of pencil between them under the table, and holding them, we heard the writing going on within the slates. After the writing had continued for some time, three raps were heard on the slates, which signified that the message was finished. On opening them, we found the following long message written upon one of them:—'*Bless you, my son. I am glad I am enabled to communicate. I am your father H—, and I come with many of your ancestors. Your uncle B— is present, and rejoices that he can assure so worthy a nephew of his increasing regard. You will remember how I prophesied to you, through Mr. Mansfield [i.e., Mr. Mansfield of New York, a well-known test medium], of the continued prosperity of the undertaking you have in hand; and I can only tell you again that you have a great work to do still. The varying fortunes of your undertaking since you have been engaged in it, may now be said to have ended in a prosperous voyage. I can never be too glad that Captain P— [our private tutor, now deceased] took you in hand, for you owe everything to him, and to A— [an old European attorney of the late Supreme Court, now no more.] My good friend the Maharajah R— S— is present with me, as is your grandfather R—. We all rejoice that this truth has been brought home to you, and I want you to remember that "dunya akhirat ke kheti hai" [written in Bengali], and that the knowledge you now possess will fit you for the next world. We are all very happy, and give you our benediction. I shall come again some day, and talk more fully to you. Good-bye, my son.'* The handwriting of the message was as fine as copper-plate; the personal allusions in it were correct to the letter, and the Urdu quotation at the end, marked a peculiar trait in the character of the present writer's father, who was an accomplished Urdu scholar, and in the habit of interlarding his conversation now and then with Urdu quotations—facts of which Mr. Eglinton was entirely ignorant. The message was remarkable for the explicitness with which it served to identify the deceased party in his communications with his living son. All the names appearing in the message were given in full. The Urdu quotation means, that what we sow in this world, we shall reap in the next. The Maharajah referred to in the message is a well-known native prince, whose loss has been universally mourned of late, both in India and England."

About this time he met the veteran Hindoo Spiritualist, Peary Chand Mitra, with whom he enjoyed many quiet hours in discussing the mysteries of spiritual phenomena. Since then Death has solved these problems of the grave for this kind friend.

The *séances*, invariably held in private houses, were largely and continuously attended by the *élite* of Indian civil and military society; and, to meet the demand for full reports and information, a fortnightly journal, similar in style to *Light*, was started. This venture met with considerable success, and continued to be published during the whole of Mr. Eglinton's sojourn in India.

I do not propose to narrate at length the *séances* given by Mr. Eglinton during this period. I must perforce confine myself to matters of special value—such for example as the following incidents, related by Mrs. R. H. Cheetham in *Psychic Notes* for January 16th, 1881. The first is a singularly curious case:—"Two slates were carefully washed and a piece of pencil was laid between them. I was asked to grasp them at the corners of the wooden frame and press them tightly together with one hand, Mr. Eglinton holding the slates in the



same way at the opposite cross corner. Thus held we stretched out our arms as far as we could, holding the slate in the full light *away* from the table. My right hand and Mr. Eglinton's left still touched the hands of our respective neighbours. At once, *within* the slates, the sound of rapid writing was heard, and in a very short time, the usual three small raps were given as a signal for us to look at the result. On the slate were twenty-two lines containing one hundred and forty-two words signed by the name of a near relative of mine who left this world some years ago. Before I glanced at the signature the strong resemblance of the small, close writing to that of my friend amazed me, and when I came to read the written lines my astonishment increased. I found in them a verbatim quotation from a letter written by me and posted to New Zealand the week before, and also a remark relating to my private affairs which seemed to me to point conclusively to the identity of the writer whose signature was appended. I had spoken to no one of what I had said in the letter sent many days before, and I am not conscious that it was in my thoughts as I held the slates. Below

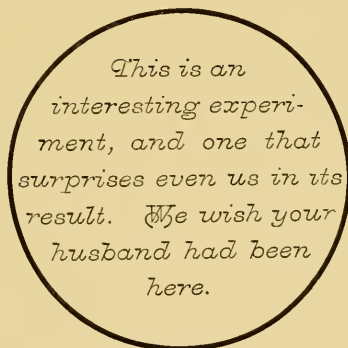


FIG. 10.—Writing Produced under an Inverted Tumbler.

the letter to me, in a large and quite different handwriting, was a message to my husband, who was not present."

The next experiment was not less valuable:—"A soda-water tumbler was reversed on the slate over a crumb of pencil, and then pressed the glass up against the under-surface of the table. That is to say, Mr. Eglinton put the slate under the table, with the reversed glass upon it, and forced the tumbler hard against the wood by pressing up the slate with his hand, the wrist and arm being clearly seen by us. Writing was heard and the three raps were given for us to look at the slate. Within the circle described by the rim of the glass we found a message in a small hand, quite different from the handwriting of the letter addressed to me." (Fig. 10.)

It was during this period that a startling phenomenon occurred—no less than the instantaneous transmission of letters between London and Calcutta. I say "startling" advisedly. It is assuredly so for the world at large, but Spiritualists, who alone can form any idea of the power of spirits over matter, will readily understand the phenomenon. This carrying of letters

took place on several occasions, but a description of the circumstances attending one case must suffice. Mr. Meugens, the narrator, is well known in London and Calcutta mercantile circles as a man of high intelligence and integrity. "Mr. Eglinton and I had been to dine with some friends at the Bengal Club, and returned home at about eleven p.m. My guest asked me to sit with him before retiring to bed, and we sat together in the light. He took a sheet of paper (which I had just previously marked in one corner with my initials and private mark for the purpose of identification), placed it in a book, held the book under the table for a few seconds, and then put the book into my hands. I examined it very carefully, but the sheet of paper had disappeared. I retained possession of the book, while Mr. Eglinton (in his normal state) informed me that he saw his spirit leave his body and travel over land and sea until it entered the room of a friend of mine in London, and he minutely described my friend and the surroundings in the room, which he asserted was flooded with light. He saw 'Ernest' standing by my friend while the letter was being written, and his taking the letter when ready. In a few seconds after this he begged me to open the book (of which I had retained possession the whole time), and there sure enough inside the cover of the book was the self-same sheet of paper, with my initials and private mark upon it, completely filled with a letter in my friend's handwriting, dated that same evening in London, and commencing with an account of how the room had been suddenly filled with light, how 'Ernest' had brought the sheet of paper marked by me, and how he stood waiting to bear the letter back."

So rich were the numerous *séances* in phenomena, and so lively was the sensation caused by the publication of details, that Mr. Eglinton began to be looked upon by the native community as a *Yogi* of the first water, by the Spiritualists as a wonder, and by a sceptical world as a mystery. The press, both native and English, was, on the whole, favourably inclined, though a certain amount of antagonism on the part of individuals was naturally to be expected. One wail which arose from the sceptical ranks, when regarded in the light of subsequent events, is not to be surpassed as showing the irony of fate. Its keynote was that "a conjurer would do just the same manifestations in the clearest daylight and with double the number of sitters. . . . Convert one, and then," the writer grandiloquently adds, "the *world is at your feet*." The whirligig of time was soon to bring its own revenge, and the chosen champion of the shrieking sceptic was destined not to lay the world at the feet of Spiritualism, but simply to exemplify the fact that a prophet is not without honour save in his own country. "An average *prestidigitateur*" (I quote the qualification as enunciated in the challenge in question) was convinced of the truth of Spiritualism, and of the genuineness of its manifestations, but, contrary to the somewhat rash prediction indulged in, he did *not* become "the St. Paul of the new dispensation," as the sequel will show.

Mr. Harry Kellar, the well-known conjurer, was then on a visit to Calcutta, and a portion of his entertainment was devoted to an "exposure" of Spiritualism. Urged by some opponents of Spiritualism—clericals, of course—he seized the opportunity, conjurer-like, to make as much capital out of the fact of the sensation caused by Mr. Eglinton's mediumship as he could, and his (Kellar's) performances were given nightly to crowded houses. At that time, however, Kellar was evidently an honest inquirer, if I may judge from a letter published by him on the subject in the *Indian Daily News* for January 13th. He there confesses that he had followed with much interest a correspondence regarding Spiritualism, and more particularly "the accounts of

manifestations said to have taken place in the presence of Mr. Eglinton." He continues:—"I am far from wishing to sneer or throw discredit on what is said to have taken place, and which has only reached me on hearsay. At the same time I should be glad of an opportunity of participating in a *séance*, with a view of giving an unbiassed opinion as to whether, in my capacity of a professional *prestidigitateur*, I can give a natural explanation of effects said to be produced by spiritual aid. I trust that my character as a man is a sufficient guarantee that I would take no unfair advantage, or violate any of the conditions imposed at a *séance* to which I was invited."

After such a letter, Mr. Eglinton had what the Yankees call "a bad time." The public were loud in their demands for an answer, and the Spiritualists begged him to give Kellar a *séance*. For a long time no response to these calls was made, and Mr. Eglinton at first was obdurate and refused point blank to comply with either request. Experience had taught him that conjurers were, as a rule, animated in all they did, as regards Spiritualism, solely by a desire to make capital out of it, and he naturally regarded this letter as a clever *ruse* on Kellar's part to advertise himself at another's expense. Ultimately, however, Mrs. Gordon prevailed on him to meet Kellar, and confident in his own integrity, and the reality of his mediumistic gifts, he did so. With what result, the following extracts from some of the conjurer's letters to the *Indian Daily News* will show:—"In your issue of the 13th January I stated that I should be glad of an opportunity of participating in a *séance* with a view of giving an unbiassed opinion as to whether, in my capacity of a professional *prestidigitateur*, I could give a natural explanation of effects said to be produced by spiritual aid. I am indebted to the courtesy of Mr. Eglinton, the Spiritualistic medium now in Calcutta, and of his host, Mr. J. Meugens, for affording me the opportunity I craved. It is needless to say I went as a sceptic, but I must own that I came away utterly unable to explain, by any natural means, the phenomena that I witnessed on Tuesday evening. I will give a brief description of what took place."

After describing several successful experiments, Mr. Kellar proceeds:—"In respect to the above manifestations, I can only say that I do not expect my account of them to gain general credence. Forty-eight hours before I should not have believed anyone who described such manifestations under similar circumstances. I still remain a sceptic as regards Spiritualism, but I repeat my inability to explain or account for what must have been an intelligent force that produced the writing on the slate, which, if my senses are to be relied on, was in no way the result of trickery or sleight of hand."

On the 30th of the same month Mr. Kellar addressed another letter to the *Indian Daily News*, reporting some experiences of another kind with Mr. Eglinton, one of the witnesses being Lord William Beresford, V.C., and regarding which the clever conjurer said:—"In conclusion, let me state that after a most stringent trial and strict scrutiny of these wonderful experiences I can arrive at no other conclusion than that there was no trace of trickery in any form, nor was there in the room any mechanism or machinery by which could be produced the phenomena which had taken place. The ordinary mode by which Maskelyne and other conjurers imitate levitation or the floating test could not possibly be done in the room in which we were assembled."

Thus once more was a professional conjurer nonplussed when brought face to face with

spiritual phenomena. The call for testing by *prestidigitateurs* is, after all, only a parrot's cry on the part of those who, driven from pillar to post to find an excuse for shutting their eyes to facts, refer to conjurers as the Alpha or Omega court of appeal, forgetting that they have, over and over again, tried "to find out the trick," and failed.

Mediums, who are the instruments of an external agency, have, as I have stated, more than once been confronted with conjurers who deceive by sleight of hand; but in the same manner as no man of science who has thoroughly and fairly investigated the phenomena of Spiritualism has failed to become convinced of their reality, so no conjurer who has been confronted with the same facts has been able to explain their occurrence by prestidigitation. The sensation caused by Kellar's conversion was indescribable. Some suggested that the conjurer had been "squared" by the medium, because both were brother Masons; others began to think there was "something in it;" while the poor sceptic who wanted a convert of a conjurer, never opened his lips again! It may be interesting to note that Kellar made an offer on the spot of a very lucrative engagement for six months if Mr. Eglinton would produce the same results on the stage, an offer, it is perhaps unnecessary for me to say, never accepted.

I see from the American papers (1885) that Kellar has since "ratted." Probably he found out that it pays better to abuse Spiritualism than to endorse it. I fail, however, to see how he can possibly explain away the very explicit statements he made in India, although, as "a matter of business," it may suit him to thus gull a very gullible public.

The discussion about the instantaneous transmission of letters from London to Calcutta, and *vice versa*, outshining as they did the alleged phenomena of theosophy, waxed warm and furious, and Mr. Meugens determined, if possible, to put the matter to a decisive test at the first opportunity, although as a matter of fact the evidence for the spiritual facts was then, and has ever been, incomparably superior to that adduced for so-called occult phenomena, both in quality and quantity. At no time have the former been so stringently tested, nor have they been examined with such scientific acumen. Returning from Colonel Gordon's late one evening, Mr. Meugens and Mr. Eglinton were sitting, as was their wont, on the verandah, when the latter felt a strong influence come over him, and inquired of his companion whether he would like a manifestation. "Yes," he replied, nothing unwilling. "What shall it be?" asked Mr. Eglinton. Remembering what he had previously determined upon, Mr. Meugens replied, "Bring me Mrs. Fletcher's wedding ring." Mrs. Fletcher was then in Tothill Fields Prison, and Mr. Meugens was a warm sympathiser, believing that she had been most unjustly convicted. Knowing that she would be stripped of everything else belonging to her, he thought if the wedding ring were brought from England to Calcutta, some six thousand miles away, the test would be decisive. Mr. Eglinton, under control, asked for a tumbler to be held high above his head. The lamps were burning brightly all the time, and Mr. Eglinton was now reclining on a couch a little distance off. Suddenly a chink was heard in the glass, and on lowering it for examination a wedding ring was found in it. It was old and worn, and although Mr. Meugens was of course unable to identify it, yet he was naturally immensely pleased at a wedding ring having been brought to him at all under such conditions. There could have been no preparation, as the particular object chosen had been asked for spontaneously, and the chances were many against such an object being in Mr. Eglinton's possession. A few days afterwards a letter, carried by spirit agency (only one of many which came to hand

in like manner), was received by Mr. Meugens from Mrs. Fletcher in her own handwriting, telling him she had sent the ring in obedience to his request, and hoping he received it safely. He returned to England in time to meet her at the prison gates when she was released, and his first question was, "Where is your wedding ring?" She held up her hand, upon which were the other rings which had been restored to her by the prison authorities, but no *wedding* ring was there, and she explained that she thought he had received it months before!

This fact may be beyond the comprehension of many, of all indeed, perhaps, who have not had practical personal experience of similar marvels. I cannot, however, emphasise too strongly the fact that Mr. Meugens is a man whose reputation is beyond the shadow of reproach, respected and esteemed in commercial circles in England and India, for his sound business qualities. He is, moreover, an experienced investigator, accustomed to weigh evidence; in short, he is not a man likely to be mistaken or deceived, and his testimony I need hardly say will be accepted by all who know him, as accurate and unvarnished. His opportunities for investigation, too, living as he did in daily contact with Mr. Eglinton, were practically unlimited, and I find it a somewhat onerous task to select isolated cases—and I can do no more—out of the multitude which he and others in India put on record.

Another satisfactory experience was the following. After relating the circumstances of Mr. Eglinton's arrival in India as his guest, he proceeds:—"I had taken the top floor of a house for the season, into which I had put my own furniture, and as the rest of the house was entirely let out in offices, there was no one residing there except ourselves. Fig. 11 is a sketch showing the situation of the rooms, from which it will be seen that when our doors were locked it was quite impossible for any one to get into our rooms. As is usual in India the rooms were very large, roomy, and lofty, and what is not so usual, the floors were laid in Portland cement, so there could be no possibility of any communication through the floors. The verandah faced south, looking into the road. D is the doorways, from which it will be seen that one door led into the dining-room from the landing, and another into the bedroom. Both these doors were always barred before we retired to bed. The signs M and E represent the relative positions of our respective beds, M being mine, E Eglinton's, and they were a good many feet apart. Each bed is near one of the doorways looking into the dining-room, and I would add that the head of each bed was towards the north. I had not personally known anything whatever of Mr. Eglinton prior to his arrival in India, but we speedily became great friends, and I had many wonderful manifestations with him in private. One night we had gone to bed (I would add that each bed was furnished with a mosquito curtain which tucked in under the mattress, so that one had to disturb it if one wanted to get out of bed). We always kept a light in the room, a small hanging kerosene lamp, which was turned down, but gave sufficient light to enable me to see anything in the room. As it was rather warm we were both lying in our sleeping suits *on* the beds (I mean outside the bed clothes), and although the light was dim, and the mosquito curtains made things hazy, we could either of us see distinctly any movement made by the other. We had bid each other good-night, when 'Daisy' suddenly controlled Eglinton, and said, 'Mr. Meugens, don't go to sleep yet; watch.' Accordingly, I kept my eyes open, watching Eglinton's bed. After watching for some time I fancied I saw something in the corner marked †, and I sat up



in bed to have a better look. I saw what appeared to be a small cloud of something like muslin. This gradually developed until I could make out what appeared to be a human form draped in white. A little after, this form began to move, and then glided through the doorway at the foot of my bed, and then seemed to lack strength, for it glided back to the original corner. After a few seconds of interval, the form passed through the doorway again as before, and this time came right up to my bed, and seemed to be gazing at me through the mosquito curtains. I could see that it was the figure of a woman, tall and graceful, but although I tried hard I could not distinguish the features. The feet were bare, and so were the hands and arms beyond the elbows, but there was a veil or what appeared to be

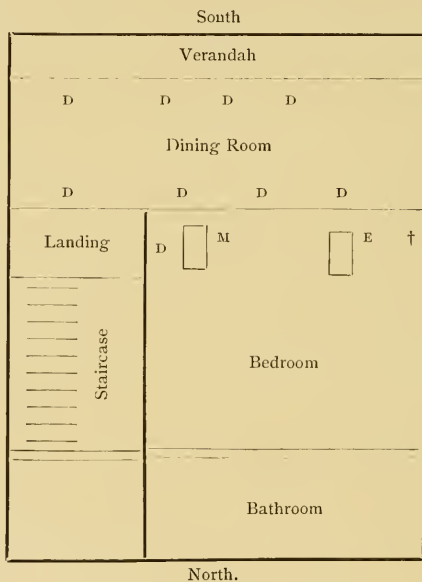


FIG. 11.—Plan of *Sance-room* in Calcutta.

such over the figure's face, and, moreover, the mosquito curtains added to the difficulty of my seeing distinctly. The figure rested her hand on the tester of the bed, and when I asked if she knew me, she rapped three times with her hand. I then asked if it was my mother, and again three raps. The figure then seemed to try to come closer, and as though she wished to touch me through the curtains; this, however, she did not manage to do, but she bent her head still lower, and I heard distinctly the whisper, 'God bless you.' She then glided back to the corner she had started from, and gradually dissolved or faded out of view. All this time Eglinton lay perfectly still on the bed, and so far as I could see, for I kept on glancing towards him, remained exactly as I have described when 'Daisy' first controlled him. As soon as the form had quite faded away 'Daisy' called out 'Well, Mr. Meugens,





I am not an artist as  
 you see Goodbye Eoblers  
 your very

Enforced  
 this  
 here  
 must

what do you think of that for a real old-fashioned ghost?' 'Who was it, "Daisy"?' I asked. 'Your mother, of course,' she answered, 'who else could it be?' I may add that my mother died when I was a child of five or six, and having no portrait of her beyond a photograph taken from an old oil painting belonging to my father, it would be no easy matter for me to identify her, even had I succeeded in seeing her features as distinctly as I could have wished. As bearing on this manifestation, I may remark that when I was at Lake Pleasant, in 1882, my mother gave me messages through several mediums there, who were strangers to me, to the effect that she had shown herself to me in Calcutta, and would yet find opportunity of doing so again, still more successfully."

When Mr. Meugens returned to England, Mr. Eglinton went to Howrah as the guest of Colonel and Mrs. Gordon, remaining with them during the rest of his stay in India. It was just before this period that Lord William Beresford became interested in, and converted to Spiritualism. Mrs. Gordon thus relates what took place on one occasion:—"A pair of folding slates were brought by Lord William, who obtained answers to questions on their inner sides. A name he asked for was also written. Two slates were then taken and washed by the sitters and a bit of pencil put between them. Lord William held the slates at one side, while Mr. Eglinton held them on the other. Writing was distinctly heard, and in a few seconds three raps denoted the completion of the message, and one slate was found full of an admirably written, carefully punctuated communication, which would have taken any one several minutes to write."

Among other persons who visited Mr. Eglinton, may be mentioned Dr. Warden, the Rajah Kumar Singh, Mr. Justice Cunningham, Mr. Justice Tottenham, Mr. Reily, Captain Andrews, Lord and Lady Lawrence, Sir Donald Stewart (commander-in-chief of Her Majesty's forces in India), and Captain and Lady Elizabeth Clough Taylor.

While staying at Howrah Mr. Eglinton received an invitation to proceed to Madras as the guest of General Morgan, after which it was his intention to go on to Simla, with a view to entering upon the duties of private secretary to a gentleman resident there, who had offered him that position; but urgent domestic affairs at home decreed otherwise, and he sailed for England in April, 1882.

It was during the voyage home that a letter was carried from Mr. Eglinton while at sea to Mrs. Gordon at Howrah. For a full account of this incident, which has, erroneously I believe, been claimed by Theosophists as confirming their views, I must refer my readers to "The Occult World," by Mr. A. P. Sinnett. I must here simply content myself with putting on record the maturer conclusions of Mr. Eglinton with regard to the "appearance" on board the *Vega*. He now believes the apparition to have been a spontaneous materialisation, of a somewhat unusual order, of some one who called himself "Koot Hoomi."

While in India he had not an opportunity of witnessing any genuine mediumship amongst the natives except in two cases; in one of which self-inflicted wounds were rapidly healed, and another in which lost property was recovered through the agency of a fakir. The growing of palms, the well-known basket trick, the throwing of a ring into a pond and its reproduction, are all feats which no second-rate conjurer would care to introduce in London. He saw one of the best men in India, and although he studied several of his performances, they were all of a similar character and explainable by natural means.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE ROYAL FAMILY AND SPIRITUALISM. PSYCHOGRAPHY EXPLAINED.



R. EGLINTON arrived in London on the 22nd April. The desire he had long had to live apart from Spiritualism as a profession seemed now to be on the point of being fulfilled. He entered into partnership with a gentleman in a publishing firm, trading under the name of the Ross Publishing Company; but although exceedingly prosperous, the erratic conduct of his partner drove him to a dissolution, in August, 1883, a great loser by the transaction. In the meantime he gave occasional non-professional *séances*, some of the finest being held at the residence of his friend, Mr. Dawson Rogers, at whose house, Mr. Eglinton writes, "I first had the pleasure of meeting that estimable and remarkable medium, Mrs. Everitt, whose *séances* for the direct voice are the best I have ever known." After the dissolution of partnership he was so much broken down by constant cares and worries that he decided to accompany his friends Colonel and Mrs. Lean on a visit to Paris. They stayed together in a *pension* in the Boulevard Haussmann, and in their pleasant society he soon recovered his usual health. He gave one or two private *séances* to persons of distinction during his stay in Paris, notably to the Princesse Lucien Buonaparte, Madame Olympe Odouard, Dr. Goyard, and others, with excellent success. The return to town occurred in December, 1883, after an absence of five or six weeks. It becoming known that he was about to give professional *séances* in London again, not having done so, with but one or two exceptions, since 1878, he was flooded with requests for sittings, and one of the first was given at the residence of Mr. Sam. Ward — the "Uncle Sam" of American fame, and uncle of clever F. Marion Crawford, the author of "Mr. Isaacs," etc. It was at his house that he first had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Sinnett, the Earl of Dunraven, and others. So much has been said about the connection of the Royal family with Spiritualism, that it may not be out of place here to say, concerning the many contradictory reports asserting that H.R.H. the late Duke of Albany took *no* interest in "Mr. Eglinton's Spiritualism," that there is in existence a letter of invitation from a well-known Spiritualist asking him to dinner to meet H.R.H., thus showing he *did* take an interest in Mr. Eglinton's mediumship.

At a later period another "contradiction" from Sir Henry Ponsonby, the private secretary of the Queen, went the round of the papers, whereupon I wrote as follows to the *Pall Mall Gazette*, one of the journals in which the "denial" appeared:—"In your issue of Wednesday, the 25th instant, you copied from the *Adelaide Evening Journal* a letter purporting to have



been written by Sir Henry Ponsonby, her Majesty's private secretary, asserting that 'it is not true that the members of the Royal Family are believers in Mr. Eglinton's Spiritualism;' and also a letter from the Hon. Alexander Yorke, who was equerry to the late Duke of Albany, stating that the notorious Bramah-lock double slate used by Mr. Eglinton was not given to him by his Royal Highness. As to both these letters, knowing what I do, I can only describe them as exceedingly diplomatic. Will Sir Henry Ponsonby, leaving out the qualification of 'Mr. Eglinton's Spiritualism'—whatever that may be—plainly assert that none of the members of the Royal Family have ever attended Spiritualistic *séances*, or that they have not arrived at a belief in the possibility of communication with the unseen world? And will the Hon. Alexander Yorke kindly inform your readers who it really was who presented the Bramah-lock slate to Mr. Eglinton? I happen to be aware that he (Mr. Yorke) knows, and it would be interesting if he would be ingenuous enough to state the fact. He could do so without any breach of confidence." These questions have never been answered, although care was taken to send copies of the paper to those concerned. Further, I learned that the original statement which drew forth Sir Henry Ponsonby's letter, says nothing about Mr. Eglinton's Spiritualism, in fact does not mention his name, so that the denial, if genuine, looks very like an evasion of the question. Readers will draw their own conclusions. Mr. Alexander Yorke, I may here mention, has attended a large number of *séances* with Mr. Eglinton.

Mr. E. Dawson Rogers has kindly supplied me with an account of a private sitting with Mr. Eglinton, early in 1883, at the time when he was engaged in commercial pursuits.

"A *séance* was held at my residence, Rose Villa, Church End, Finchley, N., on the evening of the 14th of January, the circle consisting of my wife, two sons, two daughters, and myself, with Mr. Eglinton as medium. We sat in the dark and had long conversations with spirits, who spoke with the direct voice. In the course of the sitting one of them asked: 'Have you any private note-paper with printed heading?' I replied that he would find some in the Davenport. Immediately afterwards we heard several strong pulls at a side drawer in the Davenport. This drawer goes very stiffly, and we knew exactly what was being done by the noise made by the drawer in being pulled out. The spirit had, in fact, gone to the particular drawer in which my stock of note-paper is kept. Some quires were at once thrown on the table, and I was immediately—that is, within two or three seconds—requested by the voice to light up. Having done so, we found on a piece of the paper a message of about eighty words, well and distinctly written in pencil. As soon as this had been read I put out the light again, and had scarcely done so when light was once more called for. As nearly as I can judge, not more than three seconds had elapsed; but in that space of time a pencil sketch (of which Fig. 12 is a *facsimile*) had been executed on another sheet of my private note-paper. The voice told us that the sketch might be taken as a general 'representation,' though not exactly a likeness, of my daughter Kathleen, who has now been about ten years in the other life. I should add that Mr. Eglinton sat between myself and my wife, and we know that he did not move from his seat during the *séance*."

Another noteworthy account of a *séance* from the same pen is the following:—

"On the 13th of March, 1883, I attended a *séance* held at the house of Mr. R. Pearce, Holder's Hill, Hendon. The circle comprised Mr. and Mrs. Pearce, Mr. and Mrs. T. Everitt, Mr. Frank Everitt, my wife, and myself; and Mr. Eglinton as the medium. We were sitting

in a room well lighted by a gas chandelier, which hung directly over the table, when Mr. Eglinton asked that a piece of paper should be initialled by members of the circle and placed in a book. Mr. Pearce accordingly produced some note-paper, which was initialled at the four corners by Mr. Everitt, Mr. Pearce, and myself—while I also wrote my initials and the date of the sitting at the back. This piece of paper I, at Mr. Eglinton's request, placed inside a book, which I laid before me on the table, with my left hand upon it. Mr. Eglinton put



FIG. 12.—A Direct Drawing.

his hand upon mine for a few seconds and then requested me to open the book. I did so and found that the note-paper had disappeared, and in its place was the address card of one of my daughters. On one side of the card was written the following message:—*'I am taking care of Frank, to whom I send my regards. Don't be anxious.'* 'Frank' was the name of one of my sons, who was at home ill. We were not then aware how serious his illness was. He departed this life three days afterwards. On the other side was the following message purporting to be from a dear friend (a German), who entered the spirit-world in 1874, and from whom we have

had very many communications since:—*‘Lieber Freund,—Für den Augenblick bin ich nicht im Stande dir ausführlich zu schreiben, aber ich werde es in Kürze thun. Behalte ein gutes Herz und, mit Grüsse an alle, verbleibe dein treuer E. F.’* Later in the evening, while sitting in the dark and receiving communications from Mr. Eglinton’s spirit-attendants by the direct voice, they told us that they had fetched the card on which the written messages had been given, from my house (about a mile distant); and as to the initialled note-paper which had disappeared they informed us that it was in their possession, that they had taken it for a special purpose, and that it would be returned on some future occasion at my own residence.

“On the evening of the 10th February, 1884, eleven months afterwards, Mr. Eglinton paid me a visit at my house in Church End, Finchley, and we had a sitting in the evening—the circle comprising (in addition to Mr. Eglinton), Mr. and Mrs. R. Pearce, my wife and myself, and my son and two daughters. It was a dark *séance*, Mr. Eglinton sitting—not isolated from the circle—but with us at the table between my wife and myself. Before the light was put out I had laid some paper and a pencil on the table, in case they might be needed. We had the usual manifestations of lights and raps, and touches by materialised hands; and some pleasant conversation with Mr. Eglinton’s spirit friends, in the direct voice. Suddenly, while all these were going on, we heard a noise as of the rustling of paper in the air, and a sound like that of writing. The paper fell between my wife and my son, and we were at once directed by the ‘voice’ to light up. We did so—and then, to our surprise, we found that none of the paper which had been placed on the table before the *séance* commenced had been used, but that the writing had been done on the initialled piece of note-paper which had disappeared eleven months before, and which was now returned to us, as clean, smooth, and uncrumpled as when placed between the leaves of the book held by my own hand. The message written was as follows:—*‘We have been asked to write this message for your son: “Dear Father,—Only a word with difficulty—but a great deal just now. Take comfort in the fact that I shall soon be able to write myself. Love to all, from your affectionate son, F. Rogers.”’* I have only to add that the text of the message was written in a good bold hand, which I do not recognise; but it is certainly not Mr. Eglinton’s, being as unlike his as could possibly be imagined. But the signature, ‘F. Rogers,’ is equally unlike the writing of the rest of the message, and is *beyond a doubt that of my son*, who departed this life, as I have said, three days after the paper originally disappeared, viz., on the 16th of March, 1883. No one who knew his writing could hesitate for a moment to declare that the signature was most certainly his.”

Much was being said at this time about the so-called “thought-reading” of Mr. Irving Bishop, and believing his performances in Liverpool and elsewhere not to be genuine, Mr. Eglinton challenged him in the following terms:—“I will place in the hands of the Psychical Society the sum of £10, and that Society shall choose a committee of six of its members, to mark and hide a pin in a manner similar to that adopted by Mr. Ladyman. Bishop shall allow himself the like conditions of being blindfolded and a copper wire; and if he, under these circumstances, will guide any one of the six gentlemen to the spot where the pin is hidden, I will forfeit the sum above-named, and will publish the result in the newspapers. Should the Psychical Society and Mr. Bishop consent to this, and the latter succeed, he will at once see the importance it will give him in having been successful with a committee of scientific gentlemen, whose testimony no one will doubt, besides having clearly demonstrated that *his* power of thought-reading has stood

the calm and deliberate test of a body of men who have already satisfied themselves of the existence of such a power." This challenge was never accepted.

In January, 1884, Mr. Eglinton again came forward as a professional medium. It really seemed as though every effort on his part to disengage himself from public life was doomed to failure. In spite of himself, he has been over and over again forced out of private life, and his wonderful gifts placed at the service of his fellow-men. Who will dare to say that there is not an unseen guiding hand in this? At all events, it would be difficult to gauge the value his mediumship has been to Spiritualism, especially during the last period of his professional career; and his success since January, 1884, can be regarded as little less than phenomenal.

He took up his residence at 12, Old Quebec Street, W., and was visited by the leading celebrities of the day, including some of the highest personages in the land. Mr. Charles Blackburn, always to the fore in his care for, and appreciation of genuine mediums, presented him with a test cabinet, the following being a description of a *séance* at which it was used. It was of inch-thick mahogany and exactly the shape of a bath chair without wheels; instead of a glass window front, it had, for ventilation, copper wire netting, with meshes of about one inch. This wire was stretched from head to foot. The cabinet contained a seat for one person only inside, the long wire door being finally fastened outside with a Chubb's padlock, or by any lock which the sceptic might choose to bring. It was then put together, and the medium entered and sat down. The wire door was shut, fastened with a Chubb's padlock — brought by Mr. Blackburn for the purpose — and both keys were retained until the *séance* was over, when all saw the lock unfastened, and Mr. Eglinton let out, everything being in as perfect order as when he entered. The cabinet was shut off from the circle of sitters by two large, thick curtains, so as to secure darkness round the cabinet during "form manifestations," but the company had about one-fifth of a full jet of gas, and all saw five materialised forms at separate intervals open the curtains, and come boldly up to the investigators. Whilst all could hear the medium groaning in the cabinet, "Abd-ū-lah," a dark-faced figure with one arm, came, and, in Oriental fashion, often salaamed. "Ernest," with several others, including a lady, also appeared.

After employing this cabinet for some time, its use was discontinued because some of the best and most conclusive results take place when the medium is free and unfettered. This will be clearly seen when I come to deal with apparitions formed with the medium in full view.

As I have said, the year 1884 marked a new era in the history of Spiritualism. Sounder methods of investigation were gradually obtaining, and a more sympathetic and appreciative attitude was adopted towards sensitives. Mr. Eglinton contributed not a little to this end by his sound judgment with regard to the phenomena best suited for presentation to inquirers. After due consideration and consultation with his invisible co-workers, he decided that for the most part psychography, or the production of writing by other than normal means, was by far the best phase of spiritual phenomena to present to neophytes; and he was undoubtedly right, the conditions being so open and satisfactory, and the results more easily obtainable and less exhausting than is the case with many other phases of the phenomena. At any rate, his *séances* received respectful and marked attention at the hands of most distinguished persons, and convert after convert eminent in all ranks of life was made.

As psychography from this time has formed the *special* feature of Mr. Eglinton's mediumship, this seems a fitting place to describe the general conditions under which it is obtained. This is

the more necessary as many persons have strange and confused ideas as to the manner in which *séances* are conducted, their conception of what takes place being, if anything, even more hazy and *bizarre*. Considering, however, the long prevalence of misrepresentation of the subject by interested persons, and the gruesome and garbled pictures drawn for a too confiding public by would-be critics, this state of mind is hardly surprising. In endeavouring to expose Spiritualism, these writers and self-constituted authorities have exposed, as I shall show, nothing more than their own ignorance of a subject which, of all others, requires careful and patient handling. And even honest and earnest truth-seekers have sometimes vague and erroneous ideas as to how,

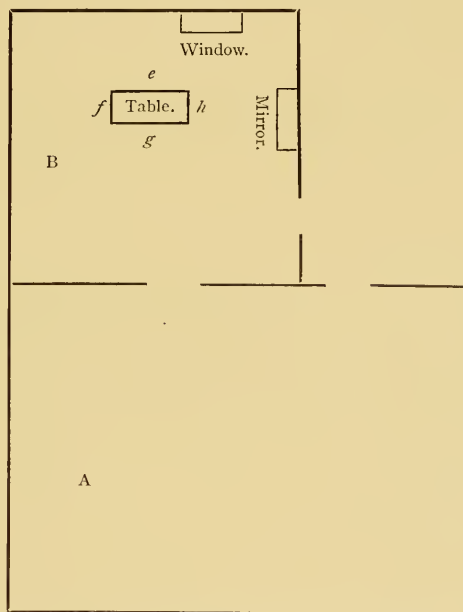


FIG. 13.—Ground Plan of Mr. Eglinton's *Séance*-room at Old Quebec Street.

or under what conditions, the phenomena are presented for observation. On both these grounds, therefore, a plain matter-of-fact explanation of the *modus operandi* of spiritual *séances* may be serviceable as well as interesting.

One of the most striking characteristics of this abnormal writing is its production, in many instances, within a closed space, access to which by ordinary means is precluded: as, for example, between two slates, exactly paired, fitting accurately one on the top of the other, and secured in position by cord tied in one or more directions round their outer surfaces. Or, it may be obtained when the slate or paper has been put under lock and key, or between two book-slates locked together, and in a variety of other ways.



The room in which the *séances* take place in no respect differs from an ordinary apartment, nor does it contain any feature upon which an argument against the reality of the phenomena could possibly be based. Any room will do: indeed, many of Mr. Eglinton's best results have been obtained in the private houses of investigators. As, however, a large number of the sittings to be hereafter described, took place at 12, Old Quebec Street, I will describe the chambers occupied by Mr. Eglinton at that address. The apartment formed the inner of a suite of two drawing-rooms such as are met with in scores of London houses. Fig. 13 is a ground plan of these rooms. As I have said, Mr Eglinton has been as successful at the residences of investigators as at his own rooms. The practice of conducting these experiments at a table is obviously adopted for convenience and comfort, and is not for any reason connected with the production of the writing. Psychography has been obtained (and is, therefore, obtainable) in almost

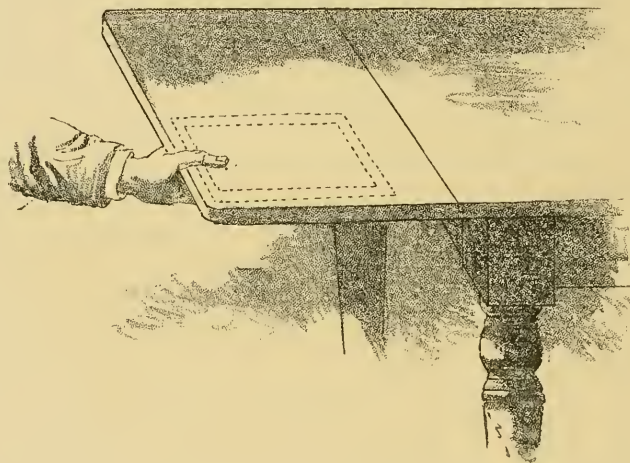


FIG. 14.—Table Used by Mr. Eglinton, and Mode of Holding the Slate for Simple Experiments.

any position in which the medium can be placed—while standing isolated in the centre of a room, or while sitting on the floor. I should not have mentioned this point but for the fact that some persons fancy the table has something to do with the matter. That is not the case: the use of a table is by no means absolutely necessary.

The table used by Mr. Eglinton is shown in Fig. 14. It is what is technically known as a "Pembroke"—a rather old-fashioned make, but one which many will recognise as a very common two-flap table, the flap being supported, when raised, by wooden cross bars fixed in a pivotal screw. Any table, will, however, serve equally well, but a card table is perhaps better than any, as there are no obstacles, such as cross-bars, in the way to prevent the slate from being pressed flat against the under-surface of the table, by the fingers and thumbs as shown in Figs. 14 and 15.

In Fig. 16 the position of the table in front of the mirror is shown (see also Fig. 17). At

this the investigators take their seats. These, generally, are two in number, but on rare occasions three persons are present, in addition to the medium. Mr. Eglinton usually sits at *e*, and, in the representative *séances* I have now especially in mind, my friends sat at *f* and *h* and *l* at *g*. By comparing Figs. 13 and 16 these positions will be readily understood.

As to the light, these *séances* are held either in broad day, lamp, or gas light; never in the dark nor in a dim light. Nothing could be more satisfactory than the conditions for perfect observation in this respect.

The slates used are common school slates, selected in size, so that one will pair exactly with any other. These are either taken from a stock kept by the medium, who buys them by the gross; or, as is frequently the case, the sitter takes his own. Book slates, or those fitted with lock and key, can also be used.

Those present take their seats at the table as indicated, Mr. Eglinton sitting at *e*. A

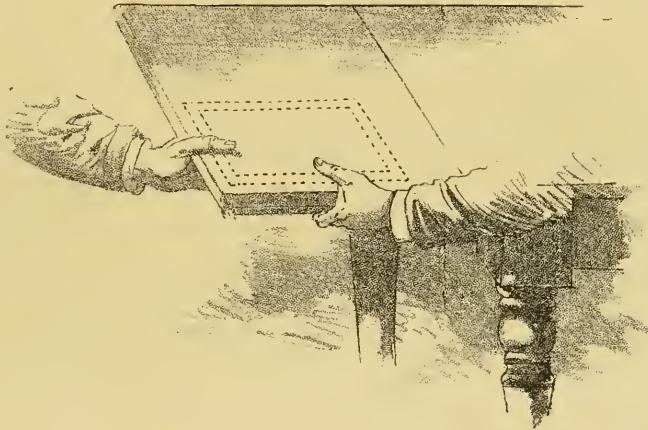


FIG. 15.—Method of obtaining Writing when the Slate is held by Mr. Eglinton and the Sitter.

slate is taken by one of the company, cleaned, and a piece of pencil—a mere crumb, about one-sixteenth to three-sixteenths of an inch long, which is usually cut fresh from a stick, and marked so as to prove that that identical piece actually produces the writing—placed upon it. The medium then takes the slate, and at once places it in position at the corner of the table between *e* and *f* (Fig. 13), keeping it there by pressing the under surface of the slate with his fingers, and the table top with his thumb. Figs. 14 and 15 further illustrate this position. It will be seen that a closed space is thus formed between the slate and the table, in which it would not be possible to write by ordinary means. When thus ready, one of the company is desired to ask some question of the “force,” “intelligence,” or “spirit”—or whatever name the inquirer may give to the agency producing these phenomena. The most frequent inquiry has regard to the presence of personal friends who have passed away. Supposing this has been put, almost immediately the sound of writing is heard; the completion of the

answer is signified by three taps with the pencil on the slate; the latter is brought to the top of the table, and a pertinent answer to the question is always found written on the side of the slate which has been nearest the under surface of the table. No movement by which it could have been produced has been detected on the part of the medium. The result is probably puzzling, and a second and third and fourth experiment is made, in the course of which internal evidence of the identity of the agency at work is often gained.

What may be termed the more crucial tests as to the reality of this phenomenon have been very common with Mr. Eglinton. The simple phenomena *when seen* are perfectly satisfactory, and by means of these alone, an inquirer can learn a great deal with regard to the subject. The so-called crucial tests, however, are more satisfactory to those who are

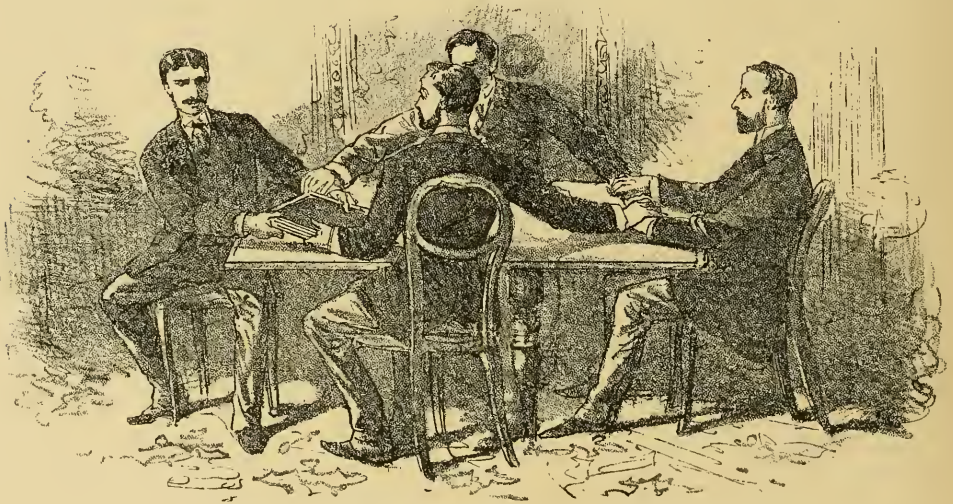


FIG. 16.—Method of obtaining Writing between Two Slates held over the Table.

obliged to depend upon the testimony of others, inasmuch as they show that every precaution human ingenuity can devise has been exhausted before ordinary explanations are abandoned for abnormal ones.

One of the most frequent of these tests is represented in Fig. 16, where the slates, placed face to face, are held over the table in full view of all present, the writing being produced while so held. This engraving is an exact representation of what took place at a *séance* at which I was present. Two slates, exact pairs, fitting accurately when placed one on top of the other, were cleaned and securely tied in transverse directions, a crumb of slate pencil having been placed between the two enclosed surfaces. They never left the sight of the three witnesses the whole time. Held by Mr. Eglinton at *e*, and the sitter at *f* (Figs. 13 and 16), *over* the table, the sound of writing between the two slates was heard, ending in



less than half a minute with the usual signal of completion. The slates were cut apart, and on the inner surface of one of the slates was found a message containing one hundred and thirty words.

At another time the slates, prepared as aforesaid, were held over the head of the sitter at *f* (Figs. 13 and 17). I was sitting at *g*, and another friend at *h*. The person sitting at *f*, though unable to see, in the usual manner, the actions of the medium, was, however, enabled to add his testimony to that of the other sitters, inasmuch as he saw every movement reflected in the mirror in front of him.



FIG. 17.—Method of obtaining Writing when the Slates are tied and held over the Head of one of the Sitters.

The actual production of the writing without visible agency has also been witnessed. An ordinary tumbler was inverted on a slate with a crumb of pencil underneath it, and placed in position at the corner of the table, as shown in Fig. 18. The sound of writing being heard, permission was asked to look under the table. This was given, and the pencil was seen tracing a portion of the writing, moving from side to side without any visible cause.

"But," says one, "it is as clear as daylight that the writing has been prepared by some chemical means, and that the cleaning of the slates beforehand with a damp sponge is allowed only as a blind." My answer is, that although this assertion might be urged against a very few of the experiments now being made, day after day, by intelligent and educated

people, yet in the vast majority of instances such a theory is utterly untenable. Why? Because—

1. In some cases the slates have been washed with all known re-agents for making writing with invisible inks visible.
2. The writing is generally done with slate pencil, and no method is known to science whereby the marks of slate pencil can be invisibly transferred to a slate and afterwards made visible.
3. On many occasions the slates used have never been in the possession of the medium, and have not been touched by him until, the *séance* having commenced, and the slates having been cleaned and tied together, they are put in position for the production of the writing.
4. The writing oftentimes takes the form of answers to impromptu questions, on topics which could not possibly have been thought of beforehand. Arbitrary signs and symbols, words and sentences in English and foreign languages, thought of on the spur of the moment, have been immediately reproduced.

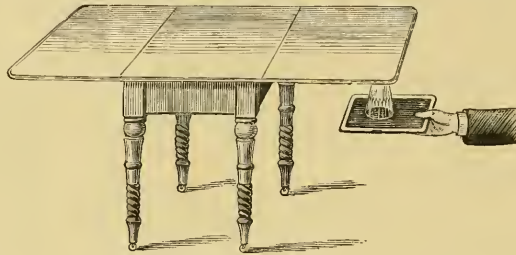


FIG. 18.—Obtaining Writing under an Inverted Tumbler.

5. The sound of writing is invariably heard, and the facet of the pencil is found to be worn down after the experiment is complete.
6. Two, three, or more pieces of differently coloured crayons have been inserted between the slates, and only when all was ready has the colour to be used been selected. The writing has been done forthwith, and has invariably been found executed in the colour chosen.

If it be asserted that the medium in some way produces the writing with his fingers, I can only answer that the facts of the case are utterly opposed to this assumption. Even supposing, for the sake of argument, that he could elude the vigilance of two, three, or more pairs of eyes, this would be improbable.

“But,” I am told, “conjurers produce results seemingly as remarkable by sleight of hand.” I must deny this point blank: the conditions are by no means the same. A conjurer would not allow the investigator to bring his own slates, or to secure them, nor would he allow such close proximity to himself. Further, he would not be able to reproduce, under the same conditions, any sign or word suggested after all the preparations



were complete ; and last, but not least, he could not, by a trick, cause writing to be executed under the same conditions, which should be, as is often the case with Mr. Eglinton and other mediums, an exact *facsimile* of the "hand" written by some friend or relative who has long since passed through the portals of the grave, and of whose very name and existence the medium is unaware. I know of many instances in which dates and names have been given quite unknown to any person present, but which have afterwards been verified. What conjurer could do this ?

Another valid reason against the writing being a mere trick is the fact of its extremely rapid production, the speed varying from three to six times the rate at which the quickest penman can write. The limit obtainable under ordinary circumstances is forty words per minute ; the average being thirty words. Psychography far exceeds this. I have personally known, more than once, two hundred and eighty-eight words per minute to have been written, while there are instances on record where even this remarkable speed has been exceeded.

Such are the general features of a psychographic *séance*. How far they conform to the truth can be learned by any person choosing to take the necessary trouble to verify my facts ; how far they diverge from the supposed loose and credulous method of investigation usually attributed to Spiritualists by some men of science can be readily seen. I have only touched on general conditions, but *there are others which it is quite as necessary the investigator himself should observe*. Amongst these are a fearless, candid love of truth wherever it may lead, an openness to conviction, and a spirit of inquiry which will admit that, however much is already known of the laws of Nature, there *may* be others yet to be unravelled.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### GENERAL TESTIMONY TO PSYCHOGRAPHY.



SHALL now concern myself for the most part in dealing with the evidence on record for the reality of Psychography. This is abundant, both as regards quantity and quality, and, taken *en bloc*, forms a difficult nut for the sceptic to crack. I shall leave the reader to decide whether it is probable that all my witnesses are deceived or deceivers, or whether it is more credible that in these matters they have used the same common sense which

otherwise regulates their daily lives, and that they record the facts just as they occurred.

The first case I shall quote is narrated by Mr. A. H. Louis, barrister-at-law:—"A blank card being placed between two slates was held by Mr. Eglinton and myself, a crumb of lead pencil being placed with the card. After a lapse of, certainly not more than half a minute, we found that the card was inscribed with matter of the utmost significance to me relating to the most important part of what I must call the work of my life, as I shall hereafter take an opportunity to show. On the top part of the card was a roughly drawn map of the American and European continents, with a cross surmounting a small sphere. On the lower part was figured two isosceles triangles; these triangles were filled with minute writing, too minute for deciphering; a few words, however, could be read, from which the purport of the whole could be gathered, that purport being, that a sign was there intended to be given of mystical import, having reference to labour and motive of Masonic significance. At the foot of the card was the signature of initials, and a date, 'G. W., 1799.' All I can, or may, or will say here is that these initials are those of the name of George Washington, the first of American Masons, and the date was the year of his death."

Another experience of Mr. Louis' follows naturally on that just stated. Both took place in the full light: "Being alone with Mr. Eglinton, having come for an evening's conversation without any idea of having any experiences, and after we had been more than an hour together, he said that he felt impressed that we were to sit for written communications. Placing a crumb of slate pencil between two slates and both of us holding these, writing immediately began. 'Joey' first gave his own name, and, in reply to my earnestly-expressed wish that a dear young friend, ignorant of these experiences, should be brought within this region, 'Joey' wrote that it should be so soon if 'they' could get within his influence. Immediately afterwards he wrote that 'Ernest' wished to write.' A crumb of pencil was again placed between the slates, and we immediately heard writing proceed with great vigour,

and decision and rapidity, a sharp series of raps with the pencil being given to signify that the 'message' was finished. It was couched in these terms: '*My dear Friend,—We do not like to see you in a condition by which your usefulness to yourself and others is impaired. Remember what Rousseau says, L'HOMME N'EST JAMAIS MOINS MISERABLE QUE QUAND IL PARAÎT DEPOURVU DE TOUT. We specially wish to enjoin you to bring to the front all the faculties with which you are so richly endowed for good active work, and to take heart in the absolute certainty that we are around you all the time, and pour upon you the perfume of our sympathy, affection, and love.—ERNEST.'*'

Miss Fisher, of Clifton, has narrated an experience which may be taken as typical of the simpler phenomena:—"Being in London for a few days, I took the opportunity of having a private *séance* with Mr. Eglinton, and the proofs I then received of the truth of spirit communion were so convincing that I consider it my duty to bear testimony to that truth, which removes the fear of death, and imparts consolation when we mourn the loss of a dear relation or friend. The *séance* took place in a small drawing-room, wherein was a plain, uncovered table, at which the medium and I took our seats. Mr. Eglinton gave me some slates to examine, which I did, and was satisfied that they were perfectly clean. I then rubbed them well with a sponge given me for that purpose. The medium, having placed a crumb of pencil on one of the slates, held my hands in one of his, while with the other he held the slate under the table, not so far but that part of the slate and his hand were visible to me. On my inquiring if a relation, who had lately left the earth-life, was present, the pencil was heard writing, and, on the signal being given, Mr. Eglinton withdrew the slate, and I saw written there the word 'Yes.' This was written on the upper surface, which was held against the table. I asked that a message might be given me by this spirit. Mr. Eglinton for this purpose cleaned two slates, and putting a small piece of pencil on one, he covered it with the other, requesting me to hold them firmly together, he only touching one side. We held the slates *between* us, neither *on* nor *under* the table, so that it was *utterly impossible* that the writing could have been produced by any conscious agency on his part. We held them but a few moments before the pencil began to write rapidly inside, and on the signal being given, I removed the top slate, and found on the bottom one a message of half-a-dozen lines, signed by my brother's name, which was quite unknown to the medium. Had I before entertained the slightest doubt as to the genuineness of the phenomenon, this one fact, that my brother's name, which, as I before stated, was unknown to the medium, was written between closed slates *in full light*, would have proved that my brother was indeed near me, and had given me this message from beyond the grave. I must add, too, that I was a perfect stranger to Mr. Eglinton until that day."

A good case of direct writing in a language unknown to the medium is recorded by Mr. A. Lillie, F. Asiatic Soc., author of "Buddha and Early Buddhism," etc:—"We sat in the broad daylight. Two slates were cleaned and then placed *on* the table. A crumb of slate pencil had been inserted between the slates. Mr. Eglinton held one corner of the slate and I held the other. Soon the sound of writing was heard. This is the message: '*Dear Sir,—There is someone here who appears to take an interest in your Oriental work, and we yield up to him the power to write the following.*' After this came a verse of Sanskrit poetry, written in the Bengali character. This is the translation:—'*I (have) neither confusion, nor*

*doubt, nor divisions of . . . .* (words illegible). *I (have) neither father, nor mother, nor bride. I have no relations, or friends, or teacher, or pupil. I am 'Siva, I am 'Siva! My form is Joy and Thought.'* After the Sanskrit the letter thus continued:—*'Let this be a proof of our power to those who doubt. To those earnestly inclined we are willing to help all in our power, and, not only so, to reveal to them the true principles of so-called Spiritualism.'* This is word for word what was written on the slate."

The testimony of Dr. G. Wyld (M.D., Edin.), of 41, Courtfield Road, South Kensington, is exceptionally clear and to the point. "Last evening, Lady Cranstoun invited me to meet Mr. Eglinton at her house, and the circle of seven, including Mr. J. Campbell, B.A., being all harmonious, we had a pleasant and successful evening. The slates were new and the property of Lady Cranstoun, and Mr. Eglinton, as usual, began by holding a slate, on the surface of which was placed a crumb of slate pencil, below and closely pressed against the under surface of the table. Then, on each one present, in rotation, asking that a name, a word, or certain information should be written, the request was at once and audibly complied with. Eglinton then requested the lady at his right hand to unite with him in pressing the slate close against the under surface of the table, and again our requests for names and words were at once met by writings on the slate. Confidence being thus established, Mr. Eglinton then placed a slate on the upper surface of the table with a fragment of pencil and covered this slate with another; for the third time our requests were complied with, and names, figures, and sentences were written as dictated by us. The sitters were well-known to each other, and there was a good light on the table all the time, and fraud, even if desired, was impossible."

Another witness, Mr. J. H. Gledstones, a well-known merchant at Bordeaux, says:—*"Mr. Eglinton and myself having put a blank card between the leaves of a book upon which we placed our hands, found on taking it out these words written in pencil—'I am anxious to communicate to (sic) my husband. I see one of his friends here.—FLORA ELIZABETH DARVALL.'* These are the names of an old friend of mine, although I did not know till I inquired, that Elizabeth was one of them. Now, it so happens that this lady's husband had departed this life only one month previously, while the sender of the message, as the medium was correctly informed in some mysterious manner, left us in 1879. A week afterwards, at a *séance*, while Mr. Eglinton's hands were handcuffed behind his back, himself on the dark side of a curtain, a hand and arm came out into full view, and taking up a pencil that was placed on a table with some cards on my side of the curtain, in a partially lighted room, wrote on one with great rapidity. When finished, the card was given to me by this hand, when I found written on it:—*'My dear Friend,—I have met my husband since I wrote the other day; I did not know that he had joined us. He is here, and sends you his greeting. I am aware conditions do not always serve to enable me to communicate. I do not forget those who take an interest in my spiritual welfare as I do in their material welfare. I am happier than I was in earth-life. God bless you.—F. E. DARVALL.'* I gave this card to Captain Darvall, and persuaded him to accompany me to a *séance*, to see if he could hear from his mother. To his great astonishment, while he and Mr. Eglinton held a double slate between them away from the table, the sound of writing was heard, and upon opening them the whole of one side of a slate was found written upon, and

signed 'Godschall Johnson.' The message was addressed to Captain Darvall, who told us that the name was that of a deceased relative. This was a very interesting manifestation to one who had never seen anything of the kind before, and my friend did not refuse to believe the evidence of his senses. For the first time in his life, he found himself calmly saying to a dead man, 'Well, how are you getting on?' I hope that none of the relatives of these friends will blame me for giving the names. I can see no reason for not publishing them, and one would think that all who had the pleasure of knowing the spirit, who in this life was called Lady Darvall, cannot but rejoice to learn that she is happy, for in these spontaneous communications from unevoked spirits, may we not be satisfied as to the genuineness of their source?"

A clergyman (I am in possession of the real name and address) also wrote testifying to Mr. Eglinton's wonderful powers. "It may be useful to mention a simple and interesting test which I applied at the second of two very successful *séances* which I have attended. More than once I specially examined the 'crumb' of pencil before it was used. Small, thin pieces, with sharp edges, are employed. Immediately after a message or answer had been given I removed the pencil from the slate, where, as has been noticed by others, it lay against the last word of the communications, and I observed that one of its angles was freshly worn down, exactly as would be the case in writing. This change in its substance, being produced in the very short interval during which it was placed on the slate, or between slates, and hidden from view, and being coincident with the production of the writing and the scratching sound as of a pencil on the slate, proves as completely as such a thing can be proved that the pencil was used. This evidence, of course, confutes the suggestion, *if it were tenable on other grounds*, that the writing is prepared beforehand. That the medium himself handled the tiny fragment of pencil as it thus travelled across the slate in the confined space between slate and table, or between the two slates pressed together, is to those who have watched the occurrence in the clearest light entirely out of the question. It is quite possible for a prejudiced person under the guise of full examination to annoy a medium with unreasonable requirements. But the candid and thorough inquiry into minute particulars which is necessary in the investigation of such marvels, Mr. Eglinton treats very amiably and indeed asks for. I may suggest that the observation of the slate pencil, as having been actually used when writing appears, has a place in the chain of scientific evidence."

The handwriting of these messages was often characteristic of "the dead." A good case of this kind is recorded by Dr. Nichols, who is supported in his testimony by three other well-known and responsible persons.

"We sat in the full daylight round a very plain table for direct writing on slates. There were five persons present—Mr. Charles Blackburn, Mrs. Western, Miss Cook, Mr. Eglinton, and myself." After describing the indisputable conditions under which several small messages were written, Dr. Nichols continues:—"Two slates were cleaned and laid upon the top of the table in full sight. A bit of pencil, about a quarter of an inch long, was placed between them. All our hands were joined, and thus holding each other we watched and listened. In a few seconds we heard the sound of rapid writing—then the signal raps. Removing the upper slate we found a message (Fig. 19) of fifteen lines, containing one hundred and twenty-six words, in a handwriting perfectly familiar to me, and totally unlike that of any person present :



'My dear Papa,—I cannot tell you how rejoiced I am that I am able to send you these words of greeting and love, after so long a period of silence. Silent, however, only in the outward form, for as you and dear, dear Mana know, I am ever with you in spirit. What a blessed boon is this God-given power that enables me to tell you this myself! Dear, dear Mama! How many hours I have spent in ministering to her [in] the tenderness of my love, and how futile have been my efforts to free her from pain and suffering. Give her my constant and tender love, and not forgetting your dear self, my own Papa, I am yours in the blessed faith. † WILLIE.'

"It is the handwriting of my daughter, Mary Wilhelmina (already referred to in Chapter X.),

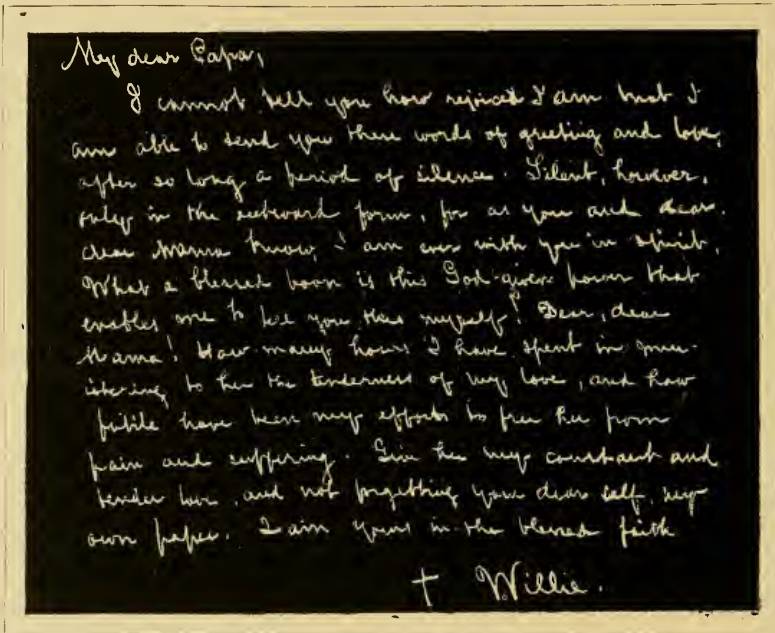


FIG. 19.—Reduced Facsimile, of, Recognised Psychographic Writing.

familiarly called Willie; I give a specimen of the handwriting of Mr. Eglinton (Fig. 20), that the reader may judge whether he could have written this letter, as it was written on the slate in not more than one-tenth part of the time it has taken me, a fairly rapid writer, to copy it. No; we five persons *heard* every word written; in the full daylight we *saw* the two slates lying upon the table before us from which the sound of writing proceeded. When the upper slate was raised from the lower we all saw the work which we had heard. The test was perfect—perfect as to the conditions—perfect as to matter and handwriting."

To make the account more satisfactory, Dr. Nichols has allowed me to reproduce a portion of his daughter's handwriting, written some years before she left the body (Fig. 21).

A lady, the wife of a late Mayor of Bolton, after describing the production in less than half a minute, under the ordinary conditions, of a message containing no less than one hundred and twenty-six words, or more than eight times as many words as the swiftest penman could write in the same length of time, goes on to testify that afterwards "when holding the

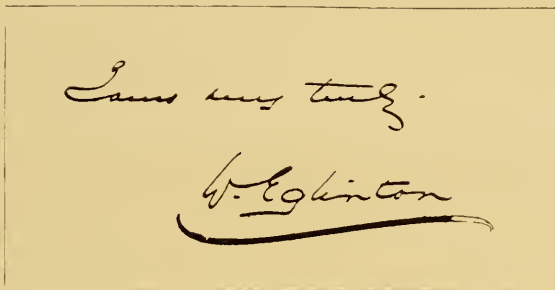


FIG. 20.—Handwriting of Mr. Eglinton.

slates at arm's length between us, higher than the table and away from it, in this position I was allowed to ask for any word, and it was written directly. The little pencil was always found at the end of the last letter, and once we saw it hanging there, as a needle would hang on to a magnet. I have not observed that this has been named in any account of the

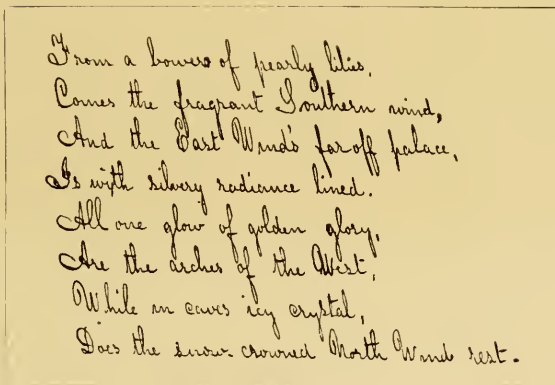


FIG. 21.—Handwriting of Dr. Nichols' Daughter.

writing. I said I should like something in another language. I chose French, but I wish I had chosen some less familiar language. Without delay the words were written: '*Votre ami n'est pas ici. Dieu vous bénit.*' On my new folding slate, which was never out of my sight, I bore away four messages in different hands; one was the familiar formula, '*Let this convince*

you of our power.—JOEY.'” She adds, “I was convinced of a power—an intelligent power, an independent power—yet a power connected in some way with the medium. I will end by saying that he seemed in a normal state, except once or twice when the power was very strong.”

Writing on March 29th, 1884, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers says:—“I have lately been present at several sittings with Mr. Eglinton when slate-writing has been produced under the most perfect test conditions, messages being given from departed friends, with names, dates, and other facts unknown to the sitters at the time, but subsequently verified to the letter. Great as were Dr. Slade’s mediumistic powers for obtaining communications in this form, I think they are exceeded by Mr. Eglinton’s.”

Mr. Hensleigh Wedgwood, M.A., has been good enough to supply me with an account of a valuable *séance*:—“In the spring of 1884, just after Mr. Eglinton had been presented with his famous pair of folding slates, locking so closely together as to make the introduction of a piece of paper impossible, I had a morning sitting with him under the conditions so often described—he and I sitting close to each other at the corner of the table in full daylight. Having been shown the folding frame, I expressed a wish to experiment with it, when Mr. Eglinton gave me a blank card which he desired me to mark. I accordingly wrote my initials upon it, together with a small circle, which might easily escape observation, telling him I had written my initials, when the card, together with a nib of black lead, was placed within the frame, which was snapped to and the key given to me. The closed frame was then laid flat on the table, and our hands placed upon it. I do not think it was ever removed from its place, but I cannot now be quite sure that it was not for a time held under the table, as was so frequently done on other occasions, but it was never withdrawn for a moment from my immediate observation. Presently Mr. Eglinton became entranced, and in the name of a control familiar to me, talked to me about the drawing they proposed to execute on the card. In the course of a very few minutes, which I estimated at the time as under ten, the work was done and the frame placed in my hands, with directions to open it as soon as the medium came to himself. Accordingly, as soon as he awoke out of his trance, I unlocked the frame (the key of which I had kept in my pocket), and took out the card which I had put blank into the frame not a quarter of an hour before, and on the same face on which I had placed my distinctive mark I found a drawing of a female figure, as if floating in the air, holding back her copious hair with both her hands. It was a well-proportioned figure, in a difficult attitude, with the outline clearly drawn without hesitation (except the legs from the knees downwards, which had evidently been hurried over), the fore-shortened limbs being slightly shaded. It would be absurd, under the circumstances described, to suppose that the frame could have been surreptitiously withdrawn and opened, and the figure drawn with such rapidity, as to baffle my observation. The only other way of escape from the admission of an occult agency (equally absurd, as it appears to me) is to suppose that I and the scores of other similar witnesses, are unconsciously entranced for as long a time as may be necessary to accomplish the operation in hand.”

Others of Mr. Wedgwood’s experiences are also valuable and interesting. The following evidence was called forth by an unwarrantable attack upon Mr. Eglinton on the part of some members of the Society for Psychical Research. Mr. Wedgwood is one of the Vice-Presidents

of that Society, and he says: "So many have borne witness to the genuineness of Mr. Eglinton's slate-writing that I have thought it needless to add my voice, although my experiences have, I think, not been less decisive than any of those previously published. But now I am induced to come forward by seeing that stress has been laid on his want of success when sitting with a party of members of the Society for Psychical Research, as if any amount of negative evidence could derogate from the weight of facts solidly established on positive testimony. *The Society for Psychical Research have no patent for accurate observation.* Their testimony should have just as much and no greater weight than that of any other trustworthy witnesses. The peculiar value of the slate-writing test depends upon the extremely simple conditions under which it is exhibited, so as to render fraud conspicuously impossible in the case of a moderately observant witness. The first experience that I shall notice took place some years ago, when Mr. Eglinton was residing with Dr. Nichols in Fopstone Road. I took with me a pair of my own slates which I had tied up with string passing twice across the long and once across the short side of the slates, sealing them on the edges at the six points where they were crossed by the string. We sat in the dark, but on this occasion did not succeed in getting anything written on my slates. Two or three months later I took the same slates as I had tied them, and gummed the edges all round with postage paper, so as to exclude the possibility of inserting a tool, however fine, at any point. We now sat under the gas-light with the gas turned low, but with light enough to see each other clearly, as well as the slates laid flat on the table between us and covered by our four hands, Mr. Eglinton's as well as mine, which were never removed from them. After a while, the well-known sound of slate-writing began to be heard, and putting down my ear to the slates and withdrawing it again there could be no doubt that it was from them that the sound proceeded. I remarked to Mr. Eglinton on the painful amount of bodily effort he seemed to be exerting, which appeared strange to me, as I thought that whatever influence he could exert in the matter must be purely the result of mental effort. When the slates were opened, the seals and gummed paper remained unbroken. Three separate messages were written on both sides, containing seventy-five words in all, in three different hands, neatly written in even lines, with all the dots and accents correctly placed (one of the messages being in French), and each handwriting kept consistently throughout the message. One sentence was written with soft slate-pencil, the others had the appearance of being written with a blunt metallic point. The morsels of slate-pencil that had been put in rawly broken, had plainly been worn as if with writing. One of the sentences seemed to be in answer to my remark on the effort it appeared to cost Mr. Eglinton: '*We managed to produce what you require, but with great difficulty and stress upon the medium.*' My next instance is a case of writing between the leaves of a closed book, where the difficulty is carried one degree further than that of writing in the empty space inclosed between the rims of a pair of slates. I was one of a party of eight, sitting round the table, with the gas full on. Mr. Eglinton gave me a blank card, from which I tore off a corner and kept it in my pocket. He put the card in a book, together with a morsel of black lead, and, turning to a sitter on his right, laid the book on the table, with both their hands on it. As nothing ensued, Mr. Eglinton removed the book, and laid it between him and me, and we placed our hands on it. Shortly after, having had the usual notice of three little taps that the writing was accomplished, I opened the book, and on the card I

had placed there blank a few minutes before, I found a short letter addressed to me in a well-known and very peculiar handwriting, 'Did you get my letter?' In fact, I had received the letter alluded to only just before starting from my house for the sitting, and so had it in my pocket to show my fellow-sitters. There could not be a doubt of the identity of the two handwritings and signatures. I had not mentioned or shown the letter to anyone, nor was the person through whose hand it was written (unconsciously as I believe) aware of my intention to sit with Mr. Eglinton. Nor, conversely, did the latter know anything of my communications with my mysterious correspondent. There was no trace whatever of black lead on the page of the book opposite to the card, although, of course, the fragment used in writing on the card must have rubbed with equal force on the opposite page. I have still the card with the fragment I tore off; the corner accurately fitted on to it.

Professor Cassal, a member of the teaching-staff of University College, and an intimate associate of Victor Hugo in the *coup d'état* of 1852, and a partner in the banishment from France of that celebrated poet and Spiritualist, had a psychographic *séance* with Mr. Eglinton, and his narrative of the *séance* I think worthy to be placed before my readers. It is as follows:—  
 "I had long been desirous to witness the fact of direct writing; at last I found myself able, and went to Mr. Eglinton, accompanied by my son [also holding several public appointments, and a man of critical acumen], purchasing on our way several ordinary framed slates. We found Mr. Eglinton a sympathetic, intelligent, gentlemanly young man, and he received us in a neatly-furnished room, the most striking article in which was a deal table, standing near the window. At this table we took our seats with the medium, my son facing him and I being on his right. After trying my new slates, with feeble results, the medium took one of his own, cleaned it carefully, laid a fragment of pencil on it, and held it with his left hand—his right being in mine—against the under surface of the table, the slate being partly visible to me. In answer to the question whether a spirit could communicate, we heard the sound of pencil-writing, then three little taps. We then found written, on the upper surface of the slate, the word 'Yes.' It seemed written from the side opposite to the medium, and it was on the part of the slate remote from his hand. Thinking the ice broken, we returned to my own slates. Here are the results. 1. Two were placed together with a morsel of pencil between, loose in the space formed by the apposition of their frames. Mr. Eglinton and I held them between us, he with his right hand, I with my left. I asked if a spirit friend was with us. We heard movements of the pencil; I distinguished the sounds of marking stops and dots, then three taps. On separating the slates I read upon the upper surface of the under one, '*Madame O.'s guide, Dr. F., is present and salutes you.*' Neither the medium nor I had left hold of the slates, and I looked fixedly upon them. Dr. F. was the name of one of our old friends. 2. My son, holding a slate out of sight of the medium and myself, wrote upon it. I then held it against the under surface of the table. After sounds of writing and three taps, I withdrew it, and read, '*Yes, she is here. We regret, however, that she is not able to write. Do you not feel her presence?*' 3. In my turn I wrote upon a slate, using the same precaution, '*Is my friend W. present?*' '*Is my father here?*' The answers were: '*Your friend W. is not here,*' in French; and in English, '*Your father is here, and many others with him.*' 4. Upon a fourth slate I wrote, '*Could my father give me his signature, or a few words of his writing?*' The reply was, '*We are sorry that*



*your father cannot write. He will probably be able another time.*' Neither the medium nor my son could have seen what I had written. My questions were in French; the replies, as all were, except the one about my friend W., in English. 5. The medium handed to my son a pair of hinged folding-slates, furnished with lock and key, who wrote, on one of the clean slates, a question, locked the slates together, put the key in his pocket, and laid them on the table. The medium and I each laid a hand upon the slates; writing was heard, then three taps. On my son unlocking the slates he found an answer apposite to the question he had written, of a private and personal nature. 6. Lastly, the medium placed two large clean slates together upon the table. Then we heard sounds of writing for about a minute. On separating them we found the lower one covered with writing entirely different in character to Mr. Eglinton's. A few concluding lines were above the body of the writing and written inversely to it. It was this:—'*We have long desired to have this opportunity. The writing which you have under your eye is produced under conditions which, under ordinary circumstances, would be impossible. It consequently goes to prove the truth of what we are endeavouring to promulgate. What is the agent or acting cause in the phenomena? That does not much matter. The fact is here. Certain clever, lynx-eyed persons, who pretend to explain what they have never seen, will one day have to admit their ignorance. But to those who, like you, enjoy the consolation and advantage of knowing this truth, I say that the knowledge they acquire and are able to impart, should compensate for what they endure in an unpopular cause. Farewell.*—ERNEST.' In conclusion, it is needless to say that my son and I took every precaution which men with their eyes open, seeking for truth, could take, and we affirm that deception was simply impossible. All took place in full daylight, and when that began to fade, in the light of a large lamp. I only record irrefragable facts. I leave others to draw conclusions."

Mr. James Burns, the editor of the *Medium and Daybreak*, to whose courtesy I am indebted for the engraving illustrating the following narrative, also reported the experience of Mrs. Burns, a lady whose competence as a witness cannot be called in question except by the ultra-sceptical.

"Mrs. Burns and Mrs. Megrue received a kind invitation from Mr. Eglinton to sit privately with him. The sitting took place on Monday, April 28th, 1884, in the afternoon. Previous to starting, Mrs. Burns bought a couple of slates, that there could be no possibility of their having been written on in any way by Mr. Eglinton. Writing was obtained on them, and also on slates produced by Mr. Eglinton, each one being carefully cleaned before the experiments commenced. There was no attempt at mystery or concealment. A plain table was used, at which the party sat; Mr. Eglinton with his back to the window, through which the sun was shining, Mrs. Burns to his right, and her friend opposite to him. On the wall facing the vacant side of the table, a looking-glass as large as a window is placed, so that the whole proceedings could be observed either in the looking-glass or by scrutinising the table. Several messages were obtained by Mr. Eglinton holding the slates close under the top of the table, a small piece of pencil being placed on the upper surface of the slate so used. On these occasions, all hands were joined on the top of the table, with the exception of Mr. Eglinton's right hand, which held the slates, and which was in view. The writing, of which a facsimile is given (Fig. 22), was

produced in the following manner: One of Mrs. Burns's slates had a small piece of pencil placed on it, then another slate was laid on the top. One end was held by Mr. Eglinton, and the other by Mrs. Burns, higher than the table, and at some distance from it; they were, indeed, held up in the air, so that they could be seen in every direction. Thus held, writing was heard going on between the slates. Then an interesting experiment was

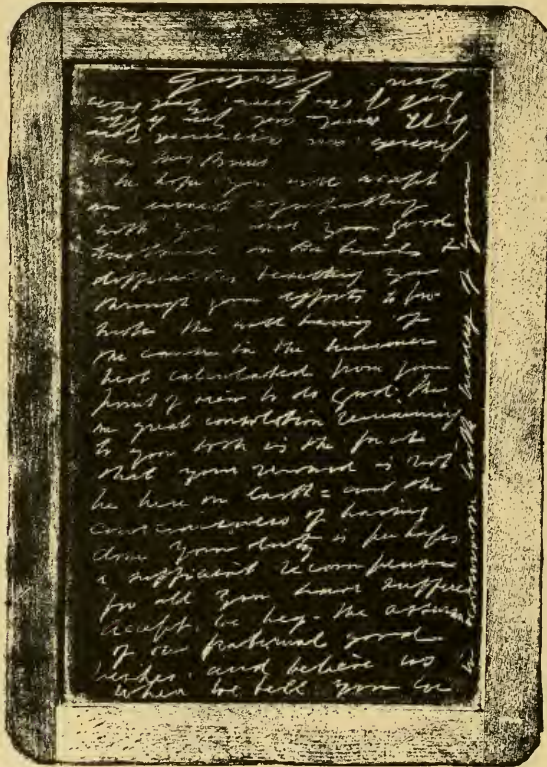


FIG. 22.—Facsimile of Direct Writing. (Reduced one-fourth.)

tried: Mr. Eglinton withdrew his hand, and the writing ceased till he replaced it again; Mrs. Burns also withdrew her hand with a similar result."

Mr. W. Fowler, a well-known merchant at Yarrow, Kulpara, in South Australia, who in June, 1884, was passing through London, thus records the results he obtained:—"By an appointment with Mr. Eglinton, I and two lady relatives went to his residence one morning at ten o'clock, and at his direction seated ourselves round a small table."





PHASES OF MATERIALISATION No. 1



Mr. Fowler then describes the usual process of examining and cleaning the slates. Continuing, he says, "Mr. Eglinton put a bit of slate pencil about the size of a grain of rice on the top of a slate, and holding the slate with his disengaged hand close under the flap of the table, obtained in writing several intelligent replies to questions suggested by us. He then asked me if I would write the name of any departed friend from whom I should wish to have a communication, telling me not to mention to anyone the name I had written. I then took one of the slates from the table, and holding it so that no one present could see what I had written, wrote the name of a man who had for twenty-five years previous to his death, last July, been my most intimate friend in Australia. The name written by me was George Hamilton, with a question to which I asked for an answer, and after writing it I placed the slate by my side where it could not be seen by anyone. Mr. Eglinton then placed a slate underneath the flap of the table, and in a few seconds withdrew it with the word 'Yes' written largely on it. Mr. Eglinton now said, 'We will try if we can receive the communication by placing a slate on the table and covering it with another.' This was done. Placing a scrap of slate pencil between the two slates, Mr. Eglinton then rested his disengaged hand on the top slate and we immediately heard the scratching of the pencil. In less than half a minute three taps were given to intimate that the writing was finished, and on taking off the top slate the bottom one was found covered with writing perfectly legible, with stops and even the i's dotted as now copied:—*'And to think I should ever be able to return in this manner to you! It even seems incredible to me. I have asked the guide of Mr. Eglinton to convey to you this message, but I am nevertheless with you. How much happier this beautiful truth must make you. And think of the pleasure it affords us when the portals are opened by which we can communicate to you. There is much of importance I would like to say did the power serve me, but I must rest content. Good-bye. God bless you.—G. HAMILTON.'* How this writing was produced I do not pretend to say, but that it was never made by a mortal hand I am fully convinced. The time occupied in obtaining it I do not think was really more than fifteen seconds. With Mr. Eglinton's permission I brought away with me the slate with the writing on it, as a record of the most remarkable fact which has ever been brought before my notice."

Sir Baldwyn Leighton, Bart., M.P., of Luton Park, Shrewsbury, writes as follows:—

"There have been so many testimonies on the subject of direct writing through Mr. Eglinton's mediumship that I have been unwilling to trouble you with what might seem a superfluous communication; but still there were one or two incidents in my interview with him that you might think would advance the cause to have made known. My previous acquaintance with Mr. Eglinton was of the slightest. After a recommendation from a personal friend, some letters as to an appointment passed, and one interview of five minutes to arrange such appointments. A lady slightly known to him, a friend of mine, was to meet me there, but could not come at the last moment, and, therefore, we were alone. The communications were immediate and unusually direct; and answers came, and information was given, that satisfied me at once that we were in communication with departed friends. A long letter signed with initials came from a relative, with a Greek quotation. He had been devoted to Greek literature and art while on earth, and was a clergyman of



the Church of England. The Greek was very plainly and beautifully written, and *the accents were given*. Mr. Eglinton is not, I believe, a Greek scholar, but no mortal hand could have written the communication in the time occupied, let alone the Greek. He has allowed me to retain the slate, which I have now. On a second visit, a few days after, I brought a lady, whose presence had been asked for—a very dear friend of a relation, with whom communication had been established. When by two or three questions (of no general interest) she satisfied herself of the reality of the communication with her departed friend, she was deeply affected, having never known of these possibilities. She is not a young or excitable person, but deeply religious, and the effect of this short half-hour has been a new revelation and an intense satisfaction to her."

Major F. G. Irwin, of Burlington Crescent, Bristol, had an experience in October, 1884, which adds a valuable fact to our stock of knowledge. It refers to the production of psychography under lock and key:—"Two slates were fastened together by a lock and key, and then placed in a case which was locked by myself and the key put in my pocket. The box lay on the table in full view, the hands of Messrs. Eglinton and Hockley and my own resting on the top of the box. While in this position writing was distinctly heard, and upon opening the box and taking out the slates the words '*Will this do, Mr. Tommy?*' were discovered on the inside of one of the slates."

I should state that Mr. G. Tommy, a well-known Spiritualist in Bristol, had sent the locked box for this experiment, under the care of Major Irwin, who concludes his testimony as follows:—"I went to London strongly inclined to think that Spiritualists were made up of fools, knaves, and those having an ill-balanced mind—leaving out a few that I knew could not possibly be included in any of the three classes. I left London fully convinced that all that is claimed for Spiritualism is supported by facts, which, as Mr. Stainton Moses once wrote to me, could 'be proved beyond a doubt.'"

Another careful record is that of Mr. H. A. Kersey, of 4, Eslington Terrace, Newcastle-on-Tyne:—"On Friday, September 26th, 1884, three lady friends and I attended a *séance* at 2.30 p.m. with Mr. Eglinton, at his residence. We all seated ourselves round a table (technically known as a 'Pembroke') in the centre of the room, Mr. Eglinton sitting with his back to the window. He asked for the greatest sceptic to sit near him on his right hand, and Mrs. X. was placed there; opposite to her and on Mr. Eglinton's left hand, sat Mrs. Z., while I and my sister occupied the remaining side of the table, and consequently sat opposite the medium. There was full daylight, the window not being darkened, but simply draped with a pair of thin muslin curtains. I produced a slate which I had purchased about half an hour previously at a shop in the Strand. Mr. Eglinton with a wet sponge proceeded to clean the slates belonging to him on both sides, whilst I took a dry sponge and rubbed the slates, taking special care to press heavily so that if any marks had been previously made upon the slates they should no longer remain there. These slates were left on the table before us and never passed out of our sight previous to the experiments taking place. Mr. Eglinton next produced some small pieces of slate pencil and various coloured French chalks, and taking the slate which I had brought with me asked us to select a piece of pencil or chalk and put it on the slate. We selected slate pencil; it is an advantage to hear the writing, that not being possible with the softer chalk. We then joined hands all

round the table, the psychic's left hand being held by one of us. He then placed the slate close under the top of the table near to the corner on his right, the slate being kept in position by grasping it and the top of the table firmly together with his right hand; thus the thumb of that hand was always visible, and I, who sat farthest from him, could always see not only the thumb but also part of his wrist. Very shortly, in not more than half a minute, we heard a sound as of writing on the slate, the dotting of 'i's' and crossing of 't's' being very marked; on the cessation of the writing three little raps were heard on the slate, and the psychic then drew it from the table and handed it to me. On the upper surface and at the farthest end of it from Mr. Eglinton's hand, I found written as follows:—'*Truth is indestructible as is our power; we are glad to meet you all.*' I will call this Experiment A, and can only add that under the conditions described, it was, in my judgment, simply impossible for Mr. Eglinton to do it. The writing was upside down in relation to Mr. Eglinton's hand; there was no other person present, and four pairs of eyes watched him closely. For the sake of brevity it must be distinctly understood that the same conditions as the foregoing existed in all the following experiments, variations or special features being alone noticed. Experiment B.—Mr. Eglinton took the same slate, and reversing it held it as before under the table. We again heard the sound of writing, and on examination we found written in a different handwriting the following:—'*Dear Sir,—We are glad to meet you as being the champion of a great cause.*—JOEY.' Experiment C.—Mr. Eglinton remarked that portions of the surface of the slate on two sides were left blank, and asked for them to be filled up. When the slate was again held under the table we once more heard writing, and afterwards found the following:—'*We shall hope to bring our to Newcastle some day.*' Mr. Eglinton suggested that some word or words had been omitted, and requested the omission to be supplied; also that in one word of which we were uncertain, if there was a 't' in it to cross the 't.' The word '*medium*' was then inserted after the word '*our*' and the '*t*' properly crossed. Experiment D.—The Bramah-locked slate was then produced, and having been cleaned, the medium asked Mrs. X. to write a question to some friend of hers, in such a position that he could not see it; she did so, and then closed the slate and locked it, withdrawing the key and retaining possession of it. Mrs. X. and Mr. Eglinton then placed their hands on the top of the slate as it lay on the table before us all, and shortly we distinctly heard writing being produced inside the locked slate. When Mrs. X. unlocked the slate she found the following reply to her request:—'*Your Aunt Emma will communicate later on.*' Experiment E.—Mr. Eglinton asked Mrs. Z. to write a question on a slate and not let him see it. She wrote, '*Is Alfred, my son, here, and will he please write me a message to take home with me?*' The slate was turned over so as to keep the message from Mr. Eglinton's sight. He took the slate in his left hand, and held it under the corner of the table on his left, Mrs. Z. also grasping the slate all the time and helping him to hold it, Mrs. X. at the same time holding his right hand; we all heard the writing, and Mrs. Z. solemnly declares that she also felt the vibrations in the slate produced by the writing; the reply was found to be:—'*My dear Mother,—Thank God I am able to come to you. Give my love to all at home, and with plenty for yourself, I am your loving son,* ALFRED.' Experiment F.—Mr. Eglinton took two slates, and placed one on the top of the other after putting a piece of pencil between, and keeping them on the table in

full view of us all he placed his hands on them, Mrs. X. doing the same; presently we heard much writing going on between the slates, and on removing the top one the following message was found:—'Dear Niece,—I rejoice so much in being able to manifest myself to you in this decisive manner. It must comfort you to know that I am ever near you, and that I endeavour to convey the sense of my presence to you. How truly comforted and grateful should those be who have a knowledge of this great truth, and of the happiness this communion brings us and them. There is much I would like to say had I the power, but I must content myself with having been allowed to come. Keep on in the good cause, and you will be rewarded. Good-bye. God bless you. Love to John. Your loving aunt, EMMA.' Experiment G.—Mr. Eglinton expressed a wish to obtain a message for my sister, and placed two slates together on the table, as in the previous experiment, but all that could be got was a brief statement that the power was exhausted and they must bid us good-bye. Mr. Eglinton not being contented with this brought the two slates round to my sister, and resting them on the top of her head he held them there, but no writing came; he then placed one end of the slates on her shoulder, holding the other end himself. In this position a brief message was written, reiterating that the power was exhausted, and bidding 'adieu.' Thus ended an excellent *séance*, and under such satisfactory conditions that we all were convinced of Mr. Eglinton's power, and felt much indebted to him. In the experiments E and F, the replies received are characteristic of the deceased persons from whom they purport to emanate, but the handwriting does not resemble theirs. The style varies considerably in the different messages, but what is most noticeable is the speed with which the communications are written, and also that while the writing is taking place the psychic labours in his breathing as if suffering."

Shortly after this, Mr. W. P. Adshead, of Belper, as the result of some very successful *séances*, offered a challenge of £500 to any one not a medium, who would produce the same results under the same conditions. What he describes as the crowning manifestation of his series of *séances* is narrated as follows:—

"I had said that if my first wife were present, I should be very much pleased if she could communicate with me. Mr. Eglinton well cleaned a slate, laid upon it a small piece of pencil, and was about to cover it with another slate when he said, 'I will also place a piece of coloured crayon on the slate.' He did so as he thought, and laying another slate upon the top he held the corners with his right hand, asking me with my left hand to hold the other corners. All hands were then joined, Mr. Eglinton's left resting on my right hand, the slates meanwhile being *in full view* in broad daylight. In about a minute the writing commenced; we distinctly heard both pencils at work. The operation lasted about thirty-five seconds; and when finished three raps were given, and Mr. Eglinton removed the top slate. Judging from the time occupied, I expected to find about five or six lines of writing, but when Mr. Eglinton removed the top slate there was exposed to view a most remarkable production (see Fig. 23, next page), and one which, I am bold to say, human skill, however perfect its methods, in the same time and with the same means, would be utterly unable to imitate. On the bottom slate was found thirty-three lines in two distinct styles of writing; but the fact that gives to this manifestation its special character is that two messages were written at the same time in opposite directions, the messages appearing on the slate in alternate lines. One was a message from my first wife, signed



I am very glad to hear  
 that you are all well  
 and hope you are  
 enjoying the  
 winter weather.  
 I have not much news  
 to write at present  
 but I am sure you  
 will be interested  
 in what I have to  
 say. I have been  
 thinking of writing  
 to you for some  
 time but have not  
 had time. I am  
 sure you will  
 understand my  
 feelings. I am  
 very much  
 interested in  
 your friends and  
 hope they are  
 all well. I  
 must close for  
 this time. I  
 will write again  
 soon. I am  
 and believe me  
 very truly  
 your affectionate  
 friend  
 Sarah

FIG. 23.—Facsimile of Direct Slate-writing obtained in Mr. Adshad's Presence.

'Sarah,' the name being unknown to Mr. Eglinton, and occupied seventeen lines; the other was a message from a spirit who, Mr. Eglinton informed us, frequently communicated, and was signed 'J. S.' The first line of the message signed 'Sarah' commences under the last line of the message signed 'J. S.,' and this order is preserved in straight lines until the messages are finished, that signed 'Sarah' containing one line more than the other. Here I would observe that when Mr. Eglinton placed the second pencil on the slate he intended to place upon it a piece of crayon, hoping that the experiment of having alternate lines written with pencil and crayon, which had been obtained before, might be repeated."

This is not a hundredth part of the testimony which was then being poured out on all sides. Newspaper men began to notice what they had hitherto looked askance at, but perhaps the event of the year in Spiritualistic circles was the excitement caused all over the country by the news that the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone had attended a *séance*. The announcement having been made, within a few hours of its publication the Metropolitan News agencies and members of the press were busily engaged in their endeavour to get the facts from Mr. Eglinton. In this they do not appear to have been very successful, and the brief narratives presented to the public were so imperfect that *Light* sought an interview with him, and the next week's issue contained the following authentic report of one of the most noteworthy instances in which Mr. Eglinton has obtained psychography away from his own premises, and where trick tables, trick slates, and electrical contrivances were not available.

*I hear, Mr. Eglinton, that you have had a séance with Mr. Gladstone. May I ask if that is so?*

I had that honour yesterday (Wednesday, October 29th, 1884). But how did you hear of it?

*Never mind. It is already whispered in Fleet Street, and the rumour will soon spread, so that you must expect, within a very few hours, to be harassed by a number of "interviewers" on the part of the newspapers. Are you at liberty to tell me the circumstances?*

To some extent I may do so, perhaps, not having been asked, as I am in some cases, to make a secret of it. But everything depends on what you wish to know.

*Did Mr. Gladstone visit you at your rooms?*

No, I met him at the residence of a lady of distinction in Grosvenor Square. Beyond that I am not prepared to go.

*You feel that you are not at liberty to mention the name?*

I am not. You may, for present purposes, call her Mrs. O. I had been invited to meet Lady X., the Marchioness of Z., and Mr. Gladstone.

*To give a séance?*

I understood beforehand that I was to attempt to give some exhibition of my powers as a medium for slate-writing.

*Experience has shown that for successful séances it is necessary for the medium, in such cases, to be quite at his ease—free from all mental disturbances. In accepting the invitation did you feel that you could be quite at your ease in the presence of a man of such distinction as Mr. Gladstone?*



I confess I did not. My feelings at first were of a decidedly nervous kind on learning that I was to be the only other man present, and naturally the knowledge that I was to meet England's greatest statesman added not a little to this nervousness. But I was soon relieved of all apprehension in this respect. I arrived a few minutes before Mr. Gladstone, and after he had saluted his hostess I was presented to him, when, with a pleasant smile, he stepped briskly across the room, and shook hands with me, saying, "I am glad to make your acquaintance, sir." I was much struck with this mark of affability. And if anything more was needed to put me "at my ease" it was the fact that though Mr. Gladstone, at first, conversed for the most part on general topics, doing so in the most agreeable manner, and without the slightest air of conscious superiority—he gave me distinctly to understand that he had no scepticism in regard to the possibility of psychical phenomena. He was already convinced, he said, that there were subtle forces with which "our puny minds" could not deal, and which he could not comprehend; he held the attitude, therefore, not of a scoffer, but of a student who had no reason to doubt the genuineness of my pretensions. His experiences in thought-reading were sufficient to show that there were forces in nature which were not generally recognised.

*After that you proceeded to give illustrations of your mediumship?*

Yes. We took our places round an oval table of the usual description.

*How were you seated in relation to each other?*

Lady X. sat next to me, on my right. On Lady X's. right was Mrs. O., then Mr. Gladstone, and then the Marchioness of Z.

*What slates were used?*

Mrs. O. had provided two common school slates, and I had brought my now historic Bramah-locked double slate.

*And your experiments in Mr. Gladstone's presence were successful?*

Quite so. We had communications in reply to questions, the replies being written—sometimes very lengthy ones—on the hostess's own slates, both when held under the table, and when laid upon the table in full view of all present; and also within the locked slates.

*Can you tell me the nature of the communications?*

No, I cannot do that, and you must not press me too closely. I can only tell you the most unimportant of them with which the experiments commenced. We began by asking Mr. Gladstone to write a question upon one of the school slates. He did so, and the slate was held by me beneath the table, with the question upon the under side so that I could not see it, the other side being pressed closely against the under side of the table. Presently the writing began—

*Did Mr. Gladstone hear the writing?*

He did—and his face was a study. His intense look of amazement would have been amusing to those who have had experience of such phenomena, and was intensified when the slate was brought up, and the few words which had been written were declared by him to be a pertinent reply to his question. The reply was "*In the year 1857,*" and on the slate being turned over it was found that his question had been—"Which year do you remember to have been more dry than the present one?" After that Mr. Gladstone took

the locked slate into a corner of the room, and on the inside of it wrote a question, which of course none of us saw. Then locking the slate and retaining the key, the slate was handed to one of the ladies and myself, and we both held it in the sight of all. While in this position the writing was heard going on upon the closed surfaces, and upon the slate being opened it was found that the question asked was "Is the Pope ill or well?" which had been answered in red pencil by the words, "He is ill in mind, not in body."

*It occurs to me that these were rather trivial questions to put, and such as the "intelligences" or "occult forces" at work, were not likely to know very much about?*

Perhaps so; but you should bear in mind that I have given you the particulars of the first experiments only, and in all probability Mr. Gladstone's mind was then occupied with the simple question of whether any writing at all was possible under the circumstances. Of the subsequent experiments I can only say that they were perfectly successful; that some of the communications were written upon Mrs. O.'s own slates when held under the table; that several messages were given, not only between these two slates, but also within the locked slate, in view of all present; and that some of the questions were put in Spanish, French, and Greek, and satisfactorily answered in the same languages.

*Are you yourself acquainted with Spanish, French, and Greek?*

I know very little of French, and nothing at all of either Spanish or Greek.

*I have myself had so many sances with you, under every conceivable variety of circumstances, that I cannot doubt the genuineness of the slate-writing produced through your mediumship; but of course, a stranger to the phenomena could hardly be expected to be satisfied with his first experience, and therefore it was especially desirable that a gentleman of Mr. Gladstone's distinction and influence should have every opportunity of the closest observation. Do you think he was satisfied?*

Yes, I think so. He did not say so, in so many words, but his actions, and all that he said then and subsequently, seemed to point to it. Indeed, I do not see how he could be otherwise than satisfied that—to whatever power the phenomena might be attributable—they were at least of an occult or abnormal character. The written questions were in every case unknown to me; and pertinent answers, as I have told you, were written between slates fully exposed to view upon, or held over, the table of a brilliantly lighted drawing-room—the writing being distinctly heard while in the actual process. Mr. Gladstone had the fullest opportunity of observation, and I have no doubt whatever that his keen penetrating eyes, as he carefully watched all that was passing, assured him that everything was genuine. As one indication I may mention the evident interest he took in the messages themselves, which he could scarcely have done if he had any suspicion whatever of the *bona fides* of the experiments. From first to last he made a careful record of all the questions and all the replies.

*You spoke just now of Mr. Gladstone having said something after the sance—was that in reference to what had occurred during the evening?*

Not directly. But after the *sance*, and while the ladies were otherwise engaged, Mr. Gladstone entered into conversation with me on psychical subjects. I remarked upon the absurd attitude of the general public, and of many scientific men, in refusing to investigate what were but simple facts after all, when Mr. Gladstone replied in effect (for I do not profess to be able to remember his words)—"I have always thought that scientific men run too much in

a groove. They do noble work in their own special lines of study and research, but they are too often indisposed to give any attention whatever to matters which seem to conflict with their established modes of thought. Indeed, they not infrequently attempt to deny that into which they have never inquired, not sufficiently realising the fact that there may possibly be forces in Nature of which they know nothing." As I talked with him on topics of a kindred character, I was very pleased to see how his great mind could, even at this late hour of his life, open itself to the fair consideration of any new truth, however much it might run counter to previous experiences. He spoke at length of his own observations many years ago in the domains of clairvoyance and electro-biology, and then inquired whether there were any societies specially devoted to the study of occult phenomena. When I told him of the London Spiritualist Alliance and other societies, and mentioned some of the names of persons connected with them, and of others who had given attention to the subjects, he seemed greatly interested; and when I spoke of the literature of Spiritualism he said that he already knew that the movement was represented by excellent journals, and that many eminent men had written on the question—instancing Varley, Crookes, Wallace, Balfour, and others—one of whom, Mr. Crookes, had acknowledged his obligations to Mr. C. Blackburn, a wealthy gentleman lately resident in Manchester. I asked him whether he would honour me by accepting a few books upon the subject, to which he very kindly replied that, although he had many works on various matters laid by for reading when the time came for him to be able to do so, he would most cheerfully undertake to read any books I might desire to send him, adding, "And I shall keep them as a memento of this very interesting evening." I had a long and very pleasant conversation with him; but I think I have told you all that I ought to tell you, and I have certainly said more than I intended to say when I began.

*Upon the whole you were gratified by the interview?*

Decidedly. I have met princes and princesses, but, kind and condescending as they always were, I have never experienced keener pleasure than in the reflection that I have done something towards helping Mr. Gladstone to a better understanding of the possibility of communion with "friends who have gone before."

The publication of this report gave an immense stride to Spiritualism. It was noticed by nearly every paper throughout the world, the news agencies in Great Britain sending it out as stereotype matter. Of course Mr. Gladstone was deluged with letters of inquiry. The *Daily News* of November 6th contained the following "diplomatic" answer, probably lithographed on a post card:—"10, Downing-street, Whitehall, November 4th, 1884.—Sir,—I am directed by Mr. Gladstone to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday, and to say that while he cannot undertake to enter into details, he has expressed no conclusion upon the subject to which you refer.—I am, sir, your obedient servant, HORACE SEYMOUR." It is to be hoped that this "soft answer" turned away the wrath which raged against the open-minded statesman, who had, according to some pious people, engaged in sorcery, and according to others become the victim of imposture or delusion.

No further details of Mr. Gladstone's experiences have been made public, but I have good reason for thinking that the Right Honourable gentleman has not altogether ceased his

investigations. At any rate he has since become a member of the Society for Psychical Research, a half-way house at which many find it pleasant to rest prior to taking the final plunge into Spiritualism. Of course *Punch* could not pass by such a golden opportunity, and forthwith began to qualify for admission into the schools of the prophets by a temperate deliverance of the burden of its own experiences. Let this effusion be compared with former utterances and my readers will readily admit the change of tone. Thanks! *Mr. Punch*.

Equally satisfactory, but more serious, was the attitude of *Figaro*. In that journal for December 6th appeared a letter from the well-known musician and critic, Mr. J. S. Shedlock, introduced by the following editorial:—

"Mr. Shedlock is by no means an impressionable man, and the evening before he attended the *séance* he was a scornful sceptic. His present feelings may be judged by the plain statement of facts in the letter hereunder. I will only add a few words of comment upon the extraordinary tale Mr. Shedlock now has to tell. It will be noticed that a double slate, on which the message written is not seen by the medium, is securely locked and held close to the table. Immediately a scratching is heard from a crumb of slate pencil, and the reply is found written on the slate. Granting the possibility of a trick (for in this case there could be no collusion), the evasive reply concerning Mozart can be considered at worst a very extraordinary guess. About the Schubert symphony the reply was even more astounding. Had the answer been six, or a dozen, or so forth, Mr. Eglinton or the ghost might reasonably have been suspected of imposture. But the discussion whether the symphony in C is the No. 9 or No. 10 has been in progress for some time. As musicians are aware, Sir George Grove is of opinion that the Gastein symphony, which he calls No. 9, is still missing, and that the symphony in C is No. 10. The alleged spirit of Schubert, asked how many symphonies he wrote after that in B minor No. 8, replied two. The reply is certainly extraordinary, for it is in the highest degree improbable that Mr. Eglinton (who did not know even that his visitor was musical) should have been so well posted as to the Schubert symphonies, even if he could by any possibility of means have seen what Mr. Shedlock had written. Sir George Grove is now the proper man to follow up this inquiry. Peradventure, so great a Schubert-lover, who also believes in Spiritualism, may be able to wheedle out of the deceased a description of the work, and of the place where the Gastein symphony lies hidden. The spirit of Mozart, doubtless for reasons of its own, ignored the question how much of the Requiem was written by Mozart, and how much by Sussmayr. Schubert was more communicative, and perhaps Sir George Grove may be able to coax it even into jotting down the principal subjects of the Gastein symphony on the slate. 'Dear Cherubino,—Last Wednesday I went to see the psychographist, Mr. Eglinton. Mr. Gladstone's interview with the celebrated medium was recently spoken of in all the papers; and so, I am quite sure, the name will be familiar to all your readers. If a believer in Spiritualism, you would perhaps advise me to send any communication on the subject to *Light*; if a disbeliever, you would perhaps suggest the *Freethinker* or the *War Cry*. But I am writing to you for a special reason. If Mr. Eglinton, I thought, will allow me to call for any spirit, and allow me to put any question to it, I will see if I can obtain any information which will be of interest to musicians. A happy thought! What could I do better than try and learn something about the state in which Mozart left his Requiem, and about Schubert's missing symphony, or rather the one which Sir George Grove

says is missing? I have always laughed at mediums, apparitions, etc., and so I could scarcely hope that the spirits of the mighty dead would come at my beck and bidding, and allow me to question them. But nothing venture, nothing have. My wife went with me, and it was arranged between us that she should parley with Mozart, and I with Schubert. We all three sat round the table, my wife and self, and Mr. Eglinton. I said, "Is Schubert here?" Mr. Eglinton held a slate for a moment under the table; a scratching noise was heard, and on producing the slate the word "No" was clearly written on it. As I am only writing about musical matters, and also am afraid of trespassing on your valuable space, I must not describe minutely the movements of Mr. Eglinton. I will, however, say that the whole affair is most extraordinary, and does not seem at all like a farce or a conjuring trick. Mr. Eglinton then said, "Will the spirits answer questions?" The message came, "*You have power.*" My wife then took the celebrated Bramah-locked slate. She wrote on it, "Mozart, can you tell me how much you wrote of your Requiem?" Mr. Eglinton certainly did not see what was written. The slate was locked and placed on the table. An ordinary slate was placed under the table, and an answer at once came, "*Mozart is one of your guides and inspires your husband to play.*" I make no comment on this. "Now, will you write down a question?" said Mr. Eglinton to me. I took a slate, held it so as to be sure no one could see what I was writing, and although I had at first been told Schubert was not present, I thought I would still try and hold communion with him. At first I was going to ask, "How many symphonies did you write?" but I decided on a more crucial test. This is what I wrote, "Schubert, can you tell me how many symphonies you wrote after the unfinished one in B minor?" I put the slate on the table empty side upwards. Mr. Eglinton put a crumb of pencil on it, held it under the table, but so that we could see part of the slate, and could also see his hand holding it. In about five seconds a scratching was heard; the slate was lifted, and on it the figure 2. Some further experiments were made, with which I shall not trouble you, but, like Mr. Gladstone, I can say that I was much impressed by what occurred. Were I now to discuss the question of psychography, you would probably not read, still less print, my remarks. I have related my interview in as plain and truthful a manner as I possibly could; and, indeed, I felt bound to let you know what took place. If Sir G. Grove is a believer in Spiritualism, he will perhaps now visit Mr. Eglinton and push the inquiry further. I was too astonished; I ought at once to have asked particulars of key, place, etc. I just add, in conclusion, that I went to Mr. Eglinton at the request of a sister, and that my name was unknown to him. My sister had obtained an interview with him as Miss X., and my wife and self went as Miss X.'s friends.—Yours truly, J. S. SHEDLOCK, 22, Melrose Gardens, West Kensington Park, November 27th, 1884.'

Thereupon a shower of correspondence fell on "Cherubino." In a subsequent issue of the *Figaro*, he says:—"I have received a large number of communications in regard to Mr. J. S. Shedlock's visit to Mr. Eglinton, and the extraordinary answer given on the Bramah-locked slate by the alleged disembodied spirit of Franz Schubert. The question asked by Mr. Shedlock was, it may be recollected, 'Schubert, can you tell me how many symphonies you wrote after the unfinished one in B minor?' And the reply came at once in the numeral '2.' This reply, if genuine, would tend to show that the 'Gastein' symphony, which Sir George Grove declares is missing, really had some existence. I may add that Mr. J. S. Shedlock's honour and character are so well known to be above suspicion, that not one of



my correspondents, many of whom treat the affair with derision, has ventured to suggest that the story told is, so far as Mr. Shedlock is concerned, not perfectly *bonâ fide*." And further on he continues:—"Several correspondents express curiosity as to the conversation between the spirit medium and Miss Shedlock, and whether that lady gave any hint of the questions likely to be asked by her brother. Other correspondents narrate some surprising 'manifestations' by Mr. Eglinton and others, but as none of these deal with matters musical they cannot be quoted."

Mrs. Burns, the wife of the editor of the *Medium*, had another experience with

J.B.  
 We regret that our power does not enable us to give you a drawing to hang and we think you had best discontinue 'the sitting.' Had it not been for your power Mrs. Burns would not have written this. Good bye  
 Yrs. H. Masson

FIG. 24.—Exact Reproduction of Direct Writing on a Card.

Mr. Eglinton in December. The following extracts from her report are clear and to the point:—

"On the first appointment, Mrs. Burns and another member of our staff followed immediately after sitters who had left the medium in an exhausted condition. The experiments were not resorted to at once, but some considerable time was spent in easy conversation. The spirits indicated their presence on slates, taken by our representatives, when placed under the table. They had also provided themselves with certain correspondence

cards, initialled and dated, in the hope that the spirits would be able to use them. One of these was placed between two slates, and held in full light of the two powerful lamps with which the room was lighted, between Mr. Eglinton and Mrs. Burns, when one side of it was covered with writing, in reply to a question which had been previously written on the other side, unseen by the medium. The question was:—'Do you consider the power sufficient to continue further to-day?' Almost immediately, the card was written on while between the slates (Fig. 24). The inscription is as follows:—'*We regret that our power*



FIG. 25.—Exact Reproduction of a Direct Drawing upon a Card.

does not enable us to give you a drawing to-day, and we think you had best discontinue the sitting. Had it not been for your power, Mrs. Burns, we could not have written this. Good-bye. God bless you.' As the force was so weak, Mr. Eglinton kindly arranged another sitting for the following Monday (December 8). Mrs. Burns went alone. It was early in the afternoon, and the experiments were conducted in the full light of day. Mr. Eglinton suggested that Mrs. Burns should ask for the manifestation she most desired. She said she would like a drawing on one of the cards; but the subject of the drawing she did not specify, nor had she formed any definite ideas on it. The card, duly initialled, was placed between her own

slates, and laid on the top of the table. She held Mr. Eglinton's hands, and rested them on the top of the slates. Immediately the action of drawing was heard with the small crumb of lead pencil that had been placed between the slates along with the card. The experiment was not timed, but in much less than one minute, the drawing was done and the card removed. It contained an exquisite pencil sketch (Fig. 25) of a male spirit. In the illustration the only error is in the delineation of the palm-branch which the spirit carries: it is not broad and loose enough. The next step was to obtain some explanation of the drawing. A clean slate was held under the table, and the following inscription, which is given in facsimile (Fig. 26), was instantly given:—*'The spirit depicted upon the card is that of your friend and guide BRUCE, and the influence of Mr. Burns has attracted him here to say the words 'leal and true' are specially intended for the fight your husband is making for the cause.'* That Mrs. Burns might have something more, particularly for herself, Mr. Eglinton had the goodness to make one more effort. Two clean slates were laid upon one another, with a crumb of slate pencil between. Mr. Eglinton held them at one end, while the other rested on Mrs. Burns's shoulder, in full light of day. The writing commenced at once, and was completed much sooner than any writer could have accomplished it (Fig. 27). None of the writing is like the caligraphy of Mr. Eglinton or Mrs. Burns. The inscription is:—*'It has been said that Truth must prevail notwithstanding the opposition to which it is sometimes subjected. And in precisely the same manner that you and your co-workers are oppressed, so will you, like the Bruce of old, rise to the occasion. The only thing to guard yourself against is the too frequent setting at naught the admonitions of those who direct you in your work. There are many around you to-day pouring blessings upon you for the good you have done, and though your reward may seem slow, it is not for you in your sphere to receive it. You are a second — (the name has been obliterated by Mr. Burns), and as such we greet you cordially. We had hoped to secure for you some personal message for yourself, but we find the power has been otherwise engaged. Good-bye, and may those who attend you lead you to the highest light and usefulness.—J. S.'* Of the genuineness of the results there cannot be the slightest doubt. We are placed in possession of evidence of the most reliable and unique kind. No artist would attempt such a drawing in so short a time. In every respect the superhuman power at work is demonstrated."

One point with reference to Mr. Eglinton's mediumship in 1884 must not be allowed to escape notice. This is the demonstration of psychography in public on two occasions, the first being at the inaugural meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance at St. James's Hall. After the usual business of the meeting had been disposed of, Mr. Eglinton proceeded with his experiments, and considering the delicate nature of the phenomena, and also having due regard to the fact of its being, as far as I can learn, the first time that this phase of spirit power has in this country been obtained in the presence of a large public audience, the results were eminently satisfactory, and Mr. Eglinton is to be congratulated on the undoubted successes achieved. The experiments were not, it is true, as startling in their character as others which have been witnessed through his mediumship under conditions more suitable for crucial results, but they were nevertheless thoroughly satisfactory to those who witnessed them. A committee of three were nominated by the audience to conduct the experiments, those chosen being Mrs. Jacob Bright (wife of Mr. Jacob Bright, M.P.), the Hon. Percy Wyndham, M.P., and Mr. A.

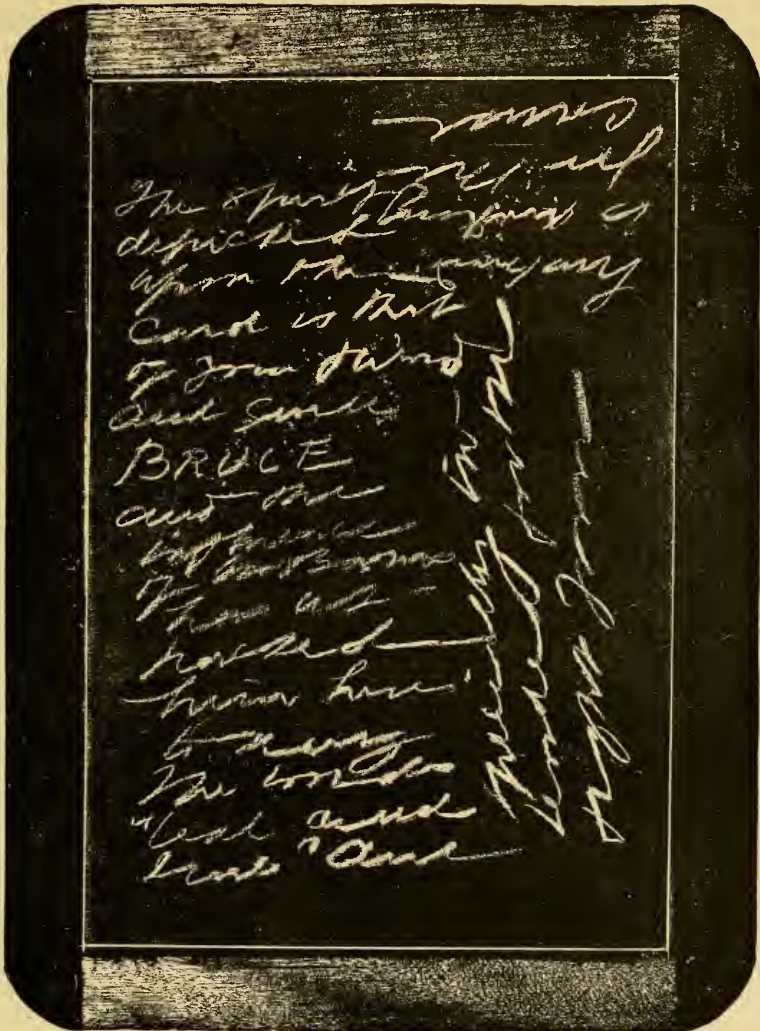


FIG. 26.—Direct Writing upon a Slate. (The original, including frame, measures 11 by 8 inches.)



A. Watts. Mr. W. Stainton Moses also watched the proceedings, and reported to the audience what was going on from time to time. The usual conditions were observed, and after the lapse of a few minutes direct writing was obtained. Four different experiments were made, all successfully, the last one being the reproduction on the slate of a number then and there chosen by one of the audience. At the conclusion of this portion of the proceedings, Mr. W. Pritchard Morgan publicly challenged any person, not a medium, in the sum of £500 against £50, to produce psychography under conditions similar to those observed by Mr. Eglinton. This challenge held good for a period of three months, from May 5th, 1884.

Encouraged by the success attending his first attempt to obtain psychographic phenomena in public, on the occasion of the inaugural meeting of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Mr. Eglinton soon arranged for a repetition of the experiment. He proposed to give an address on "The Facts and Philosophy of Spiritualism," in the Banqueting Room, St. James's Hall, on Tuesday, May 27th, to be followed by experiments in psychography. This was a bold step, but *Light* remarked that "if well managed and surrounded by proper conditions, we do not see why such a course should not be of valuable service in disseminating the facts of Spiritualism. Mr. Eglinton deserves every encouragement, and we hope he will not fail to receive it by the gathering together of a large and sympathetic audience on this occasion. His success of late has been so phenomenal that we can hardly doubt that the experimental portion of the proceedings will be satisfactorily carried out." The meeting came off as arranged, under the presidency of Dr. G. Wyld. The Banqueting Room, which will comfortably seat upwards of four hundred people, was filled to overcrowding.

The proceedings were opened by the chairman, who, in introducing Mr. Eglinton, briefly reviewed his own experience in this particular phase of psychical phenomena, more especially in the presence of Dr. Slade a few years ago, and recently with Mr. Eglinton. He dwelt on the fact that British Spiritualism had sustained a great loss in being deprived of the services of the former by an unjust prosecution. The gap thus caused had, however, now been filled by Mr. Eglinton, whom he considered not only the most valuable medium in this country, but as far as he knew, the most valuable medium in the whole world, because he obtained direct writing in full view, which could not reasonably be assailed. Mr. Eglinton then delivered his address, which was fully reported in *Light*. Mr. W. Stainton Moses, M.A., and Mr. Louis (barrister-at-law), at the invitation of the chairman, afterwards made a few remarks *apropos* to the subject of the address. The interest of the evening, however, was evidently centred in the proposed experiments in psychography, with which it was announced the programme of the proceedings would terminate. At the request of the chairman and two of the audience (Mr. W. Stainton Moses and Mr. C. C. Massey), Surgeon-General Wolseley, Mr. Brinsley Nixon, of the Athenæum Club, and Mr. Stuart Glennie consented to act as a committee of investigation, and forthwith took their seats at the table (the one used by Dr. Slade and condemned by Maskelyne as a "trick table") on the platform. At 9.25 they all joined hands, but sat without obtaining results until 9.40, when various changes were made by direction of Mr. Eglinton's spirit attendants, who communicated by means of raps which were distinctly heard and localised by the committee, with the exception of Mr. Stuart Glennie. The changes then made necessitated the retirement of the latter gentleman, and Miss Major took the vacant seat. A few minutes afterwards Florence Marryat (Mrs. Lean) was called to



It has been said that Truth must prevail  
 notwithstanding the opposition to which it  
 is sometimes subjected. And in precisely  
 the same manner that you and your  
 Counselors are opposed, so will you  
 like the Power of old, rise to the  
 occasion. The only thing to guard  
 yourselves against is the too frequent  
 looking at night at the adversities  
 of those who direct you in your  
 work. There are many  
 around you to-day having  
 blessings upon you for the good  
 you have done, and though your  
 reward may seem slow - it is not  
 for you in your sphere to receive it.  
 You are a record [redacted] - and as  
 such we speak of you cordially. We had  
 hoped to have for you some pre-  
 cious message for yourself, but  
 we find our Power has been  
 otherwise engaged. Good bye  
 and may those who attend  
 you lead you to the highest  
 Light and usefulness. J. S.

FIG. 27.—Message Written between the Slates when Resting upon the Shoulder of the Sitter. (The original, inside of frame, measures 12½ by 8½ inches.)

the table, and the circle, as thus re-organised, was subsequently successful in obtaining perfectly incontestable phenomena. At 9.51 two slates, which had been previously cleaned and examined by all the committee, were placed upon the table, in full view of all the sitters, one upon the top of the other, a crumb of pencil having been inserted between them. While in this position the hands of the medium and those of Florence Marryat were put upon the top of the uppermost slate, the rest of the circle joining hands. At 9.53 Dr. Wyld, who was also on the platform, placed his hands on the top of Mr. Eglinton's and Florence Marryat's, and immediately Surgeon-General Wolseley stated that he distinctly heard writing being done between the slates, a statement which was corroborated by the rest of the committee of investigation. At 9.54 the usual signal of completion was heard and the slates were examined, whereupon one side of the upper slate was found to be covered with a long message from "Ernest," one of Mr. Eglinton's spirit-attendants. It was as follows:—"It gives us great pleasure in being able to overcome the difficult conditions under which we labour this evening, and to assure the audience that, although unseen to them, we are nevertheless present. Now is the time to assert yourselves, and to band yourselves together in good solid work. Without material aid, how do you think it possible that we can bring home these truths to those thirsting for knowledge?—ERNEST." Surgeon-General Wolseley, Mr. Nixon, Miss Major, and Florence Marryat one after another publicly testified that the experiment had been conducted to their entire satisfaction, and that they were perfectly convinced it was an impossibility for the writing then obtained to have been produced by ordinary means. In a second experiment the word "Gordon," suggested by one of the audience, was written between closed slates, in red pencil (a significant fact!), under similar conditions. The success of Mr. Eglinton's public presentation of these phenomena was without doubt complete, and he was heartily congratulated upon the result. As a means of drawing attention to the facts of Spiritualism, such meetings cannot fail to do good, and I am sure every Spiritualist will gladly accord his thanks to Mr. Eglinton for the service which he on this occasion so freely and generously rendered to the cause.



## CHAPTER XV.

### "BROUGHT TO BOOK."



PERHAPS one of the most conclusive blocks of testimony as to the reality of the phenomenon of psychography is that which, under the title of "Bringing it to Book," has been collected and published by Mr. H. Cholmondeley-Pennell, late H.M. Inspector of Fisheries, and more recently Director of Commerce for the Interior, Egypt, and a well-known *litterateur*.

He is supported in his testimony by the evidence of the Hon. Roden Noel, a name familiar in the world of letters, Mr. Charles Carlton Massey, a barrister-at-law, George Wyld, M.D., and the Hon. Percy Wyndham, M.P. This evidence is presented in its collected form as a simple statement of facts, as facts, and without any expression of opinion with regard to the causes of their occurrence, beyond the absolute and unanimous conviction of the writers, that the effects described were not caused by the visible "physical body" of the psychic. The letters were originally written without any communication between these authors, and for any expression of opinion outside the limit named, each writer is individually responsible.

Mr. H. Cholmondeley-Pennell opens the symposium by one of the most clearly told and unique pieces of evidence ever published.

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When the recent movement of critical inquiry into the various psychical phenomena broadly passing under the name of "Spiritualism" began, I took a deep interest in its progress, hoping to find in it at least a key to unlock the mysteries of much of the old world "occultism"—to use the fashionable expression in its widest sense. I made acquaintance with all the principal mediums, amateur or professional. I went to *séances* at their houses, and held *séances* with them at my house. After several years, however, of patient and frank inquiry I gave the whole thing up. Not because I felt sure there was no truth in it, but because, supposing it to be true, I found it impossible to *bring it to book*. Almost every so-called "manifestation" that I personally witnessed was found to be inconclusive. There was always an "if" or a "but" in the logical sequence of facts when honestly marshalled; a "missing link" that made the chain of evidence worthless from a scientific standpoint.

I say nothing of the gross and palpable frauds—some publicly unmasked, and others

hushed up—by which, then as now, Spiritualistic circles were not infrequently scandalised. There are, of course, black sheep in every flock; still a hundred cases of imposture, proved or suspected, should not, and to a logical mind would not, invalidate the scientific results of a single *bonâ fide* and *repeatable* experiment. I say “repeatable,” because I hold that a solitary experience in such novel investigations would usually be quite insufficient for purposes of accurate observation.

There are, of course, amongst differing characters, different degrees of mental receptivity and “impressionability.” What will suffice for one, predisposed perhaps to conviction, wholly fails to satisfy another whose bias is of a more positive or sceptical turn. I am free to confess that my own mental attitude *vis-à-vis* the whole of the alleged phenomena of so-called “Spiritualism” is—or rather was—allied to the sceptical. Not by any means that I did not desire—really and strongly desire—to be satisfied that the facts, or some of them, were as stated to me, but that my idiosyncrasy—my “psychical condition” if you please—would not *allow* of my being personally convinced without the most positive, repeated, and complete personal ocular demonstration. . . . And without impugning the motives or logical “methods of conviction” pursued by others, it may be maintained that in dealing with phenomena which claim to set aside the recognised laws of matter, that is a most philosophical, legitimate, and, I might also say, inevitable attitude for every educated mind to adopt: perfect openness to conviction; upon perfectly conclusive evidence—and upon none other.

Having failed personally to obtain such evidence, the result of my three or four years' investigation was a mental verdict of “Not proven:” I could not bring the thing to book.

And yet now, after an interval of about a decade, and rather owing to the result of accident than intention, I find myself in a position unreservedly to reverse the above judgment—I HAVE BROUGHT IT TO BOOK. . . . And, what is more, I am satisfied that the same undeniable evidence which was available in my case is accessible to any one in a similar frame of mind, and willing to take the necessary steps to investigate for themselves. Indeed, the interesting testimony of Mr. C. C. Massey, the Hon. Roden Noel, Mr. Gladstones, and others, shows that I am only one of many to recognise the almost unique character, for the purpose of systematic and rigorously-tested experiment, of the phenomena in question: I refer to the psychographic, or slate-writing manifestations, produced, so far as my experience extends, with unequalled regularity and reliability through the mediumship of Mr. William Eglinton, through whose kindness I have had opportunities of witnessing and critically observing these slate-writing phenomena six times—three times at the house of Mr. Eglinton, and three times at my own house—and on no one occasion has there been a failure in their production.

The conditions of my experiments and their results were as follows (I am obliged to give them somewhat in detail in order that nothing shall be omitted of importance to the argument):—

1. The sitters were never less than three nor more than five, medium included; and comprised seven different men and three different ladies—all old personal friends of my own, and who, with one exception, had never seen Mr. Eglinton before.

2. The three *séances* at Mr. Eglinton's house were in each case held during the whole time in broad daylight ; and the three at my house in every case in full lamp-light.
3. Except in the first *séance* *the only slates used have been my own*, bought by myself, marked (signed) by myself, as well as by the other sitters, and never taken out of their paper wrapper or shown to the medium or to any one else, between the time of purchase and the commencement of the *séance*.
4. In five out of the six *séances* intelligent writing has been produced between the two slates, previously free from marks, placed in exact juxtaposition, one on the top of the other, *and when both were in view of all the sitters*.
5. The slates were usually held between the medium and the right-hand sitter, but sometimes also between the medium and the left-hand sitter.
6. During the six *séances* writing was obtained when the slates were held by and between five different sitters and the medium.
7. The slates were never at any time, during either of the *séances*, taken away from the table by the medium or by anyone else, except on the first occasion, when four slates were employed, and those not actually in use were placed for convenience on a chiffonier within reach (without the medium quitting his place at the table), and where the slates still remained in full view of all.
8. The slates were invariably carefully cleaned, in full view of all, after each manifestation—sometimes by the medium, sometimes by the sitters, sometimes by the sitters first and by the medium afterwards, and sometimes by the medium first and by the sitters afterwards.
9. The cleaning was done, when at the medium's house, with a moist sponge, and the slate rubbed hard and thoroughly over again with a dry one ; and at my house, once by a damp sponge (mine) ; once by a silk pocket handkerchief *dry* ; and once by the medium's pocket handkerchief, damped there and then.
10. The slates were all exact pairs, fitting accurately when placed one on the other, and were in every experiment scrupulously and watchfully kept in that position.
11. A fresh pair of slates were used at each *séance* ; and with one exception (when they were kept by one of the other sitters) I have them all still untouched, with the writing upon them.
12. The instrument of writing was in each case a minute piece of slate pencil, about three-sixteenths of an inch long, placed between the two slates. The slate pencil used was in three instances supplied by the medium, and in three by myself.
13. A sound as of writing by slate pencil was distinctly audible in every case, proceeding, apparently, from between the slates, and three slight taps, as if with the point of the pencil, at the finish, indicating that the writing was completed.
14. [Localisation of sound being extremely difficult, I give this evidence as collateral rather than direct. Its force is, however, greatly added to in this case by the synchronous vibrations of the slates corresponding with the duration of the sound. These were distinctly felt and pointed out at the time in more than one instance, and were several times noticed in the case of the final “taps.”]



15. The small pieces of pencil always showed such marks of "wearing down" at the side of the point as would naturally have been produced by writing at the usual angle.
16. The writing was in different "hands," and of very different sizes, as also of various degrees of neatness and of length—length, that is, of the "message" or writing produced. Once the entire slate was completely covered in a small running hand, and the writing finished off by a circular line surrounding the whole.
17. What was written was invariably intelligible and properly expressed; and when in answer to a question was always germane to such question.
18. In the case of the long message (16) which was signed "J. G." I asked what was the full name and that it might be given. *This was immediately done, whilst I was holding one end of the two slates together above the table, between the medium and myself.* The name thus written—a double surname corresponding with the initials—very peculiar in spelling, and also uncommon, was perfectly well-known to me.

On another occasion I asked that the figure 2 might be written, which was also done, the slates at that time being, as I have said, in full view and lying flat on the upper surface of the table, one exactly on the top of the other.

Now referring to the writings described above, under paragraph 18; if, in spite of the rigorously severe precautions observed, there could remain any reasonable possibility of the slates being tampered with and the writing produced by the employment of chemical or other analogous means, the circumstances that on at least two occasions *the writing was immediately produced in the form of answers to impromptu demands or questions from myself*, would effectually dispose of such an hypothesis.

The argument is clearly unanswerable. And looking at the whole of the actual facts verified—not once, merely, but over and over again—and at the stringent conditions under which the experiments were conducted, can it be denied by any candid mind that the evidence fulfils the description predicated—that it is *conclusive*?

"Perfect openness to conviction; upon perfectly conclusive evidence." That is the (strictly philosophical) bargain as between Demonstrator and Investigator. The Demonstrator having fully and completely fulfilled his part, it remains for the Investigator to frankly fulfil his. That I accept the position without the slightest hesitation or reservation, this letter is the best proof. Further, I have submitted these phenomenal facts to several eminent men, scientists, chemists, and conjurers, and, granting them to be facts, no one has been able to suggest the slightest "feasible" explanation or clue to the mode of their production. . . .

"*But are they 'facts'?*" That is the point!" I hear some one say. . . . Well, either they are facts, or else the senses of nine different persons, of both sexes, on five different occasions, under changed conditions of light, and in varying circumstances of locality, must have conspired to play them false; must have signally failed to perceive and appreciate that which ought to have been simply, easily, and palpably perceptible and appreciable by the most rudimentary intelligence. There is no escape from the position except by a point-blank challenge of the accuracy of the statement of conditions premised:—

"I say your slates were not bought and marked as asserted; or, if they were, they

were not really those used at the *séances*. . . . I deny that any writing was ever, in fact, produced upon them, or if it was, it was put there before the slates were placed in position. . . . It is useless to assure me that the slates were always first of all examined; your eyes, which could see the writing on them plainly enough after, were evidently incapable of seeing it before. . . . When you assert that the whole of the sitters' hands, medium's included, were in every case in full view whilst the writing was going on, that is another instance of optical delusion. . . . The sound of writing corresponding with the vibration of the slate?—a trick of the imagination. . . . Well then, if in spite of all you will obstinately persist in adhering to your absurd propositions, you must be (pardon the impoliteness), but you really must be all lunatics or liars—or both! . . . Still unsilenced? You say that if I like to take some little—very little—trouble I can see the same things for myself? I tell you that if I did see them I should mistrust my own senses—the thing is on the face of it impossible—and however simple, obvious, and conclusive the ocular demonstration you propose, I could not, and, in such a case, would not believe my own eyes."

Well, then, my dear sir, or my dear madam, if that really be so, I can only say that I am sincerely sorry for you. As it is only by trusting, within certain well defined limits, to the guidance of the senses nature has given you that the business of your existence is carried on in the world; that you are conscious that there is a world; that you have, in short, any proof *that you are, at all*, you are really to be pitied! And as "pity is akin to love," I again affectionately invite you to reconsider the libel you have indited against your own faculties, and to *try them*, just for once in a way, frankly and fearlessly, upon the simple—almost childishly simple—proposition suggested.

Whether, however, you will or will not take my advice, I assert to you that the conditions of the practical experiments I have described are *absolute*; that there is no loophole or crevice left for imagining fraud; and I assert further—limiting the assertion to the strict sense of the words—that the results of these experiments conclusively establish the existence of some objective, intelligent force, capable of acting externally to the medium, and in contravention of the recognised laws of matter.

Mr. C. C. Massey, 1, Albert Mansions, Victoria Street, S.W., together with the Hon. Roden Noel, are the next witnesses:—

"On the afternoon of April 10th, 1884, I met Mr. Roden Noel by appointment at Mr. Eglinton's rooms. We sat for some time with but indifferent success, getting but a word or two written on the upper surface of a slate clasped underneath and against the table by Mr. Eglinton with his right hand, his left joined to my left on the table, my right hand with both Mr. Noel's. Of course a single word, under perfect test conditions, would be as conclusive as a volume; and as I was thoroughly satisfied on this, as on a former occasion when Mr. Eglinton was at my own rooms, that the medium did not himself write the words, the phrase "indifferent success" must be taken, so far as I am concerned, to refer only to the quantity of the phenomenon, and not to its quality. Nor was Mr. Noel at all dissatisfied; but as he sat on my right, and the medium's left hand was stretched across to grasp my left hand, the arm rather

intercepted Mr. Noel's view of Mr. Eglinton's right hand as it grasped the slate. So that as to these single words, my testimony must, I think, be taken alone, and for what it is worth.

"There was a pile of Mr. Eglinton's own slates upon the table, and it was always upon one or other of those that the writing was obtained. Of the two that were used, I cleaned one, after it had been well wetted, with a dry sponge, myself, on both sides; the other I saw similarly treated by Mr. Eglinton. Of course I watched to see that there was no unobserved change of slate, nor did Mr. Eglinton rise from his seat during the *séance*, except once, to write down an address I had given him. It will be understood that we sat in broad daylight.

"We noticed two facts, one of which, certainly, could not result from any voluntary act of the medium. This was the lowering of the temperature of the hand which held the slate, just before and after the writing. The other fact was the cessation of the sound of writing when Mr. Eglinton broke the contact of his hand with my own.

"Mr. Eglinton now laid one of the two equal-sized slates ( $10\frac{6}{8}$  inches by  $7\frac{5}{8}$ ) flat upon the other, the usual scrap of pencil being enclosed. Both slates were then, as I carefully assured myself, perfectly clean on both surfaces. He then forthwith, and without any previous dealing with them, presented one end of the two slates, held together by himself at the other end, for me to hold with my left hand, on which he placed his own right. I clasped the slates, my thumb on the frame of the upper one ( $\frac{3}{8}$  inch), and three of my fingers, reaching about four inches, forcing up the lower slate against the upper one. *We did not hold the slates underneath the table*, but at the side, a little below the level. Mr. Noel was thus able to observe the position. Mr. Eglinton held the slates firmly together at his end, as I can assert, because I particularly observed that there was no gap at his end. I also noticed his thumb on the top of the slates, and can say that it rested quite quietly throughout the writing, which we heard almost immediately and continuously, except when Mr. Eglinton once raised his hand from mine, when the sound ceased till contact was resumed.

"When the three taps came, denoting that the 'message' was finished, Mr. Eglinton simply removed his hand from the slates, leaving them in my left hand, also quitting contact of his other hand with my left. I took off the upper slate, and we saw that the inner surface of one of them—which, I cannot positively recollect; perhaps Mr. Noel, to whom I have submitted this account, may supply the omission—was covered with writing; twenty lines from end to end written *from* the medium, and one line along the side by the frame, the 'Good-bye' on the other side. The writing was in straight lines across the slate, all the letters slanting from left to right. I now give the whole message:—'*We shall be most glad to co-operate with you in any experiments you may care to enter upon, or to answer any questions propounded by you and your friends. Our purpose in manifesting is as much to aid in honest inquiry as it is to merely demonstrate our power to write under exceptional conditions. We find in the atmosphere constantly pervaded by our presence more scope for work than in your rooms. There we may not at all times be sure of our power to manifest.* LES ESPRITS MÉDIOCRES CONDAMNENT D'ORDINAIRE TOUT CE QUI PASSE LEUR PORTÉE, according to Rochefoucauld, but we are happy to see that such is not the case with you and your friends. Good-bye.'

One circumstance about the writing on this slate is to be remarked. It begins about an inch from the top; from the bottom it is continued along one side (one line), and then there are three lines in the space at the top, written







in the reverse direction to that of the body of the message. The ability to produce the writing in any direction is thus shown. The writing is flowing, easy, and with a distinct character, as that of an educated penman. I took the slate away with me, and it is now in my possession.

“I am as satisfied that these facts occurred exactly in the manner I have stated as I am that the words on this paper are of my own writing.”

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Mr. Roden Noel, speaking of these experiences, says:—“Every word of this account I am able to endorse. My *impression* is that the writing was on the lower slate, but of this I am not sure. I also fail to see how the physiological condition testified to by Mr. Massey could be produced at all. I equally fail to see how the medium, while his thumb was observed by us to be stationary on the frame, could himself write a slateful of words in reverse directions, those at the sides being at right angles with, and those at the end being topsy-turvy to, those on the body of the slate, even had not the other conditions as here related precluded such a possibility; for he only touched the slate with one hand. I may add that, in the early part of the *séance*, as on a former occasion at Mr. Massey's rooms, and on his own slate, we obtained written answers to our own questions, and these could not have been written previously on the slate.”

Mr. Massey adds a note to these remarks, and points out that as writing by the medium himself at the time is absolutely out of the question, there are only three other conceivable suggestions as opposed to occult agency.

“One of these must suppose that a change of slate was effected, unobserved by us, at the last moment, one already written upon being substituted for one of those just before ascertained to be clean. As to this, I have only to repeat what I said in the introduction to my translation of *Transcendental Physics*, that while some allowance must be made in every account for defects of observation and memory, there is a point at which such defects would be so gross as to be inconsistent with ordinary sense and intelligence, and at which, if probability is to be our guide, it would be more rational at once to dispute the *veracity* of the witnesses. The second suggestion is that of concealed writing brought out by heat, which it has been said may be supplied by the hands. One has only to look at the slate pencil-writing to laugh at this supposition. Nor could any heat be obtained, except upon the little detached surfaces—perhaps one-tenth of the whole—represented by so much of our fingers as would be in contact with the under surface, while our thumbs pressed on the frame of the upper slate. And the writing is *uniformly* distinct. The third suggestion, which would question our *veracity*, we must leave to the judgment of others.”

Dr. G. Wyld, a witness already referred to, is also clear and to the point in his statement of facts. He says:—“I assisted in washing and cleaning four slates. Mr. Eglinton then began by holding a slate *below* the flap of the table and closely pressed against the flap, the usual crumb of slate pencil being on the slate, when, on my asking the question, ‘Shall we obtain information as to the source of some recent messages?’ the word ‘*Yes*’ was written. Mr. Eglinton then placed the slate *on the top of the table*, and the bit of pencil being placed thereon, he covered this slate with another. He then placed his right hand on a corner of the upper slate, and I, taking his left hand in both of mine,

pressed the three hands firmly downwards on the slates. Almost immediately we heard the writing going on. The time occupied seemed, to both of us, to be about one minute, and I therefore expected to receive only a sentence; my surprise was therefore great when I found the slate covered with fine writing from top to bottom. We read the communication, and, finding it unfinished, Mr. Eglinton took another slate, and held it by one corner close below the flap of the table, while I held his other hand. Again we heard the busy writing, and then the three taps indicating that the message was finished. The time occupied was again about one minute, and again we found the slate covered with writing, the last part of the message being carried all round the slate next to the frame. The first slate, as I have stated, was on the top of the table, under my own hands and eyes, and although the second slate was close *below* the flap of the table, it was yet held in its position by the fingers and thumb of Mr. Eglinton's right hand only, which were visible to me the whole time. I therefore assert that these slates were written on by an occult process, and of this I am as certain as I am of my own existence. If further evidence were required, it could be found in the fact that the writing on the two slates was completed in about two minutes, more or less, and that on experiment I find it takes about twenty minutes to copy it in quick writing."

The symposium is closed by the testimony of the Hon. Percy Wyndham, M.P., of 44, Belgrave Square, S.W. He writes:—"On the 23rd May, 1884, I had a sitting with Mr. Eglinton for slate-writing. My son accompanied me. We sat at a deal table, in full daylight, Mr. Eglinton opposite to myself, my son between us, to my left and to Mr. Eglinton's right. The slate was at first held under the corner of the table between my son and Mr. Eglinton, by the pressure of the fingers of Mr. Eglinton's right and of my son's left hand, both their thumbs being on the upper surface of the table, and the wrist and greater part of Mr. Eglinton's hand being visible to my son. Mr. Eglinton's left hand and my son's right were joined above the table, and my two hands on theirs. To the usual question, 'Is anyone present?' the reply 'Yes' was written. At Mr. Eglinton's suggestion, my son took a clean slate, and going into the adjoining room, wrote a question on it, and left this slate in the adjoining room. The purport of this question was unknown to myself or to Mr. Eglinton. A slate was held as before. We soon heard the sound of writing, and on looking at the slate, found the piece of pencil at the end of the last letter, and the writing was in this and in each other instance reversed from Mr. Eglinton, the tops of the letters being towards him, and the writing as if written by a person facing, as I myself was. The answer to my son's question was as follows:—'*We cannot tell, as —*' (giving the initial and surname of a deceased friend of my son) '*is not here.*' We then put two slates together, Mr. Eglinton and my son pressing them *on the upper surface of the table in full view*, when the following message was written very audibly and with great rapidity:—'*MY DEAR SON,—I am very glad to be able to accept the opportunity afforded me of dictating a message through the guides of Mr. Eglinton, but you will believe me when I say I am nevertheless present in spirit. There is much I would like to say to you, but I must defer it all until I get stronger to communicate through this (sic) means. Your father sends you much love, as does your affectionate mother, M. F. WYNDHAM.*' Stops and commas are placed as in the original. Being uncertain as to the initials, and as to who the writer

purported to be, two other slates were put together on the table, and on my asking for the name in full, 'Mary Fanny Wyndham' was written immediately. I then asked what was the nature of her death, and the reply was immediately written, 'sudden' (correct). I then asked if they could tell me the name of a relative of mine who had recently come to London. The reply was immediately written, 'Blunt.' This closed the *séance*."

One would have thought that this testimony was good enough, fair enough, and so obviously impartial, as to satisfy everybody. It did not, however, satisfy Mr. R. A. Proctor, of *Knowledge*. In that weekly he delivered himself of a choice specimen of scientific bigotry and intolerance, worthy of that "woe" denounced of old on the hypocrites who shut up the Kingdom of Heaven (of knowledge) against men: "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." He said: "*Bringing it to Book* is an advertisement of a Mr. Eglinton, a (so-called) 'Medium,' which we decline to forward or further by taking any more notice of it. Professor Ray Lankester and Dr. Carpenter would be the fittest people to deal with this person in the outset, as Mr. Flowers, at Bow Street, would be at a subsequent stage of the proceedings." Now I have quoted a block of evidence of the first order, as "plainly worded, exactly described," as even Mr. Proctor's *Knowledge* boasts to be, unimpeachably authenticated, too, by the names of the gentlemen who observed what they have recorded. This evidence establishes as a scientific fact what Mr. Proctor thus dismisses with the air of an Inquisitor dealing with heresy. He is more dogmatic than a mediæval priest. But the priest was at least in harmony with his age: the method adopted by Mr. Proctor, on the contrary, is one singularly and even ludicrously unadapted to the tone of modern thought. In this matter Mr. Proctor is as foolish as he is careless and slovenly in his statements respecting other matters, and even when his errors are pointed out he has not the straightforward honesty or grace to make any apology.

Perhaps I may be permitted to add here a report of some peculiarly satisfactory experiences of my own. I had occasion in August, 1884, to arrange a series of special *séances* for a friend (Mr. Quintin H—), with Mr. W. Eglinton. Besides Mr. H— and myself, Mr. E. Dawson Rogers (already frequently mentioned in these pages) was present at four of the six *séances* I am about to describe, and I am very pleased to be permitted to present his added testimony.

We met on each occasion at ten o'clock in the morning, and invariably occupied the same positions (for the diagram I must refer the reader to p. 103). Mr. Eglinton sat at *e*, Mr. H— at *f*, myself at *g*, and Mr. Dawson Rogers (or whoever took his place on the two occasions when that gentleman was absent) at *h*. It will be noticed that Mr. H— sat facing the mirror, and so placed himself that while he could, in the usual manner, observe everything in front of the medium, he had also, thanks to the mirror, a considerably extended range of vision.

The surroundings and conditions observed at these *séances* I have already fully described (chap. xiii. pp. 103-9), and in reading the minutes of these experiments, I must ask that these details be borne in mind.

*Experiment 1.*—We seated ourselves as shown in Fig. 13, p. 103. Two slates were cleaned, carefully examined, and securely tied together with twine, a crumb of slate-pencil

being placed between them. They were left lying on the top of the table, and never once passed from our sight. While they were thus in full view of three witnesses, there was heard the sound of writing on them in response to a request made by Mr. H—. The sound was a rapid tick, tick, and was distinctly audible to all of us. It was not, however, continuous, the "ticking," though very rapid, being disconnected—just like the sound heard when a telegraph instrument is working. Fig. 28 is a full-sized *facsimile* of what we found written on the under-surface of the top slate. We then observed that the character of the writing explained the peculiar, disconnected sound accompanying its production. The time occupied was twenty-five seconds. The message contains one hundred and twenty words.

*Experiment 2.*—On another occasion, after every precaution had again been taken, and it must be understood that this was invariably done, *the two slates were placed by Mr. Eglinton on Mr. H—'s chair, and that gentleman sat upon them.* In these circumstances one of the slates was filled by the following message—ninety-nine words—the time occupied being fifty seconds. "*We do not write this as a mere proof of our power this morning. We are solicitous that you should no longer retain a wrong theory as to the nature and quality of the intelligence at work, and therefore write in the most emphatic manner that we are disembodied spirits. And moreover, to prove this we beg to tell you that we are accompanied by a relative of yours, who says his name is Ferguson, and that he hopes to have the power of writing to you direct, when occasion offers.* ON NE CHERCHE POINT À PROUVER LA LUMIÈRE." Mr. H— was unsettled in his mind as to the nature of the force at work—hence the *apropos* allusion in this message; indeed, many apt and pointed answers to questions put on the spur of the moment during these *séances* were strong proofs of the spontaneity and genuineness of the writing, even supposing that the precautions taken to ensure the slates being free from prepared writing had been ineffectual, or that we had allowed the slates to be changed. In reference to this last point I may remark that due precautions were taken by three pairs of eyes to make sure that this was not done.

*Experiment 3.*—Mr. Eglinton rose and placed the slates held in his right hand on the top of Mr. H—'s head (Fig. 17, p. 107). Mr. Dawson Rogers and myself, of course, saw everything, but I was mentally regretting that Mr. H— could not do so, forgetting the mirror in front of him. It turned out, however, that he had a full view of every detail attending the writing between the two slates while so placed, and he afterwards wrote on the back of the slate:—"Held over my head, in full view by a mirror. I held left hand. Mr. Eglinton held two slates in his right, May 24th, 1884."

*Experiment 4.*—Without consulting the medium, I had brought several different coloured crayons with me, and before the slates were tied I inserted between them a crumb of slate pencil, and morsels of red and yellow crayons. When the slates were tied and placed in position on the top of the table, Mr. H— was requested to choose the colour to be used. His choice was red crayon and slate pencil. Upon this the writing commenced, and we all distinctly heard the scratching noise which accompanied it. Suddenly, however, this stopped, and there ensued a pause of about the same length of time as that during which the scratching noise had been heard. Then this was resumed, and again and again were alternated the sound of writing and the pause. Upon untying the slates in due course, we found one of them full of writing in alternate lines of slate pencil and red crayon: the scratching we heard was

Dear Sir,

We are assured by your friends who are present to say that your brother F \_\_\_\_\_ H \_\_\_\_\_ is with you this morning, and is also accompanied by your Sister C \_\_\_\_\_ You cannot tell how glad they are that you are being impressed with the truth of their ability to return to you in the manner described. Indeed it is but carrying out the injunction

ΠΕΡΙ ΔΕ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΟΠΑΤΕΧΩΝ, ΑΔΕΛΦΟΙ, ΟΙ  
 ΔΕΙΛΩ ΨΥΧΑΣ ΑΥΘΟΕΩ

We work with you in your efforts on behalf of humanity, and once let us approach you by knowing you really feel our presence near you, and there will be a great outpouring of the Spirit by which your work cannot but be enhanced.

L. P.

FIG. 28.—Facsimile of Direct Writing obtained in Broad Daylight.

(It should be stated that after the above message was given, it was in some parts accidentally rubbed and rendered indistinct. As a consequence, the engraver, in tracing the Greek quotation, has rendered a few of the letters incorrectly.)



caused by the pencil, the apparent cessation of writing being evidently due to the use of the coloured crayon, which on a slate would of course be noiseless. The slate pencil and the red crayon were found to be worn down by use; the yellow crayon was just as it was when placed between the slates. This experiment is very suggestive in many ways. I regret I have been unable to give a *facsimile* in colours of the message then given, but after long inquiry I have been unable to find a process adapted to my purpose.

*Experiment 5.*—This, the last, was indeed the crowning proof of the series. A single slate was taken and a piece of pencil put under a tumbler (see Fig. 18, p. 108). Both were then brought under the table close to the corner, the top of the tumbler being pressed against the under surface of the table top, held there by the slate in Mr. Eglinton's

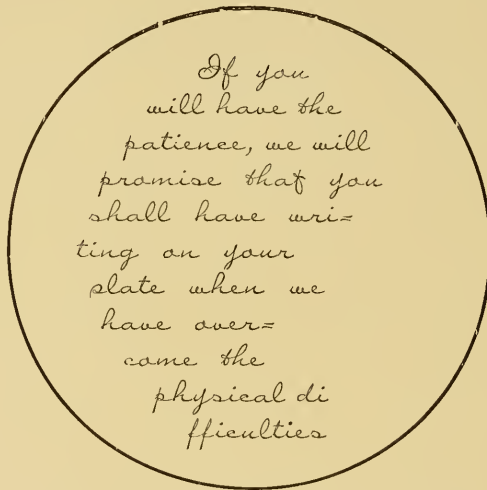


FIG. 29.—Direct Writing obtained under an Inverted Tumbler.

right hand, his left being joined to that of Mr. H—, who also clearly observed both feet of the medium, the latter not sitting "square" with his side of the table. Soon we heard the sound of writing (see Fig. 29), and Mr. H— asked permission to look under the table. This was granted, and he says:—"I distinctly saw the last word being written with the crumb of pencil, which moved without any visible cause from the right, after the syllable 'di' was written, to the left, in order to complete the word. It then stopped, and fell on the last stroke of the word. The tumbler was in position closely pressed to the surface of the slate." It will, of course, be understood that Fig. 29 simply represents the position of the writing as executed under the tumbler, and is not intended as a *facsimile*.

Mr. E. Dawson Rogers is good enough to say of these *séances*:—"I was present at the *séances* 1, 2, 3, and 5, and have much pleasure in testifying that Mr. Farmer's record of what occurred on those occasions is strictly accurate."

The success of the last case, in which the writing was actually seen in course of execution, induced Mr. Eglinton, who has always taken a lively interest in the development of his own powers, to make practical experiments with a view to regularly obtaining similar results, and he has always willingly co-operated with any earnest inquirer in furthering efforts to this end. A case in point came to my notice while these sheets were passing through the press. Dr. Herschell (M.D., Lond.), and an amateur conjurer of great ability, whose interest in Spiritualism is of many years' standing, after some satisfactory *séances* held during the latter half of 1885, specially designed a slate for the purpose of developing direct writing under conditions which might possibly allow, in due course, of the writing being seen while being executed. Fig. 30 is a drawing of the slate, which measures  $11\frac{3}{4}$  inches by  $9\frac{3}{4}$  inches. Over one surface a thin board is screwed, to one end of which a frame is attached. In this frame, and covering a portion of the surface of the slate not screened by the thin board, slides a piece of ruby-coloured glass. The space under the glass, as far as the observer is concerned, is absolutely dark, and yet a piece of pencil, if dipped in luminous paint, is perfectly visible, and any movements easily perceived.

An experiment was made with this, Dr. G. Wyld being the first to obtain successful results. He sends me the following account of what took place:—"I took with me to Mr. Eglinton's a friend, Mrs. M—, who was anxious to obtain advice as to the condition and treatment of a dear friend. She used her own slates, viz., thin metal book slates without frames, so that when closed the leaves were in contact, and I used two of my own slates tied so tightly together that I could not insert the thin blade of a penknife. Mrs. M— having placed a crumb of yellow chalk pencil between the leaves of her slate, they were pressed in close contact to the under surface of the flap of the table, the near edge being visible to us. We then, having all joined hands, heard the sounds of writing, and when we opened the leaves of the slates found yellow chalk writing, not only at the end of the slate next Mr. Eglinton's hand, but at the distant end and across the slate, and the writing contained apposite replies to questions put by Mrs. M—, but unknown to him. My two closely tied slates were then used. These we held above the table, in the air, and we heard the sounds of writing. On examination, after cutting the string, we found both of the slates covered with writing from top to bottom, and containing apposite replies to two questions put, one by myself, and the other by Mrs. M—. Our third experiment was one which, I believe, has seldom been successfully tried before, and never with the slate used. We removed the glass of Dr. Herschell's slate, and saw that there was no writing on the slate floor, and, having placed thereon a crumb of slate pencil, and a question written on paper, placed face downwards, under the covered portion of the slate, we reinserted the glass lid, and while we firmly pressed the framework of this apparatus to the table, we looked through the glass lid. We heard writing going on, but we could not see the movements of the pencil, as the glass was not sufficiently transparent; but on removing it we found a message pertinently replying to the question put by Mrs. M—. This was an interesting experiment, and seems to indicate that the day may not be far distant when through a more transparent glass lid than that used, the writing may be watched as it proceeds, and thus afford a crowning evidence of psychography."

Mr. Mair-Rolph, of Beaufield, Jersey, bears emphatic testimony to the identity of the communicating intelligences in a long letter which he published in the columns of *Light*. He

had several *séances* with Mr. Eglinton under the most absolute test conditions, and possesses several slates on which are written messages which he is able to identify as in the handwriting of a deceased son.

Mr. F. J. Collingwood, F.G.S., has also put on record a *séance* that may appropriately close the chapter:—

“On the 7th January, 1885, I paid a visit with my wife and two nieces, Misses Mary and Lizzie Johnson, to Mr. Eglinton, for experiments in psychography. I may premise that the conduct of Mr. Eglinton's *séances* is so well known that I forbear to enter into familiar details, such as position at the table, the holding of the slate, etc., etc. Several questions were put by us and replied to very pertinently in each case, after which Mrs. Collingwood wrote a question, out of our sight on the Bramah-lock slate. A bit of pencil was then dropped in, the slate locked, and the key placed upon the table in sight of us all. The slate was held by Mr. Eglinton and Mary upon the top of the table. No reply was

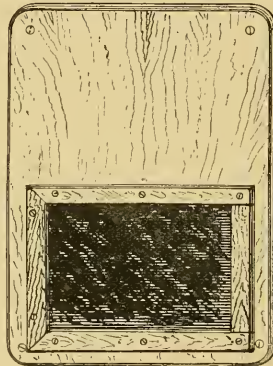


FIG. 30.—Dr. Herschell's Fenestrated Slate.

immediately obtained, and the slate was left upon the table. I produced my own book-slate, already tied, and it was held by Mr. Eglinton under the table. The string was removed from it while so held, Mr. Eglinton's left hand being grasped by that of Mary, and a sentence was written. Here we made an experiment with the intention, if possible, more completely to exclude the 'thought reading' element. I went to the bookcase, placed my back against it, and took a book at random. Mary wrote on a slate the number of a supposed page known only to herself, while Lizzie wrote the number of a line on the unknown page. The book was put by me on the slate containing the numbers, strict care being taken that it was not seen by anybody, and held under the table by both Mr. Eglinton and Mary, a request being made that the line indicated by the number might be quoted. The following was written:—'*There is no such page as 59 in the book.*' On opening the book it was found that the pagination *began* at 65. The number chosen *had* been 59, and the forms of the figures were *exactly imitated*—a manifestly conclusive answer!

Mr. Eglinton, embodying an expressed wish of mine, asked whether ‘Ernest’ would give us any hints as to the further development of ‘power’ in my nieces, and a message of one hundred and one words, appositely answering the question, was written within two slates held by Mr. Eglinton on the shoulder of Mary, her hand also grasping the slate and one of his two hands that held it. The writing was very distinctly heard by all present in this experiment, as in the others. The locked slate, having remained untouched in the meantime, was again taken up from the table by Mr. Eglinton, and held by him and my niece above the table. Writing was heard by us, and on the slate being opened, a pertinent answer to the written question was found. Lying inside the slate was *the piece of string that had been removed from my book-slate.*”

Mr. Collingwood further expresses himself as having borne in mind throughout this *séance* the statements put forward by Labouchere, Maskelyne, and others, and considers that their theories as to how these writings are produced are absolutely untenable, if not ridiculous.



## CHAPTER XVI.

### EVIDENCE FOR INDEPENDENT MIND-ACTION IN PSYCHOGRAPHY.



NOW come to several cases which appear to indicate very clearly the action of some mind outside of that of any person visibly present, *i.e.*, either the medium or the sitters. The cases quoted are representative of a class, and, did space permit, there are many similar instances which could be adduced.

The first is one recorded by Mr. C. C. Massey, whose evidence is corroborated by Mr. H. J. Hood (barrister-at-law), and the Hon. Roden Noel, all of whom, except Mr. Hood, have been previously referred to.

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On Wednesday the 23rd April, 1884, Mr. Roden Noel, Mr. H. J. Hood, and myself met at Mr. Eglinton's rooms for a psychographic *séance*. I shall not give a minute account of the conditions under which the writing was obtained. Suffice it to say that we were all three quite satisfied that any surreptitious agency of the medium, change of slate, etc., was out of the question. The special interest of the phenomenon centred in the fact that the writing purported to come from a living person, with a descriptive but otherwise anonymous signature. We sat for about an hour without any result, the medium complaining of a strange and unpleasant influence. Then the writing came suddenly, and with a rush of force. The slate, being slowly drawn out from beneath the edge of the table, was seen to be covered with writing in two entirely distinct characters. The first part consisted of twenty lines, closely written, but very clear and legible, the formation of some of the letters being peculiar. The second part (seven lines and the signature "Ernest") is all that I can transcribe for publication. It is as follows:—"We have purposely given up to the writer the power of giving you this communication, but we do not necessarily endorse his statements or his abusiveness.—ERNEST." In fact, the upper message was of an extremely scandalous character. On the following day, the same party were present, and again the medium complained of the influence of the day before. A new manifestation was in store for us. Mr. Eglinton having laid one slate upon another on the table, and both his hands upon them, in sight of us all, became much agitated (physically) and, after a spasm of unusual force, withdrew his hands, and the upper slate being removed by him there was seen upon



the lower one a letter. The cover was not addressed; it was opened by Mr. Hood (who sat next the medium on both days), and the contents, written in red ink, on a peculiar sort of parchment, were forthwith read out by him. What degree of psychological interest the letter possesses beyond the, to me, undoubtedly genuine manifestation of Mr. Eglinton's own mediumship, may be the subject of curious speculation. Scarcely a week before, I had written a letter of a very private character to a friend in Paris. I wrote it alone in my own room, immediately fastened it up, and posted it myself (without anyone else having seen it) the same afternoon. This letter had, somehow or other, been rifled of its verbal contents (never repeated by me to anyone), some of which were literally quoted in inverted commas in the letter coming as I have described. These passages, taken out of the context in which I had written them, were woven into a very censorious communication. The postscript was of a peculiarly malicious character, referring to other confidential correspondence of mine of a very delicate and personal nature. I must own that this particular shot took effect, and caused me no small embarrassment and annoyance. But as an unsympathetic public might be more likely to laugh than to condole with me on the situation, I shall say no more about it. These "confidential letters to friends," we were told, could be further appealed to "if found necessary." The letter was subscribed in a similarly general way as the message of the previous day, though by "another" writer, with the same descriptive designation. Nothing was said in the letter about the mode of its transmission from the writer to the *séance*-room. I have Mr. Eglinton's written assurance to me, in reply to a formal question I addressed to him, that the letter in question was seen for the first time by himself when it was produced to us, and that it was never, to the best of his belief, in his possession. "Its appearance," he says, "was as much a surprise to me as it was to you, and great as was the manifestation, the marvel of the letter and its contents overrides all previous experience." Of course I wrote at once to my friend in Paris to ask if he had shown my letter. He says: "Your letter to me, which you say was quoted at Eglinton's, was received by me in the morning, was read by me then. The boy took it at the door and handed it across the hall to me at once. I was the first person who opened it. I did not show it to anyone else, nor did anyone else read it or hear it read." The whole phenomenon is very interesting and curious. Mr. Eglinton, is, perhaps, more likely than Slade to convince some who are new to the facts. For Slade, though his power was almost unailing, was restless and talkative at his *séances*, and so we heard a good deal about the "conjurer's patter," and about movements suggestive of possibilities of *finesse*. I know all that to have been unfair: it was just the man's temperament; still, it was provoking. Whereas Mr. Eglinton is uniformly quiet and composed; he does not move about; he does not chatter; he does nothing, in short, which can suggest to the most wary observer the suspicion of a design to distract attention.

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This case seems fairly complete, and is similar to the incident which occurred with Mrs. Cheetham during Mr. Eglinton's stay in India, when a letter was also rifled of its contents; but the next instance carries the argument a step further. It is recorded by Mr. D. H. Wilson, M.A., of Rosemont, Hyères, France, and is one of the most complete and

convincing cases of the kind with which I am acquainted. The *séance* took place on Monday, January 5th, 1885, and the account was written immediately after the conclusion of the experiment.

The *séance* was held in daylight. There were present, besides myself, my wife, and the medium, one other person only, namely, my sister, Mrs. Arthur Kimber, of 3, Roland Gardens, South Kensington, S.W. After having obtained writings within the Bramah-locked slate, in answer to a question written by myself, secretly, therein, and also within Mrs. Wilson's own book-slate, and after having obtained a large slateful of writing in about ten seconds, whilst the slate was on the top of the table within view of all present—phenomena familiar to most investigators—the medium suggested an experiment to prove that the intelligence displayed in the writing was outside of the knowledge of the experimenters. It was this: He gave us four strips of clean note-paper. Upon two of these Mrs. Wilson and Mrs. Kimber wrote two questions (secretly), folded up the papers, and handed them to me. I wrote (secretly) two questions on the other two strips, folded them up, and shuffled all the four pieces of paper together in my hands underneath the table, and then Mrs. Wilson withdrew one of them at hazard, and placed it on a clean slate with a small crumb of pencil. The medium, who up to this moment from the commencement of the experiment had been standing before the window with his back to all of us, approached the table, and raising the said slate with the thumb and forefinger of his right hand, held it, jointly with Mrs. Kimber, under, and close against the flap of the table. The sound of writing was heard at once. When it ceased Mr. Eglinton handed me the slate, on which appeared by the side of the strip of paper the word "*Monday*," in answer to my question contained in that strip, "What day is it to-day?"

It should be noted that:—1. The medium, from first to last, *did not touch* for an instant any of the papers after we had written upon them. 2. Only one person (myself) knew that the question answered had been put. 3. None knew what question the paper drawn by Mrs. Wilson at hazard contained. 4. The answer *Monday* was written on the upper surface of the slate, on which rested also the chosen strip of paper. The crumb of pencil used had been previously marked by myself for the purpose of identification, and before the experiment had sharp facets, which afterwards were slightly worn; the said crumb of pencil rested on the last stroke of the "y" of the word *Monday*, and the writing, as in all our previous experiments, was struck down, in relation to the position of the medium.

It will occur to the reader that this experiment, so far as it was intended to prove that the knowledge shown in the psychographic phenomenon was not derived from the minds of the experimenters, was not complete. Although no one present—no one in the world—knew what question the paper chosen contained when it was being answered, yet one of us, myself, had been conscious of that question a few moments previously. In other words, the inquiry *originated* in the mind of one of the four individuals who took part in the experiments.

Mr. Eglinton kindly offering to try any further experiments to demonstrate the action of an independent (that is a *fiſſh*) mind, I suggested that we should endeavour to obtain by psychography an extract from a closed book. Accordingly Mrs. Kimber wrote on a slate the number of a *page*; Mrs. Wilson the number of a *line*, and it remained for me to choose the book from which Mrs. Wilson's line of Mrs. Kimber's *page* was to be written by psychography

on the slate. For this purpose, with closed eyes, I took a book from Mr. Eglinton's shelves, which held about two hundred volumes. A crumb of pencil was placed upon the slate on which Mrs. Kimber and Mrs. Wilson had written the number of the page and line respectively. A second slate of exactly the same size and form was placed over this one, and the book was put by myself on the top of the two slates. Mr. Eglinton and Mrs. Kimber rested their hands on the book.

It should again be noted that:—(1) Precaution had been taken that no one besides Mrs. Kimber knew what number she had written on the slate to express the page to be recited, the same being true of the number Mrs. Wilson had written to express the *line* of that page. (2) The slates and the book were on the top of the table immediately before the eyes of all present. (3) Until I had placed the book upon the slates no one could have known what volume had been taken from the shelves. Mr. Eglinton did not touch the book until the moment when he and Mrs. Kimber rested their hands thereon. It had been handled by myself alone, and I was particularly careful neither to open it nor to look at its title. (4) Neither Mrs. Kimber, Mrs. Wilson, nor myself have the slightest recollection of ever having seen or heard of the said work, which was "Ghose's Indian Chiefs, Rajahs, etc., Part II."

After the lapse of a few seconds the sound of writing was heard within the slates. Upon the usual signal of three taps (also seemingly within the slates), to indicate the end of the experiment, I examined the slates, and found the following sentence, written on the under one, with the pencil resting on the full-stop at the end. (I may mention here that all the writings throughout the entire *séance* were conscientiously punctuated, and that every *t* was crossed and every *i* dotted.) This is the sentence:—"Page 199, line 14, is a table. The last word is o." Mrs. Kimber had written 199, and Mrs. Wilson 14. I then opened the book and turned to page 199, which commences thus:—"Table A. Estates belonging to the Hon. Maharaja Jolindro Mohun Tagore Behadur," etc. The fourteenth line of that page is as follows:—"Shikharbâti, 24 Pargannas, 210 0 0." This experiment closed the *séance*. Does it prove the action of an independent—of a fifth mind?

As such a test, it seems to have this weak point, namely that the book belonged to the medium, and had probably been read by him. It can scarcely be supposed that he remembered the fourteenth line of the 199th page in the sense that he could have reproduced it at will. How then, since nothing is lost, and assuming it to have been at one time a part of his consciousness, and lurking in the storehouse of his memory—how, I say, by what process was that little unimportant fact revived?

We are reminded of the mainsprings whereby latent thoughts are revived. There is (1) the principle of association of ideas, (2) there is volition, (3) there is that acquisition of energy which the reproductive faculty displays in certain abnormal states of nervous excitement.

1. In the experiment before us how could association be a reproducing agent? "199 page, line 14," suggests nothing. When we read a book we don't read the numbers of the pages, and count the lines of each page. Yet we must suppose the line lying latent in Mr. Eglinton's mind, duly labelled with the proper number and page. This is supposing too much. We admit that whatever a person reads may lurk in his mental storehouse to the end of his life, but we cannot admit that the numbers of every line on each page of every book he reads enter that storehouse at all. He cannot, therefore, give out what he does not possess.

What association of ideas can be set in train by "page 199, line 14"? This inquiry reminds us of what can be nothing more than a coincidence, namely, that the last word of the fourteenth line was a *cipher*, which (regarded as a numerical figure) is the class of association one would expect from *figures* 199, 14, 0, belonging, as it were, to the same family. But it is merely a coincidence, for psychography told us that on that page was "*a table*" (singularly enough Table *A*).

2. If the latent thought were revived by volition (as happens when we tell another our name and address), it would come into the field of consciousness. Mr. Eglinton denies any conscious revival.

3. That there is present in the medium some abnormal excitement during the occurrence of these psychographic phenomena there can be no doubt. Of the causes of this excitement we are very ignorant, but it may be remarked that inasmuch as the effects seem to be simply muscular and nervous, neither exciting nor depressing the mind of the subject, this phenomenon cannot well be classed with those well-established facts where the most remotely hidden memories flash into consciousness in states of rare cerebral excitement, for at such times there is always great mental disturbance, bordering and often entering upon delirium. I cannot speak too well of Mr. Eglinton's disposition to assist me in my investigation of the remarkable phenomena attending his mediumship. He takes an intelligent interest in his work, and deserves the gratitude and encouragement of all serious students of this profound and important subject.

A somewhat different experiment as to its details, but pointing to the same conclusions, is that narrated by Mr. A. G. Leonard, M.A., of 44, Highbury Hill, N., and Major Le Marc Taylor, Staff-Instructor of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst.

A *séance* was held at Mr. Eglinton's at five p.m. on Monday, 29th June, 1885. The three gentlemen took their seats round the table in the usual manner, Major Taylor, who was seated at Mr. Eglinton's right hand, holding with his left Mr. Eglinton's left hand. Mr. Leonard, sitting on the right of Major Taylor, held with both hands Major Taylor's right hand. Mr. Eglinton's right hand was disengaged. The *séance* lasted for over half-an-hour, and no results whatever were obtained, though Mr. Eglinton was holding a slate under the table in the usual way. Conversation turned upon an experiment that Major Taylor had made at a previous *séance*, when the number of matches in a match-box, from which an indefinite number had been removed by two or three sitters, had been correctly written on the slate. Mr. Eglinton regretted that, on the occasion referred to, the match-box had not been marked, for (he suggested) a Sadducean world would say that another match-box, with a known number of matches, had been substituted for the one being used in the experiment. It was, therefore, determined to repeat the test, taking every precaution that could be thought of.

Major Taylor chanced to have in his pocket a box of "Tändstickor" matches. Major Taylor and Mr. Leonard then went aside to the window and marked with their initials both the box and cover. Major Taylor then removed a large number of the matches, leaving an unknown quantity in the box. Mr. Leonard then replaced a few (he knew not how many) in the box. A slip of paper was placed above the matches in the box, and the box was closed. Neither

gentleman knew how many matches were then contained in the box. All this was done out of sight of Mr. Eglinton.

The slate was then carefully cleaned and examined. A piece of slate pencil, with sharp facets, and the match-box, were placed on the slate, which (with match-box and pencil on it) was held by Mr. Eglinton under the table with his right hand. Some ten minutes elapsed, during which time Mr. Eglinton's thumb was observed by Major Taylor to remain above the table. Mr. Eglinton, being then tired of holding up the slate, placed it on the table and covered it with another slate. Mr. Leonard suggested that a newspaper should envelop the whole. The slates were again examined, and a newspaper wrapped round them, the fold of which was nearest Mr. Eglinton, and the open ends facing the other sitters. Mr. Eglinton placed his hands on the newspaper, one of them being joined to Major Taylor's, and while both the hands of the medium were in full view of both gentlemen, the sound of writing was heard.

Major Taylor removed the newspaper and then the top slate, and *sixteen* was found to have been written on the bottom slate. Major Taylor opened the match-box, and he and Mr. Leonard counted the matches, finding *sixteen* of them. The slate pencil was found to be slightly abraded. The box and cover were identified as the same that had been marked. It was thought that all possibility of fraud had been eliminated in this experiment, and it was therefore concluded—from this and other results of a similar nature—either (1) that there was an intelligent entity at work apart from the medium and the sitters; or (2) that (*a*) in addition to having clairvoyant power (*b*) the medium was able, consciously or unconsciously, to influence matter in some abnormal way.

Perhaps, however, the most conclusive case is that which I have the good fortune to be able to record. On Tuesday, September 29th, 1885, at 12 a.m., I, in company with Mr. J. G. Keulemans, attended at 6, Nottingham-place, London, W., for the purpose of conducting experiments in psychography with Mr. Eglinton. The *séance* commenced at 12.15 a.m., and terminated at 12.55 a.m. In reference to an inquiry, Mr. Eglinton cordially agreed that, as far as he was concerned, we should conduct our experiments in our own manner. I had not previously mentioned my proposed course of action to any one. It was to obtain psychography in four different colours in a rotation unknown to the medium, the particular words to be chosen at random from a book unknown to all present.

The number of a page in the book from which I wished certain words in a given line to be transcribed on the slate by psychography I chose in the following manner:—I took a piece of money at random from my pocket out of fourteen coins then in my possession. The last two figures of the date I wrote down on a slate, secretly to Mr. Eglinton and Mr. Keulemans. A similar result, *i.e.*, the last figure of the date on another coin, written down secretly as before on my slate, was to indicate the number of the line. Four words in the line having to be transcribed, I also wrote down secretly their numbers, placing the slate, on which I had written, face downwards on the table. I then asked Mr. Keulemans to select a book haphazard from a bookcase in the room, containing upwards of 250 volumes. I requested him not to look at the title or in any way to seek to discover its contents, or to so place it, when selected, as to reveal its nature either to Mr. Eglinton or myself. My instructions were faithfully followed, and not until the end of the experiment did either of those visibly present know what the book was. To make assurance doubly sure, Mr. Keulemans chose a volume without any title lettered on



its back. As I desired to obtain four lines of psychography in as many different colours, I then requested Mr. Keulemans to decide this point and to write down secretly on a slate the names of the four colours chosen in the order in which he wished them used. This was done, and the slate upon which he had written these details placed face downwards on the table. Neither Mr. Eglinton nor myself touched this slate until the end of the *séance*. My next proceeding was to request Mr. Keulemans to decide whether the words I had chosen should be counted forwards or backwards, *i.e.*, from the beginning of the line or from the end. This he did, electing that they should be counted from the commencement.

It should be noted:—(1) That the title or character of the book chosen at random was unknown to *all* the persons visibly present. (2) Mr. Keulemans selected the four colours from a number lying on the table. (3) The *order* in which these were to be used was known only to Mr. Keulemans. (4) The numbers of the page and line chosen by chance from which I desired four particular words transcribed, and the numbers of the particular words, were known only to myself. (5) Mr. Eglinton knew nothing (*a*) of the title or character of the book; (*b*) of the order of the colours; (*c*) of the number of page; (*d*) of the number of the line, and (*e*) of the numbers of the particular words in that line. (6) Not any of these details were decided upon until immediately preceding the experiment.

These preliminaries completed, Mr. Eglinton took another slate, which was cleaned and examined by Mr. Keulemans and myself. It was destitute of writing or marks on either side. Upon the upper face of this slate were placed the four crayons. Upon these, and completely covering them from view, was put the book. So arranged, the slate was then held by Mr. Eglinton's right hand just under the edge of the table, his left being all the time firmly grasped in my left, and both Mr. Keulemans' hands being placed in my right hand. I closely scrutinised what took place. At no time was the slate resting on Mr. Eglinton's knees, nor was there any support for a slate on the under surface of the table.

I then inquired of Mr. Eglinton's invisible co-workers, presumably present, whether the experiment was satisfactory to themselves; also whether we were likely to be successful. Mr. Keulemans desired aloud that the reply should be written in white, that being one of the four colours then on the slate. We shortly heard the sound of writing, the completion of the message being indicated by the customary three raps with the pencil on the slate. On examination we found the book and the four crayons as we had placed them, but on the slate under the book, written with the white crayon that had been placed on it, were the words, "*We will try.*"

Another slate, with the book and crayons similarly arranged, was then held in the position previously described. After the lapse of some minutes writing was again heard, ultimately followed by three taps. On examination we found written on the top surface of the slate (and of course under the book) the words:—(1) "*Enforced*" in white, (2) "*This*" in blue, (3) "*Here*" in red, (4) "*Must*" in grey. The crayons in each case rested at the end of the word written in the respective colours. A facsimile of this writing has been executed by Mr. J. G. Keulemans. (See Chromos, plate IV.)

The slates upon which Mr. Keulemans and myself had written the directions were now, for the first time, turned up. The order of the colours chosen and written down by Mr. Keulemans was found to be—1st, white; 2nd, blue; 3rd, red; and 4th, grey. The number

of the page written down by myself was the *sixty-first*, and the particular words chosen for transcription from the *fourth* line were the *sixth*, the *fifth*, the *first*, and the *third* words respectively.

On turning to the fourth line of the sixty-first page of the book—which turned out to be Crookes' "Researches"—it ran as follows:—"Here I must bring this enforced vindication to a close," the *sixth*, the *fifth*, the *first*, and the *third* words of which are as written on the slate. The trial had been perfectly successful.

A further experiment was then tried. Mr. Keulemans took another slate, and drew upon it a parallelogram. This he divided into two equal squares. In one he drew an owl's head, and requested that the sketch should be copied in the blank square. A piece of grey crayon was put on the slate, which was held under the table in the usual way, and in a few seconds, on being withdrawn, this had been accomplished, with the addition of the words "*I am not an artist, as you see. Good-bye; God bless you.*" (See Chromos, plate IV.)

On submitting this account to my fellow investigator he writes to me:—"The above account of this most successful *séance* is perfectly correct. J. G. KEULEMANS, 34, Matilda Street, Barnsbury. P.S.—Although I had requested to have the colours used in a certain rotation, I had, at the moment Mr. Eglington held the slates, quite forgotten how they were to follow, except that *white* was to come first.—J. G. K."

Apropos of this truly remarkable *séance* it may be interesting and instructive to compare the various theories which may be broached to explain it and its congeners:—(1) A disembodied spirit was able to perceive, either in the minds or clairvoyantly upon the slates of the experimenters, the complex method by which the particular words were to be selected. It was able to perceive clairvoyantly the words themselves. And it was able to use a force, derived from the medium, whereby to write the words. (2) The complex method aforesaid was conveyed *in toto* to the unconscious mind of the medium by thought-transference. The unconscious mind of the medium, either from the stores of latent memory or by clairvoyance, was able to perceive the particular words required, and it was able by using the force of the medium to write the words. The difference between these two theories is so little, *as far as my argument is concerned*, that if one be true the other may also be true; although, taken in conjunction with other evidence, it seems to me that my first proposition is the only one which can legitimately be held as covering *all* the facts. (3) The complex method was conveyed by thought-transference to the conscious mind of the medium. He then with a sort of "divine dexterity" managed to overcome all obstacles, and to write himself the words required. In this case, however, my direct statements as to the way in which the slate with the book and pencils on it was held beneath the table, puts altogether out of court any theory of fraud on the part of the medium. (4) There was no thought-transference and no psychography. Mr. Keulemans and I have deliberately concocted this account after, perhaps, going through the mockery of an experiment. Therefore either 1 and 2, that is, psychography, must be true; or 4 must be true; and I and hosts of otherwise acknowledged sane and responsible witnesses must be charged with fraud. The sceptic cannot be permitted to go halting off with lame excuses to seek a *via media* in 3.

This evidence taken *en bloc* seems to me most conclusive, and fatal to any theory of an "unconscious secondary self," and, even if it stood alone, it would form an insuperable

barrier to the wild theories unsupported by sound evidence so widely prevalent in some quarters. There is happily, however, a large body of testimony to experiments, both with Mr. Eglinton and other mediums, going far to prove the identity of these communicating intelligences with our common humanity. And this view is supported in divers other ways. It is, however, no part of my present purpose to go at length into this question. I am content to record facts and to leave them to speak for themselves. Speak they do with no uncertain sound.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### ON MATERIALISATIONS AND APPARITIONS FORMED WITH THE MEDIUM IN FULL VIEW.



SCATTERED through the records I have already dealt with are many allusions to materialisation, or the presentation of portions or the whole of a human figure apart from the medium. I now proceed to give (1) a few additional testimonies for the phenomena of materialisation under ordinary conditions; and (2) evidence for the formation of these "apparitions" in the light in full view of the witnesses, and while the medium is in their midst.

Before doing so, however, I desire to describe briefly the Chromo plates appearing in this volume, as by so doing the reader will be in a better position to understand many of the references in the narratives I shall shortly have to quote.

Mr. Keulemans, one of the most painstaking investigators in Spiritualism that I know, has exercised his artistic gifts to depict a few of the phenomena incident to materialisation *séances*, and he has kindly reproduced some of these for this work.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE EIGHT CHROMO PLATES.

These representations of spiritual phenomena will be readily recognised by those who have personally investigated the subject. They are reproductions of original pencil sketches, water-colour, and crayon drawings, prepared immediately after the *séances*, and the originals are, in their turn, as nearly as possible, faithful representations of the phenomena; Mr. Keulemans, I may mention, being accustomed to sketching from life (moving life) and from memory. I may now briefly describe the series of plates, and in doing so shall present, in abstract, Mr. Keulemans' own already published description.

Fig. 1 (plate I) represents a light, or a substance radiating "light," a term used in contradistinction to the cloudy luminosities frequently witnessed near the medium's person, and which appear to be connected with, or to indicate the presence of, the *non*-materialised spirit. Fig. 1a is the same luminous substance seen from the side. These two figures should be compared with Figs. 2 and 2a. Fig. 2a is also a side view of Fig. 2, and represents the same light under different conditions. The cause of these enormous variations in power of luminosity is believed to be principally atmospheric. Fig. 2. This light varies from a bright greenish blue to a pale greenish yellow, and is at times transparent like crystal, but more often

opaque or semi-opaque, and a finger held behind it can be but faintly discerned. The power of luminosity is equal to that of a piece of white-hot iron of double that size, but is far more permanent, lasting from four or five seconds to half a minute. It can be revived by the "spirit" breathing over it; yet, when it is touched by a "spirit finger," there immediately appears, where the contact takes place, a reddish spot, of ill-defined outline, which gradually disappears by further "breathing," or even without this if the light be very powerful and permanent. The size and thickness of the luminous substance also vary; sometimes it is a little larger, but generally of the size as represented in Fig. 2. The most important and peculiar features of this strange luminous substance are:—Apparition—sudden. Duration—variable. Power of luminosity—variable, and depending on certain conditions. Extinction—gradual, but far quicker than that of white-heated iron cooling down. Temperature—blood warm. Weight and appearance, to the touch—like hard wax. Now let us return to Fig. 1. On the right side an extensive blood-coloured patch is visible. From the point of the thumb there are seen to proceed two thin lines with dotted ramifications joining the blood-like spot. These two lines are of a pale greyish red, exactly the colour of living brain matter. The red spot is of the colour of human blood, and is, besides, a substance in a liquid state; for, in most cases, when the light is carried, this liquid sinks deeper into the "disc," and can be seen to assume a globular form, like a big drop of oil in a glass of water. Mr. Keulemans records that he has also noticed slight, but rapid, vibrations in the ramifications referred to, as though the substance (bioplasm?) still retains its vitality. From these appearances, and from the fact that the light is seen to proceed directly from over the entranced medium's head, it seems that the substance composing the disc is living matter abstracted by occult means from the person. The lights represented in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2 are, besides, the extremes, and not actual types; for, in the majority of cases, neither a spotless nor a blood-and-brain-marked substance is exhibited. Fig. 1 is a specimen of inferiorly manufactured light. The conditions were that night unfavourable—December and foggy weather. Sometimes, when, for instance, the atmosphere is charged with electricity, or the temperature very low, or when the medium is fatigued, and the circle, perhaps, a little out of sorts, no large lights are produced, but the smaller ones, Figs. 3, 4, 5, and 6, are substituted. These being smaller in volume, require less substance for their formation, and hence will produce less exhaustion to either medium or circle. Figs. 3 and 4 are apparently of the same chemical composition as Figs. 1 and 2. Figs. 5 and 6 appear to be less solid. In the square light, Fig. 4, as in the dome-shaped Fig. 5, two adhering drops of matter are visible, indicating that probably these, if not all the solid luminous bodies, were likewise liquid in the first stages of their formation. In Fig. 4 the adjacent drop had become hardened; that in Fig. 5 was still liquid and shivering like a drop of quicksilver. Another peculiarity in both Figs. 5 and 6 is that they have a tendency of contracting into a more solid state, in which case the top becomes detached, and remains hovering will-o'-the-wisp-like above the dome. I now come to a different class of "lights" (Figs. 7, 8, and 9). Fig. 7 is a somewhat condensed *ignis fatuus*, and lights of this nature are apparently never carried by the "spirit-hand," but hover about space, expanding and contracting continuously during the short time of their duration. Like the first series, they are first noticed near the medium's head, and from thence travel away at distances varying from a few feet to several yards. These lights, viz., those belonging to the group of which Fig. 7 is a typical representation, may assume any shape or form.



Sometimes they are more elongated or take the form of a ring, a cross (+), or a crucifix. Their power of luminosity, *i.e.*, of radiancy, is, comparatively speaking, very inferior. Fig. 8 is another example of a floating luminosity, but presenting the strange peculiarity of going out with a detonation. The light represented in Fig. 9 is, in most cases, of a whitish blue; sometimes it is of a brighter blue, with a tendency to purple. Similar lights may be noticed suddenly in the vicinity of the medium's head, where they remain stationary for several seconds, leaving, when fading away, a short after-glow of a very intense, often fierce, red colour. Such an after-glow, by its reddish vapour, is not at all unlike some kinds of artificial light seen at a distance; and often it is bright enough to make surrounding objects faintly visible. But the strange characteristic of this after-glow is that, as a luminary, it is far more powerful than the original "spark" itself, for the latter never casts any light of sufficient strength to render even the nearest object visible. It is probable that in this brilliant spark (like Fig. 8) we observe in reality but the radiation of a very minute point of an exceedingly powerful sort of light, just as in the heavens we see but the radiation of the luminaries called stars, and not their real surface; for the refractory action of the telescope reduces them to mere points. And the fact that the after-glow is the more luminous of the two, may be attributed to the diffusion of its luminiferous properties in space. In addition to the spirit-lights figured, there remain several others to which I need not now refer.

The hand represented in Plate II. is, Mr. Keulemans believes, that of Mr. Eglinton's control "Joey," at any rate his voice was *inside* an ever accumulating mass of drapery developing itself over the medium's lap. The medium, resting in an easy-chair, could be seen by the yellowish light emanating from this drapery. Plate V. will be interesting in this connection. The room on that occasion was dark, the gas having, on request, been turned out, and soon after Mr. Eglinton had retired into his chair, clouds of light were noticed over the region of his chest, and large quantities of thin substance were seen to form and condense themselves into a semi-solid mass of something like drapery falling in soft pleats on his lap. After a short while, some dark object could be observed inside this heap of flimsy substance, turning and twisting it in a lateral and circular direction. Up to that time, no other light but the phosphorescent glow emanating from the medium's chest had been noticed (unless the cloudy mass of semi-solid drapery was, perhaps, to a certain extent, self-luminous). But now, a most brilliant light suddenly appeared in front of the medium, inside the whitish mass. At first the movements were too agitated to enable me to observe the nature of the light itself, but, after a few seconds, it became more tranquil, and it was then noticed that it was carried by a hand. It had the appearance of a rounded crystal, and was not unlike the semi-transparent waxy discs (Figs. 1 and 2, plate I), though more perfectly clear, and of a light bluish colour. The upper portion of Mr. Eglinton's body was then distinctly seen, and afterwards his right hand resting upon his knee. The hand holding the light was also a "right" one, which proved that it could not have been that of the medium.

Plate III. is generally illustrative of the subject, while a description of Plate IV. has already been given on page 160. Plates V., VI., and VII. are representations of various stages of materialisation, and a general description of which will be found in the preceding paragraph; while Plate VIII. gives a general idea of what takes place when the form is evolved from the medium's side, several instances of which will be found on pages 171—178.

Of the phenomena presented under ordinary conditions, Mr. Dawson Rogers relates one instance. "On the evening of the 23rd May, 1884, I had the opportunity of witnessing various phases of Mr. Eglinton's mediumship at a private *séance* held at my own residence. The company consisted—besides Mr. Eglinton—of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Pearce, my wife, my son and two daughters, and myself. As soon as the light was extinguished, a manifestation was given which was of so unusual and so marvellous a character that—though it was produced under the most satisfactory conditions—I hesitate to record it. This, however, was followed by one which I think it well to mention, namely, the successful materialisation of two forms. No cabinet was used. Mr. Eglinton was sitting in the circle, between my wife and myself, when an illuminated head and bust appeared above the table. I saw it distinctly several times. The face was, *beyond a doubt*, that of my son Frank, who departed this life twelve months ago. He put his arms round my neck twice. He also put his arms round the neck of his mother and kissed her. The head and face of Mrs. Pearce's mother also appeared, so well lighted, and showing every feature so distinctly, that no one who knew and remembered her could have failed to recognise her."

The following is an instructive incident related by Mr. J. G. Keulemans, the significance of which will be understood by the reader later on. It is a case in which the form was sufficiently substantial to move objects, but also "thin" enough to pass through human bodies sitting round the table. It throws considerable light on some of these mysterious manifestations:—"In February, 1884, I was present at a *séance* with Mr. Eglinton. We had arranged with him that he should remain seated with the circle, and that a subdued light should remain throughout the *séance*. This light was a mere glimmer, but there was enough of it to see the crystal ornaments of the gaselier. I could also distinguish white from black in the clothing of those present. After some moments' silence and expectation, a cloudy mass was noticed over the table, which contracted and rose to the height of the gaselier. It was very difficult to detect any form or outline. Though it seemed to gradually grow denser and more symmetrical in its shape, it wanted the peculiar 'rounding;' it did not look like a human form, but appeared flat, like a kite. It remained moving upwards and downwards, and each time the upper portion approached the light its substance seemed to have increased (after one or two slow movements in a sideward direction, when the light fell more clearly on it, there was drapery visible). After some seconds, it rose again, this time right underneath the gaselier, which it touched, causing the crystal pendants to swing and tinkle. We all saw the form, saw the crystals swing, and we all heard the tinkling noise. Yet, this strange, white mass, moving over the table, did not present any resemblance to a human form—it was too flat. When the upper portion of it touched the gaselier, it made a sudden downward movement, as though to avoid collision, which induces me to believe in its reality as an intelligent being. Drapery was now plainly visible, although it looked far more ethereal than I found it on other previous occasions with other forms. If it was not material drapery, it certainly represented something suggesting drapery, for there were broad folds and pleats, especially over the head or rather over that part where the head should have been. Whilst I fixedly gazed at this strange being, turning my head a little to the right to follow its movements, it seemed to be annoyed at my searching looks, and it suddenly came down, as I fancied, straight upon my head. So it did; but I could not feel any sensible contact beyond a

very strangely disagreeable chill, which shook both my arms convulsively. Then the strange being was seen behind me. I did not recover my senses quick enough to witness its downward flight; but the nearest sitter to my left followed it with the eye, and, as I saw his head turned towards the floor behind us, looked also in that direction and just caught the last sight of the spectre. After it had vanished a glow of phosphorescent light remained visible on the carpet. The gentleman sitting next to me also felt a chill when the 'form' came down. It must have passed *through* him as well; there was no room to pass *between* us, as we were closely packed together round the table. If this were a shadowy form, how could it produce the derangement in the crystal pendants? Yet it was visible to all of us (nine persons), and visible by the *gaslight*, not self-luminous. If visibility implies substance, I ought to have felt something more solid than a disagreeable sensation when it came in contact with my own person."

These shadowy and shapeless formations were probably the incipient stages of materialisation, of which, as regards its methods, we know so little. Happily the time seems near at hand when regular and systematic investigation by experts will be taken in hand. In no other way will the key to this mystery of all mysteries be obtained.

Mrs. Burchett, the writer of the following account, is a lady well known to me, and whose report can be absolutely relied upon. After describing some phenomena of an elementary character, she says:—"There was a very faint light, sufficient, however, to distinguish each other's features. After two forms had made their appearance a male figure came out, and advanced straight to me; he was robed in white, but more closely than the others, and had his head uncovered except with his own dark hair. I recognised my beloved friend 'V.' with what feelings I will not attempt to describe. He came close to me, and I held out my hand to him, which he clasped, his hand feeling warm and natural as in life; he touched me on the cheek with his lips, whispering something I could not make out. He then retired behind the curtain, but came out again almost immediately and took up from the table my fan (his last present to me). I asked him if he recognised it. He said 'Yes,' and carried it away with him behind the curtains; soon, however, he re-appeared bringing the fan with him, which he pressed to his lips and then gave me back, and as I thought finally retired. Two other female figures appeared, and went to different persons of the company. One bore a bright light upon her dress, which disappeared as she approached the circle, and other lights were frequently seen during the *seance*. 'Joey' then directed that the gas should be turned up a little, and when this was done V. came out again, but was only able to come a little way, though he seemed most anxious I should see his face distinctly. 'Joey' then told me that I might leave the circle and go within two feet of the curtain. Immediately I had done this, V. joined me, and we stood close together; he took my hand and tried to speak to me, but I could not distinctly hear what he said except the word 'letter' (referring doubtless to one I had recently written to him). He then raised his hands as though blessing me, after which he retreated through the curtains. When I regained my seat a lady remarked that he had a foreign look, upon which I told her he was an Austrian; and after the *seance*, was concluded I showed her and the others a photograph of him which I carried in my pocket, and they all recognised the likeness."

Mr. J. H. Mitchener, F.A.S., of Burgos House, Croydon, contributes a narrative of a

materialisation *séance*, which took place on Monday, November 10th, 1884, and which I now quote: "The circle consisted of six persons only, viz., myself and wife, Mr. and Mrs. Amos, and Mr. and Mrs. William Theobald. A preliminary examination was made of the inner room by the gentlemen present. The only door leading from this room was locked, the key removed, and, as an additional test, a piece of adhesive paper was affixed to door and lintel-post, rendering entrance from without impossible without disturbing and parting the paper. The circle was arranged in the usual way. Mr. Eglinton passed quickly under control, and seemed unusually agitated, marching up and down the inner room in a restless, disturbed manner, and coming out twice to gather strength before finally retiring. To the experienced sitter this uneasiness of the medium afforded every indication of a good *séance*. Mr. Eglinton had scarcely reached the sofa, on which we heard him throw himself, before our first visitor lifted the curtain. He was of average height, slenderly built, and apparently about thirty years of age. As, with increasing power, he was able to approach the circle, I instantly recognised, beyond all question, the form and features of the spirit, and involuntarily exclaimed aloud, 'Why, you are H—d C—r!' In reply, the form bowed more than once, seemed delighted at being recognised, and came forward, peering closely into my face. This spirit is the brother of a lady who was present with me at a previous *séance*. Hardly had the form left before the curtain was again raised, discovering to us a lovely female figure, clad in the accustomed drapery, but in this instance fitting closely to the person. The power not permitting her to come forward sufficiently near to enable us to determine the features, absolute identification was not possible. But the outline of the figure so closely resembled, and so forcibly reminded me of my deceased sister-in-law, that I inquired, 'Are you L—e?' She bowed in acquiescence. I asked, 'Could you bring the little child?' She again bowed and retired, but reappeared immediately, holding by the hand a little girl of between five and six years of age. As the two forms, clad in snow-white garments, stood side by side in the dim gaslight, they presented a picture suggestive of spotless purity, and a charm of outline and grace of attitude that defy description. The legs and feet of the child were bare, and, as it kissed one of its tiny hands to the circle, clinging lovingly with the other to the beautiful figure by its side, it elicited from all exclamations of delight. It was a group of beauty, whose image will long remain in the memory of those privileged to witness it. Our fourth visitor was unknown to the circle. It was a tall, dignified male figure, with handsome features, and was perhaps forty years of age. After intimating that he came to Mr. W. Theobald, he went straight up to that gentleman, grasping him by the hand, and looking closely into his face. I asked the spirit to shake hands with me. He complied with a hearty grip, and finally, with deliberation, lifted my hand to his lips and kissed it. A peculiarity of this *séance* was the rapidity with which, hitherto, the materialisations had followed each other. Not more than fifteen seconds elapsed between the departure of the above and the appearance of 'Daisy.' Her dark, almost black face formed a striking contrast to the dazzling whiteness of her drapery. Although she spoke several times, we were unable to understand a word. Whether this arose from lack of power, or from addressing us in an unknown tongue, I was unable to determine. Number six was a woman of sixty years of age. She seemed to have eyes for no one in the circle but Mr. Amos, to whom she repeatedly kissed her hand. Conjecturing who she might be, Mr. Amos inquired—'Are you my mother?' In response she bowed several times with marks







of gratification, and made repeated but ineffectual efforts to reach Mr. Amos. She seemed, when walking, to be encumbered by the drapery, which she held extended in front of her person. Up to this time, with the exception of 'Daisy,' not one of the materialised forms had been able to speak. A male figure next stepped before the curtain, and, advancing two strides only, paused, and gazed earnestly round the circle. He held up to his mouth a portion of his drapery, partly concealing thereby the lower part of his face. We inquired of each other in turn, but he was declared by all to be an entire stranger. I asked, 'Have you come to any one in particular?' To our surprise the form replied in an audible voice, 'No,' and then carried on a conversation of some minutes' duration. A powerfully built, broad-shouldered, male figure, with a dark Oriental face and handsome features, but quite unknown to the circle, now walked forward. After traversing the room he grasped the back of one of the chairs, and raising it steadily with one arm, flourished it several times over his head, and brought it noiselessly to the ground. At my request he shook hands, with a vigour for which I was not prepared, completely pulling me forward from my seat. Before leaving, he also shook hands with Mrs. W. Theobald. During the time this powerful spirit was in the circle the curtain was partially lifted, revealing a tall, white form in the inner room. On my remarking it, the well-known voice of 'Joey' responded from behind the curtain, 'It is I.' Some little time elapsed after the departure of our muscular friend before the appearance of our ninth and last visitor. He gazed earnestly at the circle, but did not attempt to come forward. This *séance* was noteworthy in three particulars. (1) The appearance of two forms in the circle at the same time. (2) The manifestation of physical strength in the action with the chair. (3) The incident of a materialised form speaking and holding a conversation with the circle. An examination of the inner room, at the close of the *séance*, revealed that nothing had been disturbed. The adhesive slip of paper was intact, and by no possibility could anyone have gained access to the apartment."

A good case of materialisation, in which the identity of the manifesting spirit is clearly revealed, is related by Colonel Lean: "In the year 1878, I attended some remarkable *séances*, which I think are worth recording. Mr. Eglinton, whom at that time I had not the pleasure of knowing personally, was then giving a series of *séances*, at the rooms of the British National Association of Spiritualists, in Great Russell Street. My wife and I arranged with the secretary to be present at three of them. On the first evening we found several well-known persons assembled in the large *séance* room of that association. There was a cabinet with a black curtain prepared for the medium, which we examined. The door was then locked, and we sat in a half-circle facing the cabinet, with the gas burning in a gaselier pendant from the ceiling, giving sufficient light for us to see distinctly all that happened, thus precluding the possibility of any accomplice entering the room (Fig. 31). Various phenomena occurred, and then Mr. Eglinton, dressed in evening clothes, came out of the cabinet in a state of semi-trance, and walking up to my wife and self, appeared to be absorbing our magnetism by waving his hands over us. He then returned to the cabinet, and we heard him drop heavily into his chair. At the same moment the curtain was drawn on one side, and the materialised form of a woman, robed in white, stood before us. In this figure we both *instantly recognised* a sister of my wife, called Emily, who had been dead about six years. As Emily had been of a sallow complexion,

with black hair and eyes, recognition was easy. We both expressed our belief in the appearance of our relative, but the other members of the circle thought it was some one else. I may here state that our sister Emily had been in the habit of communicating with us by means of a table. On our return home, when my wife had retired to bed, I heard her calling me. On answering her summons, she told me that the spirits were tapping on the wardrobe, and evidently wanted us to sit at the table. As my wife is a wonderful medium for this form of correspondence, we sat at our small table, which instantly began to rock, and the communication that came was to this effect: 'It is I, your sister Emily, and it was I who came to you this evening.' I said, 'Will you come again at the next *séance*?' She answered, 'I will if I can.' I then asked her to give me a sign, when she did come, that it was really herself. She said, 'I will hold up my hand. God bless you; good night;' when the table ceased moving. On the occasion of the next sitting, under similar conditions, the same spirit materialised, but this time gave the

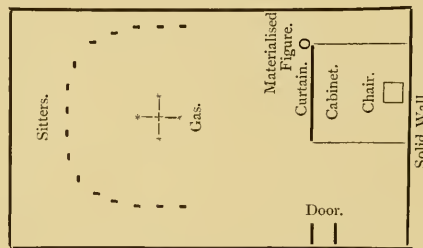


FIG. 31.—Plan of *Séance*-room.

signal by holding up her hand. My wife and I both saw it, and to make still more certain that it was no fancy of ours, I asked the circle if they could see what the figure was doing. One or two immediately hastened to inform me that it was holding up its hand. Of course we had not told any of the other sitters then of the *séance* in our bedroom. I always have thought this to be one of the most satisfactory evidences of the truth of Spiritualism and of the identity of the manifesting spirit. It seems to be like proving a proposition in Euclid. The *séances* are so connected, the same spirit coming to all three. The sign given in the privacy of our chamber, verified in the large *séance*, seen by ourselves, and confirmed by the remainder of the circle who were ignorant that it had been given there, seems to leave no opening for imposition. So incredulous is the human mind as to the possibility of the phenomena of Spiritualism being genuine, that it has always been my effort to test the truth of what I see and hear, so as to be able to silence the sceptic with facts, and to prove my argument that the phenomena called spiritual are unquestionably true, and not the result of legerdemain. Beyond that, I must leave others to form their own opinion of what it is. There is a wide field for discussion, and the more it is examined by inquiring minds, the sooner shall we arrive at more satisfactory knowledge. Since the *séance* which I have just recorded, I have had the pleasure of enrolling Mr. Eglinton amongst my best friends, and have had the privilege of witnessing far

greater wonders than those I have just described—in every instance but the one now recorded in his non-professional capacity. I consider that his mediumistic powers are marvellous; as I have seen them displayed in my house, in those of my friends, and in his own, as well as in public on the occasion of his giving a lecture in St. James's Hall. I have sat with him when the spirit was formed from his side under the gaslight in our midst, and I have sat with him more than once when his desire to please his friends by the display of his powers was great, and yet nothing has appeared—to me a strong proof of the genuineness both of the medium and the manifestations."

"Lily," a *nom-de-plume* known to many Spiritualists, advances our knowledge of these matters a step, by a narrative which forms a fitting link between cases such as those I have been treating, and instances where the actual process of formation has been witnessed: "There is a phase of Mr. Eglinton's marvellous mediumship that I propose, with your permission, to draw attention to, as I believe it to be unique. I refer to the full-form materialisations that take place *in the light* in his presence, when he is not only in the same room with the sitters, but *close to them—absolutely one with them*. I have lately been twice a witness to this extraordinary display of spirit power, each time in the presence of only one other person, a lady friend of my own. On the first occasion, Mr. Eglinton had to leave the room to search for some small article he had mislaid, and for which we also searched diligently, in his absence, in both rooms. The curtains that formed, when drawn, the only division between the rooms, were undrawn, and remained so after Mr. Eglinton's return into the front room (the door of the back room or cabinet being locked inside), until he passed, while talking to us, into a trance state, when he went to the curtains, and drew them automatically; then made passes over us, then over himself, and finally over the curtains; then knelt by my side, uttering a beautiful prayer, which he had not concluded when a grand male form, fully and perfectly materialised from head to foot, threw back the curtains, and came forward slowly and majestically, remaining with us some minutes, and finally retired. In the second sitting, about a week later, the materialisation of the same beautiful spirit was equally perfect; Mr. Eglinton on this occasion kneeling in front of us instead of side by side, when the spirit came forth and placed his hand in blessing on Mr. Eglinton's head; and on retiring, Mr. Eglinton followed him into the cabinet. In an instant the spirit again came forth, leading by the hand a beautiful female spirit, as fully and perfectly materialised as himself."

From this to Florence Marryat's experience, now narrated, is but a step:—"Mr. Eglinton is an intimate friend of mine, and during the course of a friendship of several years' standing, I have witnessed many wonderful manifestations of his extraordinary power, but nothing so marvellous as I have to relate now. The first of these two *séances* took place on Friday evening, September 5th, on which occasion the circle consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Stuart, Colonel and Mrs. Wynch, Mr. and Mrs. R. H. Russell-Davies, Colonel and Mrs. Lean, Mr. A., and Mr. Morgan. We sat in the front drawing-room in a semicircle, with one gas-burner alight; and the doors having been properly secured against any intrusion, Mr. Eglinton took up a position in the back drawing-room, which is divided by a pair of curtains from the front. He had not left us a couple of minutes, before a man stepped out from the *portière* and walked into the midst of us. He was a large, stout man, and very dark, and most of the sitters noticed



that he had a very peculiar ſmell. No one recognised him, and after appearing two or three times he left, and was immediately ſucceeded by a woman, not unlike him in appearance, who was alſo unrecogniſed by any preſent. Theſe two ſpirits, before retiring, came out *together*, and ſeemed to examine the circle curiouſly. After a ſhort interval, a much ſmaller and ſlighter man came forward, and darted in a peculiar ſlouching attitude round the circle. He had alſo a dark face, but with very refined and handsome features. Colonel Lean asked him to ſhake hands. He replied by ſeizing his hand, and nearly pulling him off his ſeat on to the floor. He then darted acroſs the room, and gave a ſimilar proof of his muſcular power to Mrs. Stuart. But when I asked him to notice me, he took my hand and ſqueezed it firmly between both his own. He had ſcarcely diſappeared before 'Abd-ū-lah,' with his one arm and his ſix feet of height, ſtood before us, and ſalaamed all round. Then came my daughter 'Florénce,' a girl of nineteen years old, very ſlight and feminine in appearance. She advanced once or twice, near enough to touch me with her hand, but, ſeeming fearful to venture farther, retreated again. But the next moment ſhe re-appeared, dragging Mr. Eglinton after her. He was in deep trance, breathing with difficulty, but 'Florence' held him by the hand and brought him up to my ſide, when he detached my hands from thoſe of the ſitters either ſide of me, and making me ſtand up, took my daughter and placed her in my arms. As I ſtood enfolded in her embrace, ſhe whiſpered a few words to me relative to a ſubject *known to no one but myſelf*, and ſhe placed both my hands upon her heart and boſom that I might feel ſhe was a living woman. Colonel Lean asked her to go to him. She tried and failed, but after having retired for a minute behind the curtain to gather ſtrength, ſhe appeared again *with Mr. Eglinton*, and, calling Colonel Lean to her, embraced him. This is one of the moſt perfect inſtances on record of a medium being diſtinctly ſeen by ten wiſneſſes *with the ſpirit*, under gas. The next materialiſation that appeared was for Mr. Stuart. This gentleman was newly arrived from Australia, and was almoſt a ſtranger to Mr. Eglinton. As ſoon as he ſaw the lady who called him to the *portière* to ſpeak to her, his exclamation of genuine ſurpriſe and conviction mingled with awe was unmiſtakable. He ſaid, 'My God! Pauline.' The ſpirit then whiſpered to him, and putting her arms round his neck, affectionately kiſſed him. He turned after a while and addreſſed his wife, telling her that the ſpirit bore the very features and expreſſion of their niece, Pauline, whom they had loſt the year before. Mrs. Stuart asked if ſhe alſo might not advance and look at the ſpirit, but it was intimated ſhe muſt wait for the next time, as all the power had been exhausted in producing an exact materialiſation, ſo perfectly recogniſable on the firſt occaſion of its return to earth. Mr. Stuart expreſſed himſelf as entirely ſatisfied of the identity of his niece, and ſaid ſhe looked juſt as ſhe did before ſhe was taken ill. I muſt not omit to ſay that the medium alſo appeared with this figure, making the third time of ſhowing himſelf in one evening with the ſpirit-form. The next appearance was of a little child, apparently about two years old, who ſupported itſelf in walking by clinging to a chair. The attention of the circle was diverted from this ſight by ſeeing 'Abd-ū-lah,' ſix feet high, dart from behind the curtains at the ſame moment, and ſtand with the child in our view, whiſt Mr. Eglinton appeared between the two forms, making a *tria juncta in uno*.

"The ſecond *séance* took place on Saturday, September 27th, and under very ſimilar



circumstances. The circle this time consisted of Mrs. Wheeler, Mr. Woods, Miss S., Mrs. P., Mrs. Victor Stevens, Mr. Frank Marryat, Colonel and Mrs. Lean, Mr. Morgan, and the Hon. Gordon Sandeman, and we sat as before, and under the same conditions. Mr. Eglinton appeared on this evening to find some difficulty in passing under control, and he came out into the circle so many times to gather magnetism that I guessed we were about to enjoy some unusually good manifestations. The voice of 'Joey,' too, requested us, under *no circumstances whatever*, to loose hands, as they were going to try something very difficult, and we might defeat their efforts at the very moment of victory. When the medium was at last under control in the back drawing-room, a tall man with an uncovered head of dark hair, and a large beard, appeared and walked up to Mrs. P. She was very much affected by the recognition of the spirit, who was her brother. She called him by name, and kissed him, and informed us that his face was just as it had been in earth-life. Her emotion was so great we were afraid she would faint, but after a while she became calm again. Then a lady came forward, the mother of Miss S., and gave her some advice relative to her private affairs. We next heard the notes of a clarionet. I was aware that Mr. Woods (a stranger, until a few days before this *séance*, to Mr. Eglinton) had lost a brother under peculiar circumstances (all of which had been detailed satisfactorily to him by slate-writing through Mr. Eglinton), and that he had been promised and expected to see his brother this evening. It was the first time, however, that I had ever seen Mr. Woods, and yet, so remarkable was the likeness between the brothers, that when a spirit now appeared with a clarionet in its hand, I could not help knowing at once who it was, and saying so to my next neighbour. The spirit advanced to Mr. Woods and grasped his hand. As they appeared thus, with their profiles turned to one another, they were *strikingly* similar in feature and expression. This spirit's head was also bare—an uncommon occurrence—and covered with thick hair. He appeared twice, and said distinctly, 'God bless you,' more than once. Mrs. Wheeler, who had only seen the spirit once in earth-life, was startled by the tone of the voice, which she recognised at once, and Mr. Morgan, who intimately knew the deceased gentleman in Australia, confirmed the recognition by saying it was a perfect likeness of him. My daughter, 'Florence,' then came out, but only a little way, not far enough to reach us. I was disappointed at her want of boldness, which 'Joey' explained by saying she was weak to-night as they wanted to reserve the strength for a manifestation by-and-by. He then said, 'Here comes a friend for Mr. Sandeman,' and a man wearing the Masonic badge and scarf appeared, and made the tour of the circle, giving the Masonic grip to those of the craft present. He was a very good-looking young man, and said he had met some of those present in Australia, but no one seemed to recognise him. He was succeeded by a male spirit who had materialised on a previous occasion. As he appeared through the curtains, a female form, bearing a very bright light, appeared with him as if to show the way. She did not come beyond the *portière*, but everyone in the room saw her distinctly. On account of the dress and complexion of the male figure, we had wrongly called him 'the Bedouin,' but Mr. Frank Marryat now discovered he was an East Indian, by addressing him in Hindustani, to which he responded in a low voice. Someone asked him to take a seat amongst us, upon which he seized a heavy chair in one hand and flourished it above his head. He then squatted, native fashion, on the ground, and left us, as before, by vanishing

suddenly. 'Joey' now announced that they were going to try the experiment of *showing us how the spirits were evolved from the medium*. This was the crowning triumph of the evening. Mr. Eglinton appeared in the very midst of us, in trance. He came into the room backwards, and as if fighting with the power, his eyes shut, and his breath drawn with labour. As he stood thus, holding a chair for support, a white, flimsy mass was seen on his hip, his legs became illuminated with lights travelling up and down them, and a white cloud settled about his head and shoulders. The mass increased, and he breathed harder and harder, whilst invisible hands pulled the flimsy drapery out of his hips in long strips that amalgamated as soon as formed, and the cloud grew thicker. All at once, in a moment, as we eagerly watched the process, the spirit, full formed, stood beside him. No one saw it had been raised in the midst of us, but it was there. Mr. Eglinton then retired with his new-born spirit behind the *portière*, but in another moment he came, or he was thrown out, amongst us again, and fell upon the floor. The curtains opened, and the figure of 'Ernest' appeared, and raised the medium by the hand. As he saw him, Mr. Eglinton fell on his knees, and 'Ernest' drew him out of sight; this ended a most marvellous *séance*. I have written down the mere facts as they occurred, forbearing to comment on what has filled me (after fifteen years' active experience of Spiritualism in all its phases) with the supremest wonder. I cannot close this paper without adding my testimony to that of so many others, that William Eglinton is, without any exception, the most wonderful medium of his time, either for slate-writing or materialisation, and those who have not witnessed what takes place through his mediumship, have a great deal still to learn."

Most of those who were present at either or both of these *séances* have assured me that this description is perfectly accurate, that they occurred under strict test conditions, the doors being locked and the keys in the possession of one of the company, and the rooms having been thoroughly searched beforehand. I append the full names and addresses, and it must be understood that where initials are given in the narrative, family reasons exist for the names not appearing in full. Those signing the report are:—Colonel Francis Lean, 20, Regent's Park Terrace, N.W.; Mr. R. H. Russell-Davies, 12, Westbourne Park Road, N.W.; Mr. R. Stuart, 24, Ebury Street, S.W.; Colonel Alexander Wynch, United Service Club, Pall Mall, S.W.; Mrs. Eva Florence Stevens, 20, Mimosa Street, Fulham, S.W.; Mr. Frank Marryat, 20, Regent's Park Terrace, N.W.; Mr. W. P. Morgan, 1, Queen Victoria Street, E.C.

As all additional testimony to this remarkable phenomenon is valuable, I now quote in order of date the following, from the pen of Mr. J. H. Mitchener, who has already been referred to in this chapter. He says:—"Mr. Eglinton kindly consented to favour me with a *séance* for Tuesday, October 28th, 1884, and, as some of the manifestations were remarkable and unusual, you may be interested in a brief relation of the leading phenomena. The circle was a large one, comprising eleven persons—four ladies and seven gentlemen. It was quite harmonious, and the physical and meteorological conditions were all that could be desired. Chairs were arranged in the usual semicircle, and one gas-burner was kept alight during the continuance of the *séance*. I occupied a chair at one extremity of the circle, and within three feet of the curtain. During the evening we were favoured with seven materialisations. Most of them, if not all, were of the highest order; which, considering the number of sitters, was certainly remarkable. The whole of the forms this evening were, in my opinion, true material-

isations. Two of the figures made great efforts to obtain recognition, but neither of the sitters, to whom the materialised spirits pointedly addressed themselves, was able to recognise them with absolute certainty. The following singular phenomenon then occurred. An object, dark as pitch, and resembling a black cloud more than anything else, came from under the curtain and remained in front of where I was sitting. It was not more than eighteen inches from the ground, and swayed backwards and forwards. In process of time it assumed a rotary motion, and two patches of white vapour became visible. As the process continued, I could dimly trace the outline of a form, apparently sitting on the ground at my feet, with its arms moving continuously backwards and forwards with a circular motion. At this stage, the arms only of the figure were clearly developed. Gradually the white material increased, and a face and bust arose, the arms still keeping up the same motion as if weaving. By degrees, and rapidly at the close, a tall male figure, dressed in the usual beautiful white material, was perfectly evolved, the darkness from which it had first emerged having disappeared as if absorbed, or dispersed like mist before the sun. Thus eleven persons had an opportunity of witnessing, in front of the curtain and within the circle, the whole process of a form materialisation. As a matter of evidence, it is worth noting, too, that during the *séance*, at the time that one of the appearances was in the circle, the medium in the dark room was taken with a fit of coughing, which was heard by all and commented upon. The most remarkable phenomenon occurred at the close of the *séance*. A noise as if two persons were wrestling was heard in the cabinet. It increased as if a struggle were taking place. At this juncture, and when we were wondering what it meant, the curtains were parted, and the medium was literally thrown forward into the circle. Behind him, and holding back both curtains with his outstretched arms, stood the materialised form of 'Ernest.' As the medium staggered backwards in a state of insensibility, he would have fallen to the ground had he not been caught in the arms of the materialised spirit. Momentary as it was, it sufficed for the whole of the eleven spectators to witness the presence of the spirit and the medium in the circle at one and the same time. Immediately the curtain closed on Eglinton, I was directed by 'Joey' to enter the dark room and take the medium a glass of water. Having it ready at my side I lost not a moment in complying. Feeling my way to the sofa I found the medium reclining, and still in a state of trance. Raising his head I gave him the water, and while doing so, 'Joey' spoke to me in a direct voice and requested me on returning to increase the light. The medium after the *séance* was painfully exhausted."

It is now my pleasure to relate an unmistakable instance of this special phenomenon in which there cannot be the least shadow of a doubt as to its reality. Such invaluable facts deserve to be placed on permanent record in the most complete manner. This *séance* is one of the crowning glories of Mr. Eglinton's mediumship, and I, for one, feel I can never repay the obligation he has thus personally imposed upon me.

Early in 1885, I was placed in a position to commence experimental research in connection with what is commonly known as "form manifestation," or "materialisation." I have long and persistently urged upon Spiritualists the necessity of regular and systematic investigation of these matters. Hitherto the evidence, with one or two notable exceptions, has been chiefly spasmodic in character; and important clues not having been followed up as they were presented, a perplexing incompleteness characterises much of the evidence brought forward in support of the most delicate, as well as the most wonderful, of the many phases of psychical

phenomena. I am not unmindful of the close scrutiny and the rigid scientific methods brought to bear upon the subject in the past by such observers as Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace, Professor Crookes, and others; but, since their inquiries, ten or a dozen years have elapsed, and, with the course of time, vast strides have been made not only in the character of the phenomena, but also in regard to the methods adopted in their investigation. Therefore, I believe myself to be well within the bounds of truth when I say that my own narrative, and those of my fellow-witnesses, contain valuable additions to our present stock of knowledge. This is more especially the case when we remember that, since the experiments conducted by Mr. Wallace and Professor Crookes, no regular course of study has been engaged in—even by Spiritualists, who of all people should have been the first to recognise its absolute necessity and paramount importance. It is needless to discuss the cause of this; many reasons are obvious. It is sufficient now to emphasise the fact that it is only by such regular and searching inquiry that we can hope to establish spiritual phenomena upon a firm and unassailable basis.

Practical experiment has fully justified this position. Short as this series of *séances* was, there has been obtained, in my view, an incomparable result. I by no means wish to infer that we have exhausted the question. Personally, I am inclined to the belief that our experience, remarkable though it is, has been confined to the mere threshold of the inquiry.

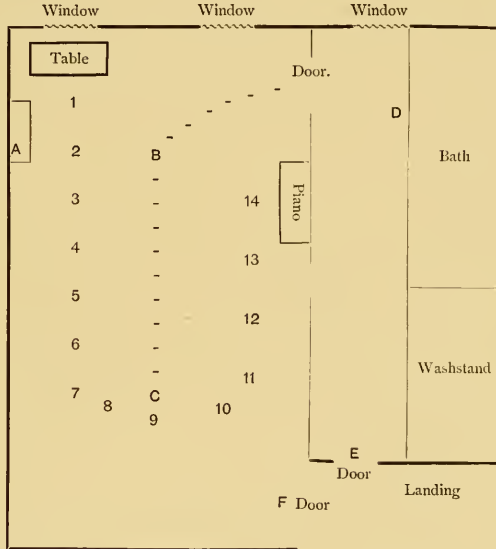
A series of twelve *séances* was arranged for with Mr. Eglinton. Of these, nine were given to circles varying in number from nine to fourteen persons, exclusive of the psychic. We have taken into account, as a working hypothesis, the existence of an intelligent force external to the sensitive. Such a position has in no way militated against the full and free use of reason and common-sense; indeed, my experience has been that, by this method, I have been enabled to establish a bond of sympathy between myself and the medium which has proved of inestimable value in the conduct of the inquiry, and I know my experience has by no means been singular. In this way it has been rendered possible for us to suggest crucial experiments, discuss perplexing features and incidents—in fact, to speak fully and freely what has been in our minds, and to obtain sanction for the employment of such measures as seemed to be desirable in order to settle moot points.

I entered upon the inquiry in a frame of mind which I can only describe as one of suspension of judgment on some particulars, and a reasonable scepticism with regard to others, while on several points I was in a state of utter disbelief. Now, although I have by no means arrived at full conviction on *all* the questions at issue, in my mind the uniform and unvarying willingness of Mr. Eglinton to place every facility for investigation before me, and the patient, earnest co-operation of the "sentient forces" working through him, have removed many doubts, shaken my scepticism, and in some respects given me an absolute conviction.

The ninth *séance* of the series took place on Tuesday evening, February 17th. Upon reference to Fig. 32, it will be seen that the events described do not depend upon illusive tests. The plan of the *séance*-room, the constitution of the circle, and the position of observers, are there given.

The room is an ordinarily furnished sitting-room with doors leading on to a landing and into a bath-room, the latter also opening on the landing. The doors E and F (Fig. 32), I locked, securing that at E, leading from the bath-room to the passage, by pasting postage-stamp salvage from the jamb, across the marble shield covering the key-hole, to the panel of the door.

To be doubly sure that while the circle was being held there was no possibility of communication by means of the bath-room door for a confederate without my knowledge, I made private marks on the door and door-post to indicate the exact position of the stamp-salvage, so that, assuming for a moment that it was removed to allow the ingress of a confederate, it is hardly possible it could have been replaced so exactly as to deceive subsequent scrutiny. I also examined the bath inside. The windows—the rooms are on the second floor—look out on to the street; they



- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. MRS. EVERITT, Lilian Villa, Holder's Hill, Hendon, N.W.    | 8. MR. D. YOUNGER, 23, Ledbury Road, W.                  |
| 2. MR. E. DAWSON ROGERS, Rose Villa, Church End, Finchley, N. | 9. MRS. FARMER, Stoughton.                               |
| 3. MISS HELEN WITTHALL, 5, Angell Park Gardens, Brixton, S.W. | 10. MRS. X.  |
| 4. MR. EVERITT, Lilian Villa, Holder's Hill, Hendon.          | 11. MR. JOHN S. FARMER, 16, Craven Street, Strand, W.C.  |
| 5. MR. H. WITTHALL, 5, Angell Park Gardens, Brixton, S.W.     | 12. MR. R. PEARCE, Lanarth House, Holder's Hill, Hendon. |
| 6. MR. F. M. TAYLOR, 6, Finsbury Chambers, E.C.               | 13. MRS. PEARCE, Lanarth House, Holder's Hill, Hendon.   |
| 7. MRS. FEARN, 23, Ledbury Road, W.                           | 14. MRS. ROGERS, Rose Villa, Church End, Finchley, N.    |

FIG. 32.—Plan of *Seance*-room.

are, therefore, duly accounted for. Our experience on this particular evening, however, in no wise depended on these precautions.

The circle consisted of fourteen persons, exclusive of Mr. Eglinton. Their names and addresses are given in Fig. 32, and the figure opposite each name corresponds with the actual position occupied in the circle, as indicated by a corresponding numeral on the diagram.

Across the door between *seance*-room and bath-room were hung two heavy curtains, and Mr. Eglinton, when using the bath-room as a cabinet, sat at, or near the spot marked D.



I have always found it difficult to describe the amount of light available for observation. Comparisons are unsatisfactory, and yet I know of no means by which the amount of light can be accurately gauged. On the present occasion I can only say that, though the gas-burner at **A** was turned low, compared with the light actually used for lighting purposes in a small room, yet it was sufficient to enable me clearly to observe everybody and everything in the apartment. When the form that appeared walked to the spot at which I was sitting (No. 11), and stood before me, I was able distinctly to note every feature; indeed, were I to see the same face amidst the crowds of Regent Street, I should positively be able to identify it. Moreover, the night was a "light" one, and although a "long" blind was drawn down over the window at the back of No. 11, yet a considerable amount of light came from that source. After the *séance*, I tested this by turning out the gas, and by this light alone I was able to distinguish the subjects of pictures on the walls, being, however, unable to read the titles of some of the engravings. It will thus be seen that although the light was technically "*low*," it was sufficient for the clear and accurate observation of what occurred. On that point I am perfectly clear.

Passing by the preliminary occurrences on the evening in question as irrelevant to the phenomenon of the presentation of a form, evolved in presence of all the observers and with the psychic in the circle in full view the whole time, I will give my observations in detail. If my readers will note the position I occupied (No. 11), they will better understand my narrative.

Coming from the inner room, apparently in a state of deep trance, Mr. Eglinton paced up and down the space formed by the circle. He was restlessly spasmodic in his movements, and his hands, at times, convulsively clutched different parts of the upper portion of his body. Twice he paused, and, approaching Mr. Younger and Mr. Taylor, made passes over them. This parade lasted for upwards of five minutes, during the last three of which a brilliant light—in size like a half-crown piece—was observed by me, at first on his right side only, but just previous to the next stage of the process, on his left side also, finally fluttering all over his breast. At the last turn these disappeared, and upon Mr. Eglinton taking up his position at the point indicated in the diagram at **B** they were not to be seen. All this time the breathing of the psychic had been increasingly laboured and deep, accompanied at times with groans.

Now, standing at **B**, half-sideways towards me, I saw him (Mr. Eglinton), by a quick movement of the fingers, gently draw, apparently from under his morning-coat, the top button of which was fastened, a dingy, white-looking substance, if I may so describe what I have never handled, and of the texture and make of which I have no knowledge. The movement of the fingers was such as to draw it at right angles from him, allowing it to fall and hang by its own weight down his left side. As it emerged from under his coat and fell, it gradually increased in volume until it reached the ground, covering Mr. Eglinton's left leg from the knee downwards, the connecting link between this portion and his side being preserved the whole time. The mass of white material on the ground increased in breadth, and now commenced to pulsate and move up and down, also swaying from side to side, the motor power being underneath the mass of material, and concealed from sight by it. The dimensions of the mass would be about two feet in height and, say, about three feet in length and breadth; but I was not favourably placed to observe the last two dimensions. Looking at the facts in the light of the result, I should say the upward pulsatory and the lateral swaying movements were caused by the action of the

head of the "form" striking against the material resting on the floor. The height increased to three feet, and, shortly afterwards, the "form" quickly and quietly grew to its full stature, carrying the above-mentioned dingy white material with it. This Mr. Eglinton, by a quick movement of the hand, drew off the head of the "form," the stuff itself falling back over the shoulders and forming part of the dress of our visitor, it being in some way firmly fixed to the rest of his apparel. All this time the link (of the same white appearance as already described) was maintained between the growing "form" and Mr. Eglinton, who had remained in sight of all of us during the whole operation. The connecting link was either now completely severed, or became so attenuated as to be invisible, and the "form," with a majesty and dignity one can ill describe, advanced to Mr. Evritt (No. 4), shook hands with him, and passed round the circle, treating nearly every one in the same manner. From my position I had an opportunity for prolonged and careful scrutiny. Upon his shaking hands with me, I, somewhat loth to loose my grasp, greeted him in this way three times. Passing on to Mr. and Mrs. Pearce (Nos. 12 and 13) and Mrs. Rogers (No. 14), he crossed the room to where Mr. Rogers (No. 2) was sitting, shook hands with him and those sitting on either side, and then, stepping out into the room, neared the curtains of the bath-room door, re-approached Mr. Eglinton, who was now partially supported from falling by Mr. Rogers, and, taking the psychic firmly by the shoulders, dragged him into the cabinet. This is an accurate account of what I observed of the actual formation and disappearance of the figure. I will now deal with the other characteristics.

1. *Age*.—The "form" was that of a man of middle age. Judging by usual methods, I should put his age as fifty, more or less. It is obviously impossible, however, to state this with any degree of accuracy, and I only mention it to show that its appearance was entirely different from that of Mr. Eglinton, who attained his twenty-eighth year in the following July.

2. *Height*.—The figure was certainly taller than Mr. Eglinton—upon actual measurement four inches. I decided this by noting the stature by means of objects on the walls and afterwards comparing the height of the medium in the same manner. Another means of testing this fact was afforded on two occasions, when the "form" and the psychic were standing side by side, both being firmly planted on the ground. The estimate obtained in this way tallied with that obtained in the other way.

3. *Face*.—The features were regular, full, and animated. I distinctly saw the forehead, eyes, nose, and ears; the mouth was hidden by a full growth of dark hair on the upper and lower lips and chin. The beard, also dark, but tinged with grey, was long and flowing, divided in the centre, and falling upon the chest. The eyes were deeply set, and the forehead high. The hair on the head, though dark in colour, did not appear to me so dark as that of the beard.

4. *Figure*.—This was massively built, and appeared solid and substantial. When passing round the circle the tread, though unheard, was distinctly felt. The shoulders were broad, and the head was well set back upon them. The feet I saw were naked, but I had no opportunity for further observation. The hand to the touch was warm, soft, and life-like, and, although as broad as that of Mr. Eglinton, was longer, and its grip was firm and hearty.

5. *Clothing*.—The “form” was apparelled in a white, flowing robe, fastened round the waist by a girdle. It hung in folds upon the frame of the figure. That portion hanging like a hood from the shoulders, and which formed the canopy under which the “form” was made, was darker in colour and more substantial to the sight than the rest of the garment.

6. *Other Characteristics*.—The whole “form” was full of life and animation. Though it did not speak, it clearly understood and responded to every request made to it. Gratification was indubitably expressed by the face at the success of the experiment. A careful solicitude was apparent on account of Mr. Eglinton. Twice when the latter was staggering to the ground, the “form” turned away from the circle towards him, and grasped the white connecting link between them, which again became visible towards the close of the experiment. After the “form” had had a separate existence for some minutes, the medium, still in an unconscious state, again drew forth the white material above-mentioned from his side and under his coat, and stretched it out towards the “form,” which eagerly grasped it.

Another noteworthy feature is the distance the “form” receded from the medium. The farthest point reached was ten feet, as represented by the dotted line in diagram from **B** to **C**. The distance from bath-room door to **B** was six feet. It must, however, be borne in mind that the dotted lines from **B** to **C** do not represent the track taken by the form: it approached within six inches of nearly everyone in the circle.

When the medium had returned to the cabinet, water was asked for by means of rappings, and upon my entering the room with a glass of water, and while fumbling in the dark to reach Mr. Eglinton's mouth, I felt a “form” by my side, and my arm was gently guided.

The next day I wrote to each member of the circle, asking them to write out and send me an independent account of what took place. This was done by nine of the other witnesses. On some points of detail there were differences of opinion arising solely from the various positions occupied by the witnesses. All the members of the circle were, however, in complete accord as to the general facts. Those present who did not send independent accounts of what took place, authorise me to state that they, after reading the report, approved of it as a correct statement.

Such an astounding phenomenon did not pass without criticism. One critic considered the evidence complete, but thought that, for the satisfaction of sceptics of a certain school, it would have been as well to have added, “We all examined the floor and were satisfied there was no trap-door below the pile of muslin, and we are also satisfied that no human being could have crept along the floor under cover of the said pile of muslin from the inner room unobserved.” In reply, I have to state, that I had not lost sight of these pleas, nor had others of the witnesses done so. As regards the trap-door, there were many little incidents in the *séance* incompatible with such a suggestion. I satisfied myself, however, that none existed, and subsequently I had an opportunity of thoroughly examining the house when empty, and I need hardly say I failed to discover any traces whatever of apparatus of this kind. The fact is, the “trap-doors,” and “fishing-rods,” and “broom-sticks” are invented by those who do not *know*, and those who write from experience only laugh at such vagaries of the imagination. As regards the possibility of a human being creeping along the floor under

cover of the "drapery," unseen by those present, I consider that it could not be done. I should most certainly have observed such an occurrence, and some of the other sitters were even more favourably placed for the observation of such an event.

I also received a communication in respect to this phenomenon from Mr. S. W. Watson, of Birkby, Huddersfield. This letter is a representative one; therefore I quote the relevant passages, and deal *seriatim* with the points raised:—"It seems to me that the *séance*, when viewed by the unregenerate *hoi polloi*, or by those who, like myself, occupy that border line where we halt between two opinions, will appear most unsatisfactory and inconclusive. The first weak point that occurs to me is—that the *séance* should have taken place at the house of the medium. *On his own ground*, a clever conjurer is more than a match for the sharpest and severest scrutiny. I think one might also ask—First, Was the light sufficiently good to enable the nearest sitters, notably No. 1 and No. 14, to distinguish the curtain in front of the bath-room door, and, as a matter of course, the space between the curtain and the spot marked B in the plan? Secondly, Assuming there was a sufficiency of light, was strict watch kept upon that part of the room previous to the appearance of the figure, and most particularly during that remarkable downpour of muslin or whatever it might be? It is a well-known plan of conjurers to distract the attention of their audience, and this they can do in the fullest light, and with the largest audience. How much easier, then, will it be in a darkened room, and with a small audience, consisting, too—I think I am right in assuming—if not entirely, principally of devout Spiritualists. I can conceive it perfectly easy to a skilful hand to introduce his spirit, or rather for the spirit to introduce himself, while all eyes and attentions were directed to that mystical manufacture of muslin; which latter, when piled in a large heap, as it appears to have been, would afford a convenient shield while the figure was approaching. Mind, I do not say that it was so; I only state the doubts and suspicions that arise in me. But, to my mind, the weakest part, by far, in the whole *séance* is this, that when the figure and the psychic disappeared through the curtain, there appears to be no record of any *prompt and accurate* scrutiny of the bath-room. What ought to have been done is this: someone should have been placed at the door leading into the bath-room, then the moment the medium and the form had retired through the curtain, another person should have stationed himself there; after that, it does not matter how many minutes you allow, it only remains to search the bath-room carefully, very carefully, remembering it is his own house. Assuming all this to have been done by shrewd, and at the same time by known trustworthy persons, and better still if they were outsiders not connected with the circle—then, if no trace of the mysterious visitant were discovered, I cannot conceive of but one opinion on the matter."

Although in some cases the fact of the *séance* having taken place at the residence of the medium might be considered as detrimental to the value of the evidence, yet in this instance the argument cannot fairly be held as applicable. *The strength of the testimony for the phenomenon lies in the fact of its being entirely independent of such precautions. Diligent and careful search was made, both previous and subsequent to the séance, of the adjoining room, and all means of access for a possible confederate were carefully barred.* Even, however, if these precautions had not been observed, the value of the evidence would not have been, in the least degree, vitiated. If the testimony is carefully read it will be observed that (1) Mr. Eglinton came *alone* from the inner room; (2) that his every movement was plainly discernible;



and (3) that the light was sufficient for careful observation. How, then, even assuming, for the sake of argument, that a confederate gained access to the *inner* room, could he (the confederate) have passed into the room in which the "apparition" was formed unknown to one or two *at least* of the fourteen witnesses? Such an idea is the more manifestly absurd if it is remembered that all testify that the light was good; quite sufficient indeed to enable everyone to see what was taking place, and enough to enable most of those present to observe in detail the various stages of the phenomenon. Moreover, from the position occupied by Mr. Eglinton during the process, the gaze of all the observers was directed to that portion of the room in which, to take part in what occurred, a confederate *must* have made his or her appearance. I am personally perfectly satisfied that no man, woman, or child, could possibly have passed through the door leading from the inner room to the *séance*-room without my instantly having become aware of it; this also is the testimony of all my fellow-witnesses. In addition to this, it must be remembered that I carefully secured the only means of ingress, searched the room both before and after the *séance*, and found everything to my satisfaction. I have also satisfied myself that the door in question is not "a trick door," as was suggested by the notorious "broom-stick" investigator; nor is there a trap-door at or near the spot at which the apparition was developed, nor indeed in any part of the two rooms. This has been ascertained by the most careful scrutiny. I do not, however, place much importance on this fact, inasmuch as the results of this *séance* were entirely independent of whether the door was secured or not. *But*—that inevitable "but"—I did not look up the chimney (the circle was between it and the "form"), and possibly someone got himself tied to the end of the apparatus of some chimney sweeper and in that way gained access to the room, *and then*—why, all would be very easy!

In answer to the question about the light, I must refer to the account already given. It was, as a matter of fact—the description given is under rather than over-stated—sufficiently good to enable *every* person present to observe the curtains in question, and I have already said strict watch was kept. No amount of by-play would have so distracted my attention (nor, I am assured, did it distract the attention of other witnesses to whom I have mentioned this point) as to have rendered possible what is suggested. Mr. Watson's third question has already been answered in dealing with the other points raised.

The whole matter really resolves itself into these alternatives: Either fourteen persons have united to perjure themselves, or they were, one and all, simultaneously deceived. Whether either of these hypotheses is credible, or whether it is more likely that the fourteen witnesses possessed just sufficient every-day common-sense to observe accurately, and to record faithfully, what they saw, I leave to others to judge. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that to some minds, "projecting teeth," "broom-sticks," "fishing-rods," and "chimney sweep's tackle" are formidable obstacles to the acceptance of plain unvarnished statements of fact! As to the investigators being Spiritualists—I pass by the question as to whether they are "devout" or not—such is the case. But that fact is no disqualification, provided they are, in addition, careful and patient seekers for truth; and *ceteris paribus*, their experience in research of this kind would undoubtedly stand them in good stead, compared with the facilities for observation and judgment at the command of those who are confessedly novices in these studies.



This *séance* was not the only occasion on which I had observed this phenomenon of the presentation of an apparition in the light with the medium in full view. My observation on the first occasion was, however, far from perfect, and so I abstained from a publication of the details. Others, however, had been more fortunate, and I received a relation of a similar experience from Mr. J. H. Mitchener. His account is very interesting, as corroborating in many respects the evidence just adduced. He desires me, if I publish it, to state that he has simply narrated facts as he observed them, and that the statement has not been submitted to the other sitters. He says:—"The *séance* took place on the 11th February, 1885, the psychic being Mr. Eglinton, whose character is so highly esteemed. The circle comprised eight persons, exclusive of the sensitive or medium: four ladies and four gentlemen. By request, the gas was slightly lowered, and, shortly afterwards, the medium—or sensitive, as I prefer calling him—came into the room where we were seated, and, in a state of apparent trance, marched backwards and forwards in front of the sitters. In a few minutes, an appearance resembling a white handkerchief was seen to hang from his side, as from the trousers pocket. The sensitive then paused in front of me (I occupied a chair at one end of the circle), and seizing my hand, retained it in his own with a convulsive grip during the progress of the phenomenon that followed. Meanwhile the white vapour continued to come forth from the left side of the sensitive, momentarily increasing both in volume and density. As it commenced to assume the outline of a human form, it was watched by all with close attention and absorbing interest. The sensitive struggled, as if to disengage his arm from me, yet never relaxing the death-like grip of his hand. As the spectators continued gazing, the vapour—if vapour it can be called—condensed, or if it were a substance, it contracted, gradually assuming the shape of a human being until the complete figure of a tall, handsome-looking man, with a dark beard, was materialised before the eyes of the eight persons composing the circle. When fully developed, the 'spirit' was several inches taller than the sensitive. For several moments, 'spirit' and sensitive stood side by side—the sensitive being supported by the outstretched arm of the 'spirit' placed lovingly around him. At this point the sensitive released my hand, and withdrawing from the 'spirit' a distance of from three to four feet, revealed a white band, about four inches in width, connecting his side with that of the spirit. The cord of spiritual parturition was then severed. Mr. Eglinton stumbled backwards into his chair, which had been placed behind the curtain, leaving the sitters alone with the 'spirit.' Our materialised friend then walked before the circle, shook hands with me, and with one or two others. His hand was warm, and as firm to the touch, and as powerful in the grip as that of any human being."

Such testimony might be indefinitely prolonged; and amongst other witnesses who have observed the same phenomenon may be mentioned Mr. C. Blackburn, Mr. Hensleigh Wedgwood, Miss Symons, of 43, Beaufort Street, Chelsea; Mrs. Lewis, of Weybridge Heath; Mr. F. W. Benthall, of Heybridge; Mrs. Raeburn, of Edinburgh; Dr. Morell, LL.D. (late one of H.M. Inspectors of Schools); Mr. M. Theobald, of Granville Park, S.E.; the Rev. J. R. Phillips, of Oldham; and Miss Corner, of 3, St. Thomas Square, Hackney, but I have no room for further cases. Scattered through the periodical literature of Spiritualism, there are numberless instances of the kind. Surely, however, those I have quoted are sufficient to prove the reality of this, the crowning phase of spiritual phenomena?

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### PHASES OF OPPOSITION; SPIRITUALISM AND ART; AND A PROBLEM FOR CONJURERS.



IT had long been a moot point among intelligent Spiritualists whether it was permissible to admit neophytes or inquirers, with little prior knowledge, to materialisation *séances*. Having through long experience come to regard indiscriminate introductions to meetings of this nature as injurious to the medium, and productive of little, if any good to Spiritualism, Mr. Eglinton determined to make a bold stand in the matter, as far as he was personally concerned, with, I think, good results. Looseness of conditions has ever been the curse of Spiritualism. In a letter replying to one received by him containing a request for a materialisation *séance*, at which it was confessed there would be present several persons entirely ignorant of the subject, he pointed out his position, and as the reasons given are sound and sufficient, I think it desirable to place them on record in his own words: "I hold that a medium is placed in a very responsible position, and that he has a right to satisfy, as far as he possibly can, those who come to him. Now, my experience, which is a varied one, leads me to the conclusion that no sceptic, however well-intentioned or honest, can be convinced by the conditions prevailing at a materialisation *séance*, and the result is further scepticism on his part, and condemnation of the medium. It is different when there is a harmonious circle of Spiritualists, who are advanced enough to witness such phenomena, and with whom I shall always be delighted to sit; but a neophyte must be prepared by other methods. If your friend cares to come to a slate-writing *séance* I shall be happy to arrange an hour, otherwise I must decline to sit for the reasons stated above, and which must commend themselves to you as to all thinking Spiritualists." His correspondent, I am pleased to say, saw the force and wisdom of these remarks.

I have, as previously intimated, only quoted sample cases out of hundreds of reports of Mr. Eglinton's *séances* which, during 1884 and 1885 especially, have flooded the Spiritualistic press, and I am again obliged to do little more than briefly mention what were in reality very important pieces of evidence.

The *Whitehall Review* had for a long time, while under the able editorship of Mr. Watson Lyall, himself a candid and patient investigator, preserved a calm, philosophical attitude towards Spiritualism, if it could not be said to have thoroughly endorsed it. "But a king arose in Egypt that knew not Joseph," and on Mr. Lyall's retirement it fell into evil courses. Amongst its regular correspondents, however, were some who had had practical experience in Spiritualism through Mr. Eglinton's instrumentality, and a well-deserved rebuke was forth-

with administered. A correspondent wrote:—"I have just seen a copy of a recent issue of your paper, and I much regret to find that you sneer, in an ignorant way, over the wonderful gifts that Mr. Eglinton has received from his Maker. I say 'ignorant' advisedly, because you have no right to sneer at anything that you know only by hearsay." A description of the writer's experiences follows, and he winds up by assuring the *Whitehall Review* that although there might be plenty of humbug mixed up with Spiritualistic phenomena, yet that "does not the least affect the facts, absolute facts, such as I have just roughly laid before you, and you will make a strange mistake if you allow your paper to sneer at the marvellous, yet most simple acts of communion that are daily occurring between the spirit world and our own. The Bible is one long history of this communion between the heavens and the hells and earth. Why should this have ceased, or how can it have ceased? Our parsons' asseverations will not alter God's laws."

Truth followed suit, but while the *Whitehall Review* was never vulgar or abusive, the former paper indulged in the most malignant and rancorous language, finding an able lieutenant in Dr. Ray Lankester, of Bow Street notoriety. A lengthy correspondence took place in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, introduced by a self-styled thought-reader, who, partly seeing an opportunity of making some capital for himself, and partly acting as a decoy of Mr. Labouchere, entered the lists with a pseudo-challenge, the circumstances connected with which are already familiar to the public. Dr. Lankester, however, deserves immortalising, and I am not altogether unwilling to oblige him and his *confrère*. I cannot do this more effectually than by quoting some of the opprobrious terms used by him concerning Spiritualists in general and Mr. Eglinton in particular. Mr. Labouchere was good enough to employ such epithets as "knave," "rogue," "cheat," "vagabond," while Dr. Lankester's superior erudition gave him a somewhat wider choice in "sludge," "pickpocket," "unsavoury specimen of natural history," "vermin and skunk." No wonder Mr. Eglinton was disinclined to meet the authors of bantlings like these, and I, in common with the majority of Spiritualists, rejoice he did not fall into the trap, and demean himself in such company. As he remarked, with true dignity, he could afford to bide his time. The facts will be acknowledged some day, when prejudice has grown tired of its vain attempts to strangle them. There was, however, no lack of defenders, and a tribute is due to Mr. A. P. Sinnett and Mr. C. C. Massey, amongst many others, for the loyalty to truth evinced in connection with this matter. The *Manchester Evening News* was fair and courteous, and pointed out that "to call an opponent by names, not usual in well-conducted society, might be hard hitting, but it was not good manners," and it then proceeded to give a short account of one of Mr. Eglinton's psychographic *séances*. *Figaro*, in presenting a portrait of Mr. Eglinton to its readers, thought it could not be denied that he was a "very clever individual," and contented itself with a few very general observations, while in the "greatest humbug" competition started by the *Pall Mall Gazette*, he comes fourteenth on the list with only nine votes, out-running, however, Madame Blavatsky, who only polled four. Such is the distinction made between fame and notoriety.

Mr. C. B. Hankey, of Stanstead, Emsworth, had a curious experience at a *séance* at Mr. Eglinton's, in the course of which he recovered some lost property by spirit agency; and a little later Mrs. Cowley, well known to many Spiritualists, relates some interesting incidents which succeeded other remarkable experiments in psychography. She states:—"Mr. Eglinton, who

became much agitated, said he saw a vision. Closing his eyes, he slowly narrated the particulars of a scene in the early life of a departed relative, which was at once recognised as true by my friend and myself. Still holding my hand, Mr. Eglinton became more and more agitated, at the same time describing the unhappy state of the lady in some part of her earth-life. He rose from his seat, and paced the room in great apparent suffering and agitation. His left arm began moving convulsively, and suddenly he sat down, begging I would hold fast his right hand, saying, 'Look! look! Your friend is trying to show you her name on the back of my hand!' His left hand was now clenched on the table. We could see nothing at first on the back of his hand, but presently faint red lines began to appear, rising, as it were, under the skin, growing darker by degrees, until the, to me, well-known name of the lady—not a very common one—appeared distinctly complete. After remaining for a few seconds for our inspection, the letters faded away. After other manifestations, I was patted several times on my knees, and arms, and wrists by invisible fingers. My friend's handkerchief was taken several times from her lap, and at length appeared on the opposite side of the room. Materialised hands then made their appearance from under the edge of the table. They were of different forms. One appeared close to me, sitting as I was some distance from Mr. Eglinton, which was described by my friend as a 'long-fingered one.' Mr. Eglinton's left hand during these occurrences continued to hold the slates, while his right hand was grasped by my companion, and his feet were in full view throughout. The phenomena were rapidly produced, with great power, but it is difficult to describe the continuous occurrence of characteristic communications on family and private matters, which could not but convince us of the identity of our spirit friends."

In February, 1885, out of deference to the efforts of Mr. J. G. Speed, the editor of the *Ulverston Mirror*, to extend a knowledge of Spiritualism, a flying visit was made to the Furness district, and seven *séances* were given to some of the leading inhabitants of Ulverston. The admission of one uneducated and unscrupulous person, however, caused some little annoyance, as he endeavoured to make capital by asserting that Mr. Eglinton had used a "trick table." It is true, a table was taken on the occasion by him to Ulverston, but it consisted simply of a flat piece of board with four legs to it, and was taken owing to the difficulty sometimes experienced in getting one which would allow the slate to be pressed firmly against the "bed" of the table. At the time it was used it was pronounced satisfactory, and a certificate to that effect was volunteered by the individual in question. It was only when some idea of making money out of the affair entered his mind that he began to cavil, and finally his untruthful statements and false representations showed that the man was not worth notice. Though the table was taken by Mr. Eglinton with the best of motives, he, in view of possible misconception, never used it again. A lively correspondence on Spiritualism in the local paper ensued, resulting in a considerable impetus being given to the movement.

In the meantime arrangements had been made for another Continental trip, Vienna being the most important resting place, and he left London on the 23rd February for Paris *en route* for that city. In Paris he became the guest of M. Pilo, a Swedish friend whom he had converted in Stockholm. While in Paris he had the pleasure of meeting M. Tissot, the celebrated French *genre* painter, whose attention had been drawn to Spiritualism by reading a translation in one of the French papers of Florence Marryat's account of a materialisation to which I have

already adverted. The *séances* he had with Mr. Eglinton quite won him over to our ranks, and resulted in a determination on his part to visit England later in the year to go through a regular course of investigation. This he did with the most satisfactory results, obtaining clear and irrefragable evidence as to the identity of the spirits communicating with him through Mr. Eglinton's mediumship, both in connection with psychography and materialisation. At the last and culminating *séance* he had a touching and unique experience. The veil was lifted, and he saw one whose sweet companionship had been his joy and solace in years gone by. It is not possible or right that such sacred experiences should be revealed in their fullest expression to an unsympathetic world, but the few details of the *séance* I am enabled to give will no doubt be acceptable to those whose knowledge bids them lend a listening ear.

The *séance* (a private one) took place on the 20th May, and there were present, besides M. Tissot and the medium, three ladies and one gentleman. After the usual preliminaries of a dark *séance*, Mr. Eglinton took his place in an easy-chair close to M. Tissot's right hand, and so remained the whole time. The doors were all locked, and the room otherwise secured. After conversing for a time two figures were seen standing side by side on M. Tissot's left hand. They were at first seen very indistinctly, but gradually they became more and more plainly visible, until those nearest could distinguish every feature. The light carried by the male figure ("Ernest") was exceptionally bright, and was so used as to light up in a most effective manner the features of his companion. M. Tissot, looking into her face, immediately recognised the latter, and, much overcome, asked her to kiss him. This she did several times, the lips being observed to move. One of the sitters distinctly saw "Ernest" place the light in such a position that while M. Tissot was gazing at the face of the female form her features were "brilliantly illuminated;" it also lighted M. Tissot's face. After staying with him for some minutes, she again kissed him, shook hands, and vanished.

This incident M. Tissot subsequently chose as the subject for a mezzotint entitled "Aparition Médiumique," which has now become the wonder and talk of the artistic world. Two figures are disclosed, set against a dark background—one a sweetly pretty female form, with the head slightly thrown back and resting on the shoulder of the companion by her side. Her face bears an expression of wistful tenderness, which tells its own tale of happy reunion.

"Peace, let it be. I love him still, and shall love him for ever;  
The dead are not dead, but alive."

"Ernest's" face reveals the noble spirit he is—full of solicitude and compassionate love of his kind. The ideal which those who have come in contact with him must have formed (I can speak for myself) is here fully portrayed. In both figures the hands are held half open in front, "Ernest" bearing the light with which their faces are illumined.

As a work of art there is no question of its merit. Powerfully conceived and happily rendered, the picture tells its own tale, and is a lasting monument of the artist's appreciation of the blessing bestowed by spirit communion.

This is not the only acknowledgment which M. Tissot has rendered of his indebtedness to Mr. Eglinton's mediumship. When made aware of the proposed publication of this volume, he very kindly offered to present Mr. Eglinton with a portrait etching to serve as a frontis-



piece, his idea being to impress his pencil and graver into the service of Spiritualism, by depicting from the life one of the many fleeting but, if accurately recorded, valuable aspects of mediumship. He, in common with other keen observers, had often noticed the change in



Mr. William Eglinton.

the facial expression of the medium while under control, or when direct writing was being obtained. This transformation is most marked at the period when the phenomenon actually takes place, and M. Tissot believed he should be doing a service to spiritual science, which few could render, if he placed on permanent record this strange feature of mediumship. Those who

are engaged in this research need all the light that can be obtained from any source whatever, and speaking from my own personal observation and what others have told me, M. Tissot has been singularly successful in his object. How great the change which takes place at such times may be seen by comparing M. Tissot's etching with the portrait of Mr. Eglinton facing this page. The latter is from a photograph taken in Vienna in March, 1885.

While Mr. Eglinton was in Paris, he had a *séance* with M. Detaille, the great painter of battle scenes. M. Richet, the distinguished *savant* and editor of the *Revue Bibliothèque*, also had some startling experiences, an account of which he promised to publish in that work. Wishing, however, to verify his results, he abstained from doing so until he had had further experience, and on the occasion of a subsequent visit to London, he, in company with Dr. Myers, brother of Mr. W. F. H. Myers, of Her Majesty's Education Department (who, by the way, has also had several interesting sittings), obtained the most absolute confirmation of the facts, and in such a manner as completely to upset the "thought transference," or "unconscious secondary-self" theories, he had devised as an explanation of them, and an account of which, I believe, he has prepared for publication.

Amongst other old friends whom Mr. Eglinton met during his short stay in the French capital was Mr. J. H. Gledstones, of Bordeaux, who came specially to Paris to meet him. Exceedingly loth to say good-bye to this and other friends, he, after three days' stay, left Paris for Vienna, where he arrived on the 28th February. Baron du Prel, the well-known Munich *savant* and *littérateur*, had come specially to meet Mr. Eglinton, and to be present at some *séances*. He has since published a most interesting and valuable account of his experiences under the title of "A Problem for Conjurers." He describes four out of the many *séances* at which he was present, three of which were in full light and the fourth only in darkness. Pointing out the fallacy of the argument that the slates used for the direct writing are prepared beforehand, and also the inadequacy of similar stock arguments, he proceeds to narrate his personal experience. This is similar in character to much of the best evidence I have already recorded, but I must forbear the temptation to repeat, and pass on to a brief summary of the conclusions at which he arrived, giving, however, a representative and unique case. He says, describing a *séance* which took place at the residence of Baron Hellenbach, "Our slates lay upon a table illuminated by three gas-burners ; Eglinton, whom we left completely to himself, evidently soon lapsed to a state of semi-consciousness, acting instinctively and without conscious will. He asked Baron Hellenbach for a blank sheet of paper, and when a packet was handed to him (taken out of a writing-case, of rather stiff note-paper, about the size of a post-card) he took a sheet, laid it upon the table, then went to a bookcase, took out a book at hazard, which he likewise laid upon the table. He then tore off a corner of the sheet of note-paper, which he put in my hand, after which he placed the blank sheet in the book, placing likewise a morsel of lead pencil in it, and then closed it. We then united our six hands together above the book, Eglinton kneeling between us on the floor, when Baron Hellenbach put a question on a matter connected with his private affairs and studies, which demanded a long answer. In a very few seconds I thought I felt the vibration of the writing in one of my hands ; and when I put my ear down to the book, I distinctly heard the muffled sound that rapid writing, under such circumstances, would produce. Three quick raps, coming in the

same muffled manner from the book, informed us (as usual) that we should open it, and on doing so we found the lately blank sheet of note-paper covered with thirty closely-written lines. The corner of the paper which was torn off, with its edges sharp and jagged, on account of the thickness of the paper, fitted exactly; while a later examination showed a slight impression of this on the top page of the book, though not the slightest mark of the pencil. The message was written in the English language, but was not finished, and only partly answered the question which had been put. Mr. Eglinton now pushed the slates lying upon the table nearer to us, and placed a blank sheet of paper in one of them, which was a double-folding slate, and another similar sheet between two ordinary slates, laid one on the other, providing each with a point of pencil, and, with obvious effort, made several magnetic passes above the folding slate, probably because the wooden frame in which it was bound rendered the experiment more difficult. We then spread our hands on both slates, and Baron Hellenbach declared, after a few seconds, that he could feel the writing going on inside the slates on which his hands alone were resting. I laid my head down to the other, and distinctly heard the writing going on within them. Now, again, the raps were heard; we opened the slates, and found on one sheet twenty-eight, and on the other twenty-four closely-written lines, completing the answer already begun on the first sheet, which had been placed inside the book, and written in well-chosen language, and very intelligently. The writing was quite unlike that of Eglinton himself, with which I afterwards compared it. On the other hand, it exactly resembled not only the signature of 'Ernest,' but the handwriting on another slate, which had been given when I was not present, in the English, German, and Greek languages. If the sceptic denies us the capacity of sight, and asserts that Eglinton was able to write with rapidity eighty-two lines unseen by us, by the light of three gas-burners, in answer to a question which had not yet been put, on the sheets of paper which had been handed to him, it here really seems as though scepticism, carried to an undue point, strongly resembles idiocy."

The logical deductions drawn by Baron du Prel are thus stated:—"One thing is clear; that is, that these slate-writings must be ascribed to a transcendental origin. We shall find (1) that the hypothesis of prepared slates is inadmissible. (2) The place on which the writing is found is quite inaccessible to the hands of the medium. In some cases the double slate is securely locked, leaving only room inside for the tiny morsel of slate pencil. (3) That the writing is actually done at the time. (4) That the medium is not writing. (5) The writing must be actually done with the morsel of slate or lead pencil. (6) The writing is done by an intelligent being, since the answers are exactly pertinent to the questions. (7) This being can read, write, and understand the language of human beings, frequently such as is unknown to the medium. (8) It strongly resembles a human being, as well in the degree of its intelligence as in the mistakes sometimes made. These beings are therefore, although invisible, of human nature, or species. It is no use whatever to fight against this proposition. (9) If these beings speak, they do so in human language. (10) If they are asked who they are, they answer that they are beings who have left this world. (11) When these appearances become partly visible, perhaps only their hands, the hands seen are of human form. (12) When these things become entirely visible, they exhibit the human form and countenance. . . . Spiritualism must be investigated by science. I should look upon myself as a coward if I did not openly express my convictions,

For through Eglinton I have received the proof that Zöllner, who was the first in Germany to have courage to speak of these slate-writings, discovered a grand truth, and that all his opponents who have neither read nor seen anything in this domain are in the wrong."

During Mr. Eglinton's residence in Vienna he had twenty-three *séances*, every one of which was eminently successful, only two or them being given at his hotel. Among those attending these *séances* were the Baron and Baroness Drasche, Prince Auersperg, Prince and Princess Trautmansdorff, Count Esterházy, Count Lemberg, Prince Lemberg, Count Meklenburgh, Count and Countess Traun, Marquis and Marchioness Pallavicini, Count Jennison, Count Csáky, Prince Batthyany, Countess Kühnborg, Heinrich and Madame Max (Max-Eherler, the celebrated painter), Count and Countess Harrach, and many others of note.

One remarkable materialisation *séance* took place at Baron Drasche's, Mr. Eglinton being held by Baron du Prel and the Baroness Drasche. On this occasion the materialised form went to the extreme end of a large room. These and other equally satisfactory results all tended to extend public interest and confidence in Spiritualism, and Mr. Eglinton left Vienna on the 19th March, having been the means of giving a great and lasting impetus to the movement. In view of the opposition and prejudice which existed against Spiritualism in consequence of previous events, Mr. Eglinton exhibited considerable pluck in going to Vienna at all, and deserves congratulation for the unparalleled success he achieved. An engagement had been made for him with the Crown Prince, but he was much disappointed at the event not coming off, in consequence of urgent State affairs preventing Prince Rudolph keeping the appointment.

From Vienna he went to Venice, and there gave several *séances* with great success. These were attended by the Princess Metternich, Count Esterházy, Prince Chetwertinski, and many others. He afterwards discovered Venice is a veritable hotbed of Spiritualism, and that meetings are regularly held there, an account of some of which appeared in a recent number of the *St. James's Gazette*. From Venice his route lay by Milan to Basle, and from thence to Paris, where he was again the guest of M. Pilo.

Mr. Eglinton was naturally very-proud of his successful tour, made under spiritual direction, in the face of much adverse counsel, and he returned to London, where he has since remained, giving *séances* with renewed success, but it is his intention shortly to visit Russia and Australia, thus putting a girdle round the world.



## CHAPTER XIX.

### CONCLUSION.



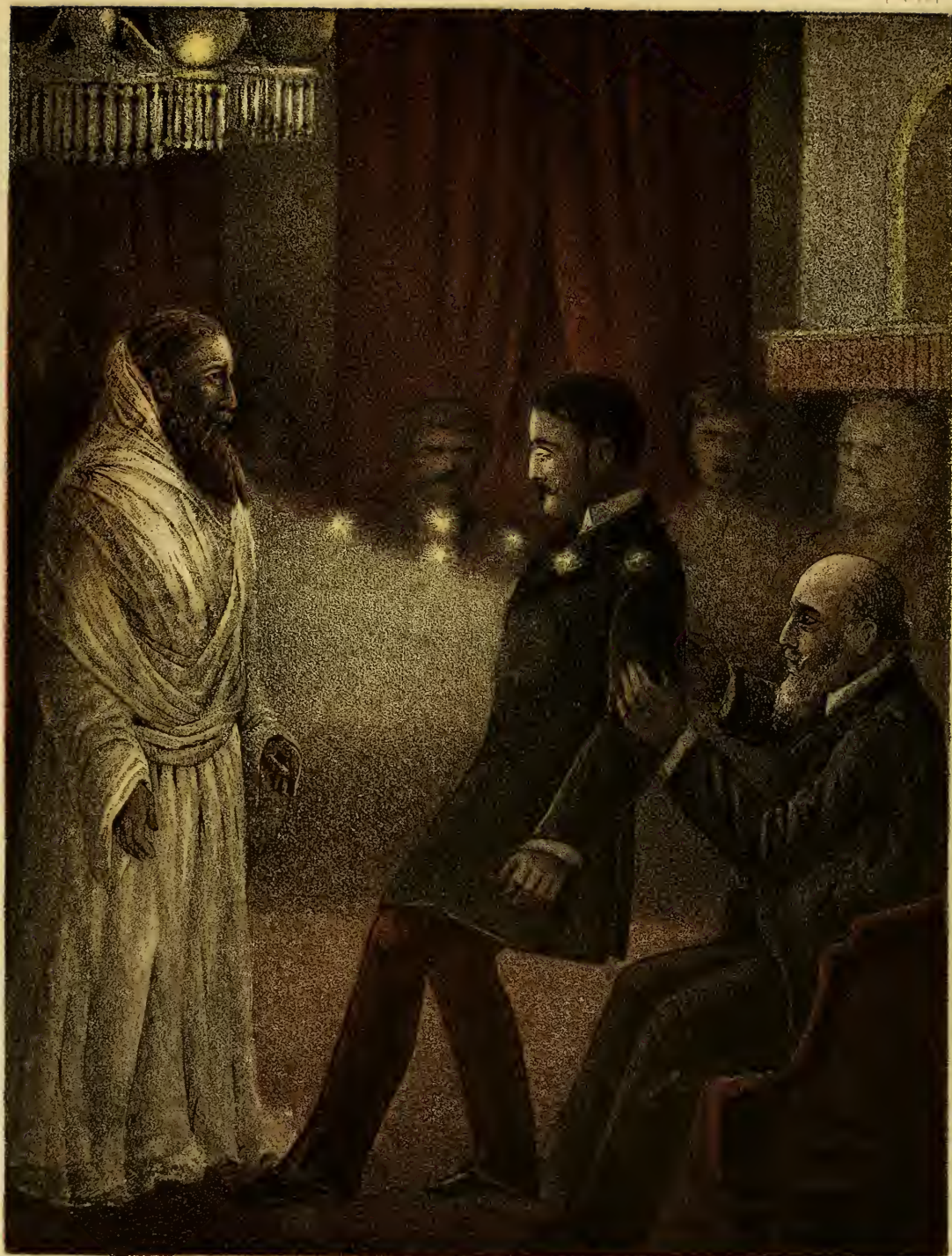
ORD BLACKBURN, one of the soundest lawyers who has ever sat on the English bench, has laid it down as a principle of evidence that a fact can be established by credible testimony as to the time, place, and circumstances of its occurrence. Applying this *dictum* to the phenomena recorded in the foregoing pages, there seems little to be desired in reference to the completeness of the evidence. The witnesses are credible, sane, and otherwise competent persons; their testimony is given in a clear, straightforward manner; and the facts to which they testify do not moreover rest upon the isolated assertion of any one man, or set of men.

On the other hand, when we come to deal with those who deny the occurrence of phenomena such as those in question, we find that they are persons in whom experience is either altogether absent, or meagre in the extreme. Moreover, the testimony I have presented is affirmative; negative evidence, no matter how abundant, is absolutely valueless in face of it. Ten men only may observe, for example, a transit of Venus, but their testimony to this fact would outweigh that of ten thousand, or indeed that of ten million men who might assert that they had not seen such a phenomenon. The same reasoning may be applied with equal force to spiritual phenomena, and, bearing in mind the fact that experience shows human testimony is, as a rule, reliable, it seems legitimate to conclude that the facts recorded in this volume are real and true.

I have just pointed out that the witnesses I have called fulfil the necessary conditions. They are credible, reputable, and of acknowledged sanity as regards the general affairs of every-day life. In many cases the bare mention of their names sufficiently establishes that fact. All the learned, civil, and military professions are represented, and the list contains the names of many who are, in other walks of life, honoured and respected of their fellows. In short, this record of upwards of ten years' public work is specially remarkable for the wealth and weight of the evidence it contains. So abundant, however, were the materials at my command, that the chief difficulty I have encountered has been the condensation of my narrative within reasonable limits. Otherwise I could have filled at least three volumes similar to this one.

In addition to those who have been already referred to in these pages, the under-mentioned have had *séances* with Mr. Eglinton. Here again, however, these do not





AN APPARITION FORMED IN FULL VIEW



represent a tithe of the number of distinguished persons who have been or are investigators into Spiritualism; many names, especially of those moving in the highest social circles, I am not permitted to give. The Duchess of Manchester, Julia Countess of Jersey, Countess of Caithness, Countess Wachtmeister, Countess of Portsmouth, Lady Granville Gordon, Lady Macdonald, Lady Alice Montague, Countess de Grey, Countess of Dalhousie, Earl Stanhope, Earl of Dunraven, Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, Lord Poltimore, Lord Ednam (now Earl Dudley), Lord Rayleigh, Sir Charles Nicholson, Sir William Topham, Sir Edward Inglefield, Sir Stuart Hogg, Hon. Auberon Herbert, Mr. Jacob Bright, M.P., Right Hon. Henry Chaplin, M.P., Mr. Charles McLaren, M.P., Right Hon. A. Balfour, M.P., Mr. Chamberlain (son of Right Hon. J. Chamberlain), Colonel the Hon. Oliver Montague, Colonel Ellis (equerry to the Prince of Wales), Mr. Hamilton Aidé, Mr. Richard Hutton, editor of the *Spectator*, Professors Crookes, Wallace, Sidgwick, Barret, Balfour Stewart, Oliver Lodge, etc., may, however, be mentioned.

Taking a list of sitters for the past year, I find the military element—next to persons of social distinction—predominant; and next in order come the clergy, followed by doctors of medicine, barristers, solicitors, and litterateurs, men of science coming last.

I am not now concerned to give a detailed analysis of Mr. Eglinton's public work for Spiritualism; the time for that is not yet ripe; nor is it part of my purpose to discuss theories. I may, however, be permitted to indicate a few characteristic features of Mr. Eglinton's career which, even at this early date, stand out in bold relief. In paying a high tribute to his character as a man and a medium, I am speaking as the chosen mouthpiece of thousands of Spiritualists who have for him nothing but the warmest feelings of regard and esteem: of that he may rest fully assured. As an indication of the estimate in which his character and abilities are held, I may mention that a prominent member of the present administration offered him an important Government appointment abroad—a fitting honour after ten years' public work. This, however, he did not see his way to accept.

Chiefest amongst his characteristics as a medium is the intelligent interest he has always shown in his work. Placed in a situation of rare temptation and danger—for such the profession of public mediumship assuredly is—he has never to my knowledge (and my opportunities for observation have extended over thirteen years) prostituted or abused his wonderful gifts. On the contrary, he has ever aimed at a high ideal, and has sought to raise the tone, not only of mediumship, but likewise that of the movement generally—oftentimes in face of much that was calculated to discourage and dishearten all but the most steadfast worker. Those who imagine mediumship to be an unqualified blessing do not know how much is suffered and endured by those who, like the subject of this volume, are the pioneers of the New Reformation. They are the prey of envy, malice, and suspicion; their very manhood is too frequently lowered by the frequent indignities they are called upon to suffer on behalf of the truth which they promulgate; whilst the too great readiness of many Spiritualists to seize upon every little breath of scandal circulated to the detriment of public characters, is nothing short of a burning shame. Alas that such should be the case! but I should not be doing my duty did I not protest strongly in this respect, and raise my voice against those who, instead of

being the first to exercise charity and extend their protecting influence, are only too keen to add to the list of trouble endured by those who do so much for the cause.

As I have said, Mr. Eglinton has ever loyally striven to raise the tone of mediumship. A striking instance of this occurred when he cordially extended his sympathy and assistance to those who, in spite of overwhelming odds, carried to a victorious issue the crusade against the abuses which had crept into public circles, damaging the reputation of all mediums, and making Spiritualists ridiculous in the eyes of the world. Nor does his record show him to have been at all backward in placing every reasonable facility in the way of honest sceptics in order to remove doubts and difficulties. I know from personal experience (for only recently has full satisfaction come to me in regard to some of the mysteries of spiritual inquiry) that he places great stress on absolute frankness and good faith on the part of the investigator, and desiderates almost beyond everything else the necessity of the confidence thus generated in order to obtain the best results. To this I attribute much of my own success in this investigation. I have never failed to speak openly and frankly to Mr. Eglinton and his controls on any doubtful or inexplicable point, and as frankly and openly have he and they met me.

With regard to the value of Mr. Eglinton's public work there can be no question. This book is a standing monument to that end. My narrative will have told its own tale with reference to the quality of the evidence; of the quantity, the subjoined table is equally explicit.

Year.	Professional Séances.	Non-professional Séances.	Successes.	Partial Successes.	Absolute Failures.	Total No. of Séances per year.	NOTES.
1874	—	135	— <sup>1</sup>	— <sup>1</sup>	— <sup>1</sup>	135	<sup>1</sup> Mr. Eglinton did not keep any record during these years.
1875	70	112	— <sup>1</sup>	— <sup>1</sup>	— <sup>1</sup>	182	<sup>2</sup> Until these two years Mr. Eglinton did not give a single <i>séance</i> on his own premises. Thus, 1972 sittings were held in various private houses in all quarters of the world, but a large proportion of the 1884-5 <i>séances</i> have also not been held at his residence.
1876	128	135	— <sup>1</sup>	— <sup>1</sup>	— <sup>1</sup>	263	<sup>3</sup> Since 1880 Mr. Eglinton kept a fairly accurate record of the atmospheric conditions during his <i>séances</i> , and it is found that of the 170 total failures in 1884-5 the weather has been either very wet, damp, or depressing in the majority of instances.
1877	204	78	170	85	27	282	<sup>4</sup> It will be observed that out of the total number of <i>séances</i> of which Mr. Eglinton has any record, viz., 3,335, more than one-third have been given apart from any pecuniary consideration.
1878	193	87	158	91	31	280	
1879	7	131	99	31	8	138	
1880	109	72	115	44	22	181	
1881	123	104	146	46	35	227	
1882	72	111	— <sup>1</sup>	— <sup>1</sup>	24	183	
1883	5	96	— <sup>1</sup>	— <sup>1</sup>	13	101	
1884 <sup>2</sup>	659	48	54 <sup>1</sup>	94	72 <sup>3</sup>	707	
1885 <sup>2</sup>	605	51	425	133	98 <sup>3</sup>	656	
Total...	2,175 <sup>4</sup>	1,160 <sup>4</sup>	1,664	522	330	3,335	

The range of his mediumship seems only to have been limited by the bounds of the subject itself, although psychography and materialisation stand out most prominently. It is, I think, a matter for congratulation that in their far-seeing wisdom his controls directed his attention more especially to psychography—by far the most suitable of the phenomena for general demonstration. Few people are aware, however, of the prolonged course of development through which Mr. Eglinton passed before his power in this respect reached the requisite degree of perfection, allowing him, at the commencement of 1884, to devote his special attention to it. For upwards of three years he sat almost daily for this phenomenon, and not a scratch was obtained. Sustained, however, by an assurance from his invisible co-workers of



ultimate success, he persevered, and at length got simple marks; then short words; and finally connected, intelligible messages, but not until another weary six months of experiment had passed. A distinct development can also be traced during the past two years, until success is now almost uniform, just failures enough occurring to remind him and his visitors that it is not always permitted to men, or spirits either, to command success. These failures are in many cases the result of a manifest hostility to the subject on the part of the sitter. Such an attitude is an infallible barrier to success. Honest sceptics, however, though more difficult to deal with than sympathetic sitters, are sooner or later sure to obtain conviction. Amongst the causes of failure constant observation shows the condition of the weather to be the most prolific. In foggy, damp, or thundery weather, or during extreme heat, or if there is any disturbance of the atmosphere, the *séances* are usually poor, if not total failures. The best phenomena have occurred in cold, dry, crisp weather.

The readiness with which manifestations have been obtained at the private residences of investigators is another noteworthy feature. For a long period he never gave a single *séance* on his own premises, and he is still at all times ready to comply with any reasonable request of this nature. In practice, however, he soon found that few people deemed it convenient to hold *séances* at their own rooms.

Not the least valuable of the contributions to our store of knowledge concerning Spiritualism obtained through Mr. Eglinton's mediumship have been those illustrating the identity of returning spirits with our common humanity. Scattered through the foregoing pages there are many instances in which it is recorded that the communicating intelligences have exhibited the special peculiarities of personal appearance, and have displayed the same idiosyncrasies of character and habit which they possessed during their term of earthly life. They are reported to have given information oftentimes unknown to any one save themselves and those for whom they wished to establish their identity—and in some instances they have revealed facts concerning themselves unknown to any one present, which have only been verified after prolonged inquiry. They have written their messages in a style of handwriting characteristic of the persons they claim to be, and in many ways have given all reasonable proof in support of their identity. Therefore, viewing the question in all its bearings, it seems to me that unless we are prepared to reject human testimony altogether, and to consider proof of identity (in the absolute) as unattainable, we cannot legitimately refuse to regard the continuity of human personality after death as an established fact. If, however, this matter of spirit identity is looked upon as lying outside the range of absolute proof, then, to be logical, those who assume this position must also view the question of proving the identity of their own individualities from the same standpoint. The argument is as potent in the latter case as in the former; indeed the absence of the chief motive (pecuniary gain), which tempts a man in the body to personate another, makes the theory of personating spirits more difficult of belief. I say nothing here of the view which regards these returning spirits as emissaries of the prince of evil sent forth to delude and lead men astray, for I look upon that theory as utterly inadequate, as a monstrous perversion of the truth—in short, as too silly, absurd, and dishonouring both to God and man.

I have one more duty to perform before I close. It is to urge upon Spiritualists the necessity and value of a comparative study of experimental Spiritualism. In this respect a



great boon has yet to be bestowed on the movement. Only by comparing the evidence obtained through a long course of investigation, by considering the testimony as a whole, and by placing the results obtained through one medium side by side with those observed in the presence of another, shall we make much progress in the inquiry. This volume is a slight contribution to this end; but its value would be enormously enhanced if these records of materialisation and psychography could be studied in connection with a narrative of similar phenomena obtained through, for example, among many others, Miss Katie Cook and Mrs. Corner, two excellent mediums with whom Mr. Crookes has had a large experience. To my knowledge there are in existence records of this character, some of them of extreme value. Mr. Crookes, Mr. C. Blackburn, and others, have, I believe, kept full accounts of their private investigations with various mediums, and they will, no doubt, in due course, give the public the benefit of their researches. It is, I hope, not unlikely that the comparative study of Spiritualism will be rendered possible in the not distant future.

I began this narrative with a record of a family *séance*: let me end it with one. It is a phase of Mr. Eglinton's mediumship which I would fain emphasise. On such occasions only is its full scope and power ever put forth. I have touched but briefly upon this special phase in the course of my narrative, but my inability to speak more plainly in this connection is my deep regret and the reader's lasting loss. Unless experiences of this nature have come home to one it is not possible to conceive the full meaning or sacredness of mediumship; nor can the responsibilities it entails on medium and Spiritualists alike be realised. Intimate friends of Mr. Eglinton who have been thus privileged bear grateful evidence of the blessing he has been instrumental in bringing to them, and in these, the closing words of what has been to me a work of unmixed pleasure, I desire to place on record my added testimony.

I remember well on one occasion—a Sunday evening—I was sitting with Mr. Eglinton alone in my own house. Through the partly open door of my study streamed the light from the gas in the hall outside. Between the two of us (Mr. Eglinton was sitting opposite to me about three feet away) there came a mist, and gradually there formed in its centre a human face. As it became more and more distinctly visible I can only describe it as radiant with a glory which we mortals only associate with that land where "the dead are many but the living few." I well remember and shall ever bear in mind that scene. Before me, the medium entranced and breathing heavily; "Joey Sandy" near at hand and giving instructions in the direct voice; and in our midst the face and form of one whose mortal voice had not been heard for many a month before. She bent her head, her lips touched mine, and a simple but unmistakable sign of recognition was given. Could I make public all that occurred a fitting reason would appear why at that moment the doubts of years disappeared, and the absolute reality of spirit communion was made manifest to me. It was not altogether the scientific evidence I then obtained, though there is no question in my mind as to its capability of being so described, or of the weight which these facts had with me. There was in addition something more—a new sense in which spiritual things were spiritually conceived—which brought conviction home to me, and made me realise that

"As unseen hands roll back the doors, the light that floods the very air  
Is but the shadow from within, of the great secret hidden there."



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