

Mediums' Book

the MEDIUMS' and EVOKERS' GUIDE

Allan Kardec

THE **MEDIUMS' BOOK**

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EXPERIMENTAL SPIRITISM

THE MEDIUMS' BOOK

OR

THE MEDIUMS' AND EVOKERS' GUIDE

CONTAINING

SPECIAL TEACHING FROM SPIRITS ON THE THEORY OF ALL KIND OF MANIFESTATIONS, MEANS TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE INVISIBLE WORLD, DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIUMNITY, DIFFICULTIES AND OBSTACLES THAT CAN BE ENCOUNTERED IN THE PRACTICE OF SPIRITISM

BEING THE SEQUEL TO

"THE **SPIRITS**" **BOOK**"

BY ALLAN KARDEC

Translated from the Eighty-fourth Thousand by ANNA BLACKWELL

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

he second volume of the Kardec series, which the translator has now the satisfaction of placing within the reach of English readers, treats of the experimental application of the theoretic principles laid down in *The Spirits' Book*, the first volume of that series.

Not only do these two books mutually elucidate each other, but each of them may be said to imply the other as its necessary complement. For, if the principles laid down in *The Spirits' Book* are true, the phenomena treated of in *The Mediums' Book* must occur as a matter of course; while, if the phenomena treated of in *The Mediums' Book* really occur, their occurrence proves the truth of the principles laid down in *The Spirits' Book*, because those phenomena are, at once, inexplicable by any other theory, and easily explicable with the aid of the theoretic principles laid down in that work.

The Mediums' Book is not addressed to Materialists, who must be brought from Materialism to Spiritualism, if at all, by their personal ascertainment of the reality of the modern spiritist "manifestations" and by the proof they give of the continued existence of the souls of the deceased men and women by whom they are produced. It is addressed exclusively to those who already believe that there is, in man, a principle of conscious individuality which survives the body, and who consequently admit, 1st, the action of LAW in the evolution of human life, and, 2nd, the existence of the Inscrutable Ordainer of the universe, of whose Wisdom and Will that LAW is the expression, and who are therefore prepared to admit. Still further, that the Providential Ordaining may be expected to proceed, for the advancement of our knowledge of our extraterrestrial relations, as IT does for that of the sciences which deal with the various departments of our terrestrial life.

The science of mathematics, for instance, is open to every human being; yet it is only through the mind of a Euclid that its fundamental principles are given to the world. Astronomy, Chemistry, Electricity, &c., are open to the study and investigation of all men; yet the *basis* of each of those sciences, as of all others, has been furnished, not by the multitude of seekers, but by the insight of some master-mind, on whose foundations succeeding inquirers have continued to build. And this for a very simple reason.

The most superficial glance at the world around us suffices to show us that the people of the earth are, as yet, in point of intelligence as of morality, of very slight average attainment; and they therefore need to be helped forward, in every department of intellectual inquiry, by spirits from worlds of greater advancement, who are incarnated among them, from time to time, for the purpose of assisting them to progress more rapidly in some given direction.

Owing to their mental and moral backwardness, men are slow to recognise the superiority of these Providentially given pioneers, and prone to resent, as offensive to their self-love, the suggestion that any such superiority can exist They therefore usually "stone the prophets," before accepting their clearer insights; but as they always end by

perceiving that those insights are the true ground on which the further development of each branch of science must be worked out, the progress of human knowledge, though slow, is sure. But at what rate would that progress be accomplished if every student, ignoring the ground-work furnished by the master-minds of the past, undertook to build up his own department of science, *ab initio*, for himself? if every tyro in mathematics, for instance, regarded it as derogatory to his mental dignity to accept the help of a riper intellect than his own, and considered it incumbent upon him to evolve for himself, from his own cogitation, his own "Euclid?"

Applying this reasoning to the system of religious philosophy contained in the Kardec books, it is to be remarked that, although the domain of thought and experiment, in regard to the existence of spirits and the information they may have to give us, is open to all, the aid of some Providentially-given *basis* of *truth* is even more imperatively needed in this new department of inquiry than in any other; and for the following reasons.

In the first place, because the spirits who communicate most frequently and habitually with men are precisely those who are nearest to them in ideas and in feeling, and who, consequently, knowing little more than the human beings with whom they are in sympathy, can only put forth short-sighted, discrepant, and erroneous statements; and, in the second place, because the true explanation of human life to which the phenomena of spirit-intercourse are intended to lead us, is to be found in its connexion with other modes and realms of existence that can only be made known to us by intelligences who have reached a higher degree of knowledge and purity, and who - not being at the command of men — will only transmit their teaching according to Providential ordering, in a centre already prepared for its reception, and with the aid of the master-mind selected by themselves as the channel of that teaching; a teaching which will necessarily differ from the various discrepant statements of the great mass of less enlightened spirits. And the proof that such teaching is what it claims to be, viz., information given by superior spirits in regard to matters essential to our progress, but which, in the nature of things, we could not find out for ourselves-and which they have therefore been charged by Providence to bring to our knowledge-can only be found in the light which it throws on the nature and aim of human life, on the ways of Providence, on duty, and on destiny.

All those who have *made a serious study* of the theory of existence which Allan Kardec was employed to elaborate, have arrived at the conviction that it presents the proofs of authenticity and superiority just set forth as conclusive; and they therefore accept it, as the fundamentals of all sciences are accepted by students: that is to say, *not as exhaustive*, but as the true basis of further discovery;- *not as a matter of arbitrary authority*, but on the broad ground of its intrinsic reasonableness, and the satisfactory solutions it gives of the great problems of life, insoluble by any other theory.

The high moral tone of *The Mediums' Book*, as of all the writings of Allan Kardec, is in unison with the assertion so often repeated by the spirits whose communications he has co-ordinated with such exceptional Clearness and reach of thought, that the *aim* of the open intercourse which is now being established between spirits and men is not the mere gratification of Curiosity, not the mere enlargement of the Sphere of interesting inquiry, not even the mere giving of the certainty of our continued existence

beyond the grave; but that the sole aim of this intercourse is the moral improvement of the human race, which it will accomplish through the new light it will throw on the nature and purpose of human life. By showing us that our present is always the result of our past and the arbiter of our future, and that the acquisition of wisdom and benevolence is the sole condition of happiness, this intercourse will furnish us with the most powerful incentive to the pursuit of knowledge and the practice of kindness; and it will thus effect the gradual amelioration of mankind that is destined to transform the earth from a world of punishment and discipline, as it now is, into a portal of the happier realms of existence to which we can only attain as the result of our intellectual and moral improvement.

No serious and intelligent student of the works of Allan Kardec has ever doubted that the theory of human progress, of which that early pioneer of the great spiritualistic movement of the present day was made to lay the foundations, will eventually be accepted as the basis of a reasoned-out religious belief, not only by all those who are interested in spirit-manifestations, but by the world at large. And this conviction of the Providential character of the works in question—abundantly justified by the reception they have eventually commanded wherever they have been introduced,—will doubtless be still further strengthened by the gradual acceptance of *The Mediums' Book* in England and in the United States, in proportion as its scope and character become known in those countries; for, while the progressive development of spirit-manifestation has constantly brought new confirmation to the explanations of the phenomena given in this book at so early a stage of the great movement—and often in advance of the occurrence of the phenomena themselves—not a single phenomenon has occurred to disprove or invalidate those explanations.

The innumerable Contradictory "theories" that are put forth, *ad nauseam*, by ignorant and pretentious spirits of the Borderland-" theories,, that explain neither the facts of life nor those of spirit-manifestation, and that Cannot even account for their own production-are proved, by their emptiness, to be mere figments of prejudice and imagination, that will collapse through their own hollowness. On the other hand, the facts of spirit-manifestation, even the most admirable and important, if observed, as is too often the case, mainly as matters of personal interest or curiosity, and without being connected by a theory that can unite them into a homogeneous and living whole, are as incapable of yielding intellectual and moral fruit as are the sands of the sea-shore of producing a harvest. But a theory that coincides with, and explains, all these facts, and that deduces from them the noblest intellectual and moral consequences, offers a firm and fruitful ground of truth and reality; and the general acceptance of such a theory can only be a question of time.

Anna Blackwell. Paris, 1876.

INTRODUCTION

Experience daily confirms us in the opinion that the difficulties and disappointments so often encountered in the practice of spiritism result from ignorance of its fundamental principles; and we rejoice to know that our endeavours to forewarn inquirers of the difficulties besetting this new study have borne fruit, and that many have been enabled to avoid them by an attentive perusal of the present work.

Persons who are interested in spiritism very naturally desire to enter into communication with spirits, and it is with a view to smoothing their path in this direction, by giving them the results of our own long and laborious investigation of the subject, that we have written this book, a perusal of which will show that those who imagine they have only to put their hands upon a table to make it move, or to hold a pencil to make it write, have come to a false conclusion in regard to the whole question.

They would be equally mistaken who should expect to find in this work a universal and infallible recipe for making mediums; for, although every one possesses the germ of the qualities necessary for becoming a medium, those qualities exist in very different gradations, and their development depends on causes which no one can control by his own will alone. The rules of poetry, painting, and music, do not make poets, painters, or musicians, of those who are not gifted with genius, although those rules guide men in the employment of the faculties which they naturally possess. So it is with the work before us; its object is to indicate the means of developing the medianimic faculty so far as the receptivity of each will permit; and, above all, to guide it in a manner that may elicit its usefulness. Not, however, that this is the sole end for which the present work has been undertaken.

Besides mediums properly so called, there is a daily increasing throng of people seeking to obtain spirit-manifestations; to guide them in their endeavours, to point out the obstacles which they may, or rather, *will necessarily* meet with in this new field, to initiate them into the manner of Communicating with spirits, to indicate the means of obtaining good communications, such is the aim of this new work, however incompletely it may be attained. The reader must therefore not be surprised at finding in this book information which, at first sight, may seem to be foreign to its purpose; experience will show its utility. After having carefully studied the subject, he will better comprehend the facts lie may witness, and the language of some of the spirits will then appear less strange to him. The writer therefore addresses himself, not to mediums exclusively, but to all those who are desirous to study the phenomena of spiritism.

Some persons have wished us to publish a very concise, practical manual, containing in a few words the method of procedure for obtaining communications from spirits; they think that a little book of that character would be widely disseminated, owing to the small price at which it could be issued, and would prove a powerful means of propagandism through the multiplication of mediums; but, for our own part, we should regard such a work as being, at the present time, more likely to be hurtful than useful.

The practice of spiritism is environed by difficulties, and is not exempt from dangers which only complete and serious study can avert. It is therefore to be feared that too succinct a treatise might lead to experimentation too lightly made, and that might be injurious to the experimenters. Spiritism is a subject with which it is neither proper nor prudent to trifle; and we shrink from bringing it within the reach of every frivolous individual who might think it an amusing pastime to talk with the dead. We address ourselves to those who recognise the serious nature of the subject, who comprehend its great importance, and who do not make a sport of holding intercourse with the invisible world.

The present work will comprise all the data we have arrived at through long experience and conscientious study; and will help, we hope, to give to spiritism the character of seriousness which is essential to its usefulness, and to dissipate the idea that it may be taken up as a matter of frivolous curiosity and amusement.

We would add to the above considerations one more of no small importance, viz., the unfavourable impression which the sight of experiments entered on lightly, and with no proper knowledge of the cause of the phenomena evolved, necessarily produces on novices and persons who are ill-disposed towards spiritism, giving them a very false idea of the world of spirits, and bringing ridicule upon the cause of spiritism; sceptics usually leave such sittings unconvinced, and but little disposed to admit that Spiritism can have its serious side. The ignorance and frivolity of some mediums have done more harm to the cause than is generally supposed.

Spiritism has made great progress during the last few years, and especially since it has assumed a philosophical aspect; men of intelligence having become convinced of its reality and importance. Spiritism is no longer a *show*; it is a *doctrine*: and people who laughed at "table-turning" no longer deride it. We believe that, by doing our utmost to retain spiritism on this serious ground, we shall gain more useful partisans than by provoking random experimentations that may be dangerous; a conviction abundantly confirmed by the number of those who have been brought over to our side by the mere perusal of *The Spirits' Book*.

Having treated of spiritism, in *The Spirits' Book*, under its philosophical aspect, our object in the present work will be to elucidate its practical side for the guidance of those who are seeking manifestations through their own medianimity, and for those who desire to arrive at a correct appreciation of the phenomena. We would enable them to understand, and thus to avoid, the stumbling-blocks they may find in their path. These two works, although this one is a sequel to the other, are to a certain degree independent of each other; but we would counsel the serious inquirer to read *The Spirits' Book* first, because it contains the fundamental principles of spiritist science, without a knowledge of which, certain parts of the present book would hardly be understood.

The present treatise has been corrected with the utmost care by the spirits who have superintended its production, and who have introduced into it a great variety of remarks and instructions of the deepest interest. They have revised the whole, approving or modifying its various portions at their pleasure; and their co-operation has not been confined to the giving of the articles signed by them, although we have only appended

their signatures when we have considered it advisable to do so, in order to render more evident the character of the communications given. Had we appended the names of all who have taken part in the work, every page would have borne testimony to their collaboration. We have, however, appended their signatures to all answers made by them to questions, the utility of so doing being evident; but names, in general, are of little importance in such a matter, what is essential being that the work, in its entirety, should answer the end proposed.

Allan Kardec. Paris, 1861.

PART FIRST—PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

CHAPTER I DO SPIRITS EXIST?

I. Doubt concerning the existence of spirits arises from ignorance of their real nature. People usually imagine spirits to be something apart from the rest of creation, and the reality of whose existence has not been proved. Many think of them as imaginary beings, known to them only through the fantastic tales of their childhood, and regard their authenticity much as they would that of the personages of a romance. Without stopping to inquire whether those tales, divested of absurd accessories, may not have some foundation of truth, they see only their absurdities; and not giving themselves the trouble to peel off the bitter husk in order to get at the kernel, they reject the whole, just as others, shocked at certain abuses in religion, confound the whole subject in the same reprobation.

Whatever ideas we may hold in regard to spirits, the belief in their existence is necessarily founded on that of the existence of an intelligent principle distinct from matter; this belief is therefore incompatible with an absolute negation of such a principle.

We assume then, as the ground-work of our belief, the existence, survival, and individuality of the soul, of which *spiritualism* is the theoretic and doctrinal demonstration, and *spiritism* the practical proof. Let us then, for a moment, leave out of sight the fact of spirit-manifestations, properly so called, and let us see to what conclusions we are led by inductive reasoning.

ESP 2. If we admit the existence of the soul and its individuality after death, we must necessarily also admit, first, that it is of a nature different from that of the body, since, when separated from the body, it enters upon a phase of existence distinct from the destiny of the body; second, that the soul retains, after death, its individuality and self-consciousness, and the capacity of feeling happiness and unhappiness, as otherwise it would be an inert being, and its existence would be equivalent to non-existence. These points being admitted, it follows that the soul goes somewhere; but what becomes of it, and whither does it go? According to the ordinary belief it goes to heaven or to hell; but where is heaven, and where is hell? People used formerly to say that heaven was "up on high," and hell, "down below; "but what is "up," and what is "down," in the Universe, since we have learned that the earth is round, and that, through the movement of all the stellar bodies, what is "up "now, will be "down "twelve hours hence, and this throughout the immeasurable extent of infinite space? It is true that, by "below," we may likewise understand the "deep places of the earth;" but what has become of those "deep places," since geologists have begun to dig into the interior of the globe?

What has become of those concentric spheres called the "heaven of fire," the "heaven of stars," etc., since we have found out that the earth is not the centre of the universe, and that our sun is only one of the countless myriads of suns which shine in space, and each of which is the centre of a planetary system of its own? Where is now the

Introduction

earth's importance, lost as it is in this immensity? and by what unjustifiable privilege shall we assume that this imperceptible grain of sand, distinguished neither by its bulk, its position, nor any peculiarity of attribute, is the only sphere peopled by intelligent creatures? Reason refuses to admit such an inutility of infinitude; and common sense declares that all the other worlds of the universe must be inhabited, and that, being inhabited, they, too, must furnish their contingent to the realm of souls.

But what, it may next be asked, becomes of the souls thus multiplied to infinity by the theory of the plurality of worlds, now that astronomy and geology have annihilated their ancient habitations?

To this question we reply that, the doctrine which formerly localised souls being opposed to the data of modern science, another and more logical doctrine assigns to then, as their domain, not any fixed and circumscribed localities, but universal space itself which is thus seen to be one grand system, in the midst of which we live, which environs us unceasingly, and touches us at every point. Is there anything inadmissible in such a theory, anything repugnant to our reason? Assuredly not; on the contrary, our reason tells us that it cannot be otherwise. But, it may next be asked, what becomes of the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, if we rob them of their special localities? In replying to this objection, we must pause to remark that incredulity, in regard to those rewards and punishments, is ordinarily provoked by the fact of their being presented under inadmissible conditions; and that, if-instead of such conditions, we assume that souls carry their happiness or their misery in themselves, that their lot is always determined by their moral state, that the union of good and sympathetic souls is a source of felicity, and that, according to their degree of purity, is their power of penetrating and discerning things that are still dark to souls of lower degree-all difficulties disappear, and the grand idea of our continuous existence becomes comprehensible and acceptable. Let us assume, still farther, that the degree of each soul's elevation depends on the efforts it makes for its own amelioration during series of existences that serve as the means and tests of its progressive purification, that "angels" are only the souls of men who have attained to the highest degree of excellence; that all can attain to that degree by effort and determination; that those who have attained to that degree are God's messengers, charged to superintend the execution of His designs throughout the universe, and finding their happiness in these glorious missions,-and we surely attribute to the idea of our future felicity an end more useful and more attractive than that of a perpetual state of contemplation which would be only a perpetual state of inutility. Let us assume, yet farther, that (lemons" also are no other than the souls of wicked men, not yet purified, but who have the power to purify themselves like the others, and it must surely be admitted that such a theory is more in conformity with the justice and goodness of God than the assumption that they were created for evil, and predestined to a perpetuity of misery. Is there, we ask, in such a theory, anything opposed to reason, anything, in a word, that the most rigorous logic, or plain common sense, can find any difficulty in admitting?

The souls, then, that people space, are what we call *spirits*: and *spirits* are nothing but the souls of men stripped of their envelope of gross terrestrial matter. If spirits were

beings apart from ourselves, their existence would be merely hypothetical; but, if we admit that souls exist, we must also admit that spirits are nothing else than souls, and, if we admit that universal space is peopled by souls, we must equally admit that spirits are everywhere. We cannot deny the existence of spirits without denying the existence of souls.

3. All this, it is true, is only a theory, though one that is more rational than other theories; but it is something to possess a theory that is not in contradiction with reason or science, and if, moreover, this theory is corroborated by facts, it must be admitted that our position has the double sanction of reason and experience. Such corroborating facts we assert to be furnished by the phenomena of spirit-manifestation, which constitute the irrefragable proofs of the existence and the survival of the soul. With many persons, however, belief ends here; they readily admit the existence of souls, and consequently that of spirits, but they deny the possibility of holding communication with them, "because," they say, "immaterial beings cannot act upon matter." This denial proceeds from ignorance of the real nature of spirits, about which the world in general holds exceedingly false ideas, erroneously regarding them as abstract beings, as something vague and indefinite; which is a great mistake.

Let us, in the first place, consider the spirit in reference to its union with the body. The spirit is the principal being, because it is that which thinks, and which survives the body, the latter being only an envelope, a vestment, of gross matter, that the spirit throws off when it is worn out but, besides this material envelope, the spirit has a second envelope, which is semi-material, and which unites it to the first at death, the spirit casts off the first, but retains the second, to which we give the name perispirit This semi-material envelope, which has the human form, constitutes, for the spirit, a vaporous, fluidic body, which, though invisible to us in its normal state, nevertheless possesses some of the properties of matter. A spirit is therefore not a mathematical point, an abstraction, but is a real being, limited and circumscribed, and lacking only the qualities of visibility and palpability to show its resemblance to human beings. Why then should it not act on matter? Is it because its body is fluidic? But is it not among the most rarified fluids, those which we call "imponderable," as electricity, for example, that man finds his most powerful motors? Does not imponderable light exercise a chemical action on ponderable matter? We do not understand the precise nature of the perispirit but, supposing it to be formed of electrical matter, or of something else equally subtle, why should it not have the same property of action as electricity, when under the direction of a will?

■ 4. The existence of the soul and the existence of God, as consequences of each other, being the basis of the edifice of spiritism, it is necessary, before entering on the discussion of this subject, to ascertain whether our reader admits that basis. If to the questions:—

- Do you believe in God?
- Do you believe you have a soul?
- Do you believe in the survival of the soul after death? he responds with a negative,

^{1.} See Vocabulary.

or even if he simply says: —"I do not know; I should be glad if it were so, but I do not feel sure of it "(a reply that would be usually equivalent to a polite negation, disguised under a gentler form to avoid wounding what he may regard as respectable prejudices), it would be as useless to continue our present argument with such a one, as it would be to demonstrate the properties of light to a blind man who did not believe in the existence of light: because, spirit-manifestations being neither more nor less than effects of the soul's peculiar qualities, it would be useless to reason thereupon with one who denies the soul's existence, and who would require a totally different line of argument from that of the present work. We therefore take it for granted that those who read this book admit the existence and survival of the soul; and if this basis be admitted, not as a mere probability, but as an acknowledged and incontestable fact, the existence of spirits follows as a natural consequence.

- 5. There still remains the question whether spirits can communicate with men; in other words, whether they can exchange thoughts with us? But why should they not do so? What is a man, if not a spirit imprisoned in a body? And why should not a free spirit be able to hold converse with a spirit in prison, just as a free man can converse with another who is bound in chains? If you admit the survival of the soul, is it rational not to admit the survival of the soul's affections? Since souls are everywhere, is it not natural to believe that the soul of one who has loved us during life should come near to us, should desire to communicate with us, and should, for that purpose, make use of the means in his power for doing so? Did not his soul, during his earth-life, act upon the matter of which his body was composed? Was it not his soul that directed the movements of his body? Why then, after death, if in sympathy with another spirit still bound to an earthly body, should he not borrow an earthly body in order to manifest his thoughts, just as a dumb man makes use of a man who can speak to express his wishes?
- © 6. But let us leave out of sight, for the moment, the phenomena which, for us, render this fact incontestable, and let us admit its reality simply as an hypothesis; and considering the question from this point of view, let us ask the incredulous to prove to us, not by mere negation-for their personal opinion is no law-but by arguments based on reason, that such communications can not take place. We will place ourselves on their own ground; and, since they insist on judging of spiritist facts by the laws of matter, we invite them to draw, from the arsenal of physical science, some demonstration, mathematical, chemical, or physiological, and to prove by *a plus b* (always, however, keeping in mind the principle acknowledged, viz., that of the existence and survival of the soul),—
 - 1. That the being who thinks in us during life will no longer think after death;
 - 2. That, if it thinks, it will not think of those whom it has loved;
 - 3. That, if it thinks of those whom it has loved, it will not desire to communicate with them:
 - 4. That, if it has the power of being everywhere, it will not have the power of visiting

us;

- 5. That, if it can visit us, it will not have the power of communicating with us;
- 6. That it will not be able to act upon inert matter by means of its fluidic envelope;
- 7. That, if able to act upon inert matter, it will not be able to act upon an animated being;
- 8. That, if able to act upon an animated being, it will not direct his hand, and make it write;
- 9. That, being able to guide a human hand in writing, it will not be able to answer questions, and transmit its own thoughts to the questioner.

When the adversaries of spiritism shall have proved all this, by reasoning as incontrovertible as that by which Galileo proved that the sun does not turn round the earth, we will admit that their doubts are founded. But as, up to the present time, their whole argument may be summed up in words such as these "I do not believe these things, therefore they are impossible they will doubtless tell us that it is for us to prove the reality of the manifestations; to which we reply, that we prove them both by facts and by reasoning, and that, if they admit neither the one nor the other, if they deny even what they see themselves, it is for them to prove that our reasoning is false, and that the facts we adduce are impossible.

CHAPTER II

THE MARVELLOUS AND THE SUPERNATURAL

** 7. If the belief in spirits and in their manifestations were an isolated exception, the product of a theory, it might, with some show of reason, be attributed to illusion; but how is it that we find this belief in vigour among all peoples, ancient and modern, as well as in the writings recognised as sacred in all known religions? It is, say some critics, because man, in all ages, has sought the marvellous. But what then is the marvellous? — That which is supernatural. — How do you define the supernatural? — That which is contrary to the laws of nature. — Ah! You are, then, sufficiently acquainted with those laws to assign a limit to their action? If so, prove to us that the existence of spirits, and their manifestations, are contrary to the laws of nature; prove they are not, and can not be, a result of natural law. Examine the doctrine of the spiritists, and see whether its chain of reasoning has not all the character of an admirable Jaw, solving all the problems that human philosophies have been unable to solve up to the present day?

Thought is one of the attributes of a spirit; the possibility of acting upon matter, of impressing the senses, and, as a natural consequence, of transmitting its thought, has its origin in the soul's physiological constitution, if we may so express it; there is, then, in this alleged fact, nothing supernatural, nothing marvellous. For a man who is dead to revive corporeally, for his scattered members to reunite to reform his body, would certainly be something marvellous, supernatural, fantastic; something that would indeed be a veritable derogation from His own laws that God could only accomplish by a miracle: but we find nothing of the sort in the teachings of spiritism.

8. Nevertheless, there are persons who say: "You, on your side, admit that a spirit can raise a table and retain it in space; is not that contrary to one of nature's laws, viz., the law of gravitation?" Yes, contrary to that law as commonly understood; but do you suppose that nature has revealed to us all its secrets? Before experiment had shown us the ascensional force of certain gases, who could have imagined that a heavy machine, bearing several men, could triumph over the force of attraction, and would not the assertion of such a possibility have appeared incredible? If a man had proposed, a century ago, to send a despatch five hundred leagues, and to receive an answer to it, in the course of a few minutes, he would have passed for a madman; if he had done it, he would have been declared to have the devil at his beck and call, for, in those days, it was only the devil who could travel so quickly. Why, then, may there not be some fluid, as yet unknown to us, possessing the property, under certain circumstances, of counterbalancing the action of density, as hydrogen counterbalances the weight of a balloon? This suggestion, we would remark in passing, is only a comparison, and not an assimilation, arid is brought forward solely to show, by analogy, that the fact assumed is not physically impossible. It is, in truth, precisely when the learned, in their observation of these phenomena, have endeavoured to proceed by the road of assimilation, that they have gone astray. In reality, the fact exists, and all tile negation in the world cannot get rid of it, for denying is not disproving; in our eyes, there is nothing supernatural about it, and this is all we have to say of it for the present.

9. "If the fact be proved," some may say, "we accept it as such; we even accept the cause which you assign to it, viz., that of an unknown fluid; but what proves the intervention of spirits? *That* would indeed be marvellous; *that* would be supernatural!"

To meet this objection, we should have to enter upon a demonstration that would be out of place in the present book, and that would, in fact, be a work of supererogation, since the action of disincarnate spirits, as the cause of the phenomena in question, is affirmed in every branch of its teachings. Nevertheless, to sum up these in a few words, we will say that they are founded, in theory, on this principle, viz., that *every intelligent effect must have an intelligent cause*, and, in practice, on the fact that the phenomena called *spiritist* having given proofs of the action of intelligence, must have their cause in something outside of matter; that this intelligence, not proceeding from those who are present at the sitting,-a point fully proved by experience,-must be extraneous to the sitters, and that, as no active agent is visible, this intelligence must be that of some invisible being. It is, then, through repeated observation that we have arrived at the certainty that this invisible being, to which the name of "spirit" has been given, is nothing else than the soul of one who has lived in the body, one whom death has deprived of his gross, visible envelope, leaving him with an ethereal envelope invisible to us in its normal state.

The existence of invisible beings once proved, their power over matter results from the very nature of their fluidic envelope; and the action of this power is intelligent, because, at death, those invisible beings only lost their body, but retained their intelligence, which is, in fact, their essence. The existence of spirits is therefore no preconceived theory, no mere hypothesis, invented to explain certain facts; it is a result of experience and of observation, and is the natural consequence of the existence of the soul: to deny their existence is to deny the soul and its attributes. If any one thinks he can give a more rational explanation of the phenomena in question, let him do so, taking care, however, to give a rational explanation of *all* the facts of the case; and, when this has been done, we can discuss the merits of both sides of the question.

10. In the eyes of those who regard matter as the sole power in nature, everything which cannot be explained by the *laws of matter is marvellous or supernatural;* and with such, *the marvellous* is only another word for *superstition*. With such minds religion, being founded on the existence of an immaterial principle, is but a tissue of superstitions; few dare to assert this openly, but many say it in whispers, and think they save appearances by conceding that religion is necessary for the people, and for keeping children in order. To such we would submit the following dilemma; either the religious principle is true, or it is false; if it be true, it is true for all men, if it be false, it can no more be useful to the ignorant than to the wise.

- 11. Those who attack spiritism as being "marvellous," really play into the hands of the materialist, since, by denying all extra-material effects, they virtually deny the existence of the soul. Go to the bottom of their thought, examine the tendency of what they assert, and it will generally be found that they reason from materialistic principles, implied, if not openly asserted. Under cover of their pretended rationality, their denial is but the logical consequence of their premiss; they reject all that naturally follows from the soul's existence, because they do not really believe in that existence: for, not admitting the cause, how can they logically admit its effects? Hence they are fettered by a preconceived opinion which unfits them for judging soundly with respect to spiritism, since their starting-point is the negation of all that is not material. For ourselves, as we admit the consequences that flow from the existence of the soul, it follows, as a matter of course, that we have accepted the facts qualified as "marvellous;" but it does not therefore follow that we are the champion of every dreamer, of every fancy, of all the eccentricities put forth by builders of theories. Those who could so far misunderstand us can know very little of spiritism; but our adversaries do not look at the matter so closely, and the duty of understanding what they are talking about is too often the thing they care least for. According to them, whatever is "marvellous "is absurd; and, as spiritism is grounded on facts which appear to them to be "marvellous," they jump to the conclusion that spiritism is absurd. Regarding their verdict as being without appeal, they think they have brought out an irrefutable argument when, after having paraded the histories of the convulsionaries of Saint Medard, the fanatics of the Cevennes, and the nuns of Loudun, they point to facts of trickery which no one contests; but are such histories the gospel of spiritism? Have spiritists ever denied that charlatans have imitated some of the facts of spirit-manifestation from love of lucre, that some pretended manifestations have been the creation of an overexcited imagination, or that fanaticism has dealt largely in exaggeration? Spiritism is no more answerable for the extravagancies that may have been committed in its name, than is true science for the abuses of ignorant pretenders, or true religion for the excesses of the fanatic. Many critics only judge of spiritism by the fairy tales and popular legends which are, in fact, its fictions; as well might they judge of history by historical romance.
- 12. According to the most elementary rules of logic, it is necessary to understand a question before discussing it for the critic's verdict is of no value unless founded on a complete knowledge of his subject; in that case, and in that alone, his opinion, even if erroneous, may be worthy of consideration but what is it worth in a matter of which he is ignorant? The true critic should give proof, not only of erudition, but of thorough knowledge of the subject of which he treats, of sound judgement, and unquestionable impartiality; otherwise we might as 'veil be guided by the opinion of the first organgrinder we meet with who should take upon himself to criticise Rossini, or that of any mere copyist who might think fit to censure Raphael.
- 13. Spiritism, then, does not accept all facts reputed to be marvellous or supernatural; so far from doing this, it demonstrates the impossibility of a great number of such, and the absurdity of certain beliefs which constitute, strictly speaking, "superstition."

It is true that, in what it does admit, there are things which, to the incredulous, appear to belong to the domain of the marvellous, in other words, of what they regard as superstition; but, let them at least confine themselves to the discussion of these, for, in regard to the others, the spiritist has nothing to say, and the sceptic, in denouncing them to us, would be only "carrying coals to Newcastle." Those who attack us, in regard to abuses which we ourselves repudiate, prove their own ignorance of the matter in question; and their argumentation is simply thrown away. "lout where," "cry some of our opponents," does the belief of Spiritists stop?" Read, and mark; and you will know. No knowledge is acquired without time and study; and spiritism, which involves the profoundest questions of philosophy and of social order, which deals at the same time with the physical man and with the moral man, is in itself a science, a philosophy, which can no more be apprehended in a few hours than any other. For those who are not content to rest on the surface, the study of such a subject is a question, not of hours, but of months and of years. Of what value, then, can be the opinion of those who arrogate to themselves the right of pronouncing judgement upon it, because they have witnessed one or two experiments, undertaken, perhaps, rather as an amusement than as a matter of serious inquiry? Such persons will doubtless affirm that they have not the leisure necessary for such a study; but, when people have not time to inform themselves correctly about any matter, they should refrain from talking about it, and especially from committing themselves to any opinion in regard to it and the higher their position in the world of science, the less excusable are they when they talk about what they do not understand.

■ 14. We sum up our preceding remarks in the following propositions:—

- 1. All spiritist-phenomena imply, as their principle, the existence of the soul, its survival of the body, and the manifestations which result therefrom.
- 2. These phenomena, occurring in virtue of natural law, are neither "marvellous" nor "supernatural," in the ordinary sense of those words.
- 3. Many facts are only reputed to be "supernatural" because their cause is unknown; spiritism, by assigning to them a cause, brings them within the domain of natural phenomena.
- 4. Among the facts commonly called "supernatural," there are many which spiritism shows to be impossible, and which it therefore relegates into the category of superstitions.
- 5. Although spiritism recognises a foundation of truth in many popular beliefs, it by no means accepts all the fantastic stories created by the imagination.
- 6. To judge of spiritism by pretended facts, the reality of which it does not admit, is to give proof of ignorance, and to deprive such judgement of all weight.
- 7. The explanation of the causes of facts acknowledged by spiritism, and the ascertainment of their moral consequences, constitute a new science and a new philosophy, requiring serious, persevering, and careful study.
- 8. Spiritism can only be conclusively disproved by one who should have thoroughly

studied it and sounded its deepest mysteries with the patient perseverance of a conscientious observer; one as well versed in every branch of the subject as the most ardent of its adherents; one acquainted with all the facts of the case, and with every argument that could be opposed to him, and which he must refute, not by denials, but by arguments still more conclusive; one, in short, who can give, of admitted facts, a more rational explanation than is given by spiritism. But such a critic has yet to be discovered.

15. We have, in the foregoing argument, pronounced the word *miracle*; a short observation on this subject will not be out of place in a chapter treating of the "marvellous."

The word *miracle*, in its primitive acceptation, and by its etymology, signifies *something extraordinary, something admirable or wonderful;* but this word, like many others, has lost its original meaning, and has come to be understood, in common parlance, as *an ad of the Divine power, contrary to the known laws of nature.* This is, in fact, its usual acceptation; and it is no longer applied, to common things which surprise us and of which the cause is unknown, except as a metaphor. It is not our intention to examine, in this place, whether God may see fit, under certain circumstances, to act in opposition to the laws established by Himself; our object is solely to show that spirit-phenomena, extraordinary as they are, derogate in no degree from those laws, that they have no "miraculous" character, and are not even "marvellous" or "supernatural." A miracle cannot be explained; spirit-phenomena, on the contrary, explain themselves, and in the most rational manner; they are, therefore, not miracles, but simply effects which occur in virtue of general laws. A miracle has quite another character; it is something unusual, isolated. If a fact can be made to recur, so to say, at will, and through different people, that fact is no miracle.

Science works miracles daily in the eyes of the ignorant. In former times, any man who knew more than his neighbours passed for a sorcerer, and, as people then believed that all unusual knowledge came from the devil, they generally burned him; but now that we have become so much more civilised, we content ourselves with consigning such a one to the madhouse.

For a man who is really dead, as we remarked above, to be recalled to life by Divine intervention, would be a veritable miracle, because it would be contrary to the laws of nature. But if the man's death were only apparent, if there were still within him some remains of latent vitality, and if a physician, or a magnetiser, should intervene and restore him to life, it would be, to men of science, a natural phenomenon; but, in the eyes of the ignorant vulgar, it would pass for a miracle, and its author would either be stoned by the mob, or venerated by it, according to circumstances. If, in some rural district, a natural philosopher, with the aid of an electrical machine, should strike down a tree, as though by lightning, the new Prometheus would certainly be regarded as being armed with diabolical power (and here let us remark, in passing, that old Prometheus would seem to have got the start of Franklin); but the arresting of the movement of the sun, or rather of the earth, by Joshua, would indeed be a miracle, for we know of no magnetiser

sufficiently powerful to accomplish such a prodigy. Of all the spirit phenomena one of the most extraordinary, without doubt, is that of direct writing, demonstrating, as it does, the power of the occult intelligences by whom it is effected; but it is no more miraculous than any of the other phenomena due to the action of those invisible agents, because the occult beings who people space are one of the powers of nature, and exercise an incessant action on the material world, as well as on the moral world.

Spiritism, by enlightening us in regard to this power, gives us a key to a host of things hitherto unexplained, and that are inexplicable by any other theory; things which, in the olden times, have passed for prodigies. Spiritism, like magnetism, reveals to us a law, the effects of which, if not wholly unknown, have been hitherto imperfectly understood; a law of which, while its effects were known, the world was ignorant, and the ignorance of which engendered superstition. This law being known, the marvellous disappears; and phenomena, formerly regarded as miraculous or super natural, are brought into the category of natural things. Spiritists no more perform miracles by making a table to rap, or the so-called dead to write, than does the physician when he restores a sick man to health, or the electrician, when he produces artificial lightning. Whoever should pretend to *perform miracles* by the aid of spiritism would prove himself an ignoramus or a charlatan by the mere fact of such a pretension.

16. Spirit-phenomena, like magnetic phenomena, before their cause is known, may well pass for prodigies; and those who, imagining themselves to have a monopoly of reason and common sense, refuse to admit the possibility of anything they do not understand, have naturally made these reputed prodigies the object of their raillery. And since religion asserts various facts of a similar character, those who thus scoff at the one, not unfrequently disbelieve the other. But spiritism, giving a rational explanation of many of the facts formerly held by science to be impossible, comes to the aid of religion, by proving the possibility or certain occurrences which are not the less extraordinary for not being miraculous, and in regard to which we see that God is not less great, nor less powerful, for not having violated His own laws. What discussions have been excited by the levitations of St Cupertin! Yet the suspension in the air of heavy bodies is a fact explained by spirit-laws; and Mr Home and other mediums known to us have frequently repeated the phenomenon manifested by St Cupertin. This phenomenon, therefore, is now included within the order of natural occurrences.

17. Among the facts of spiritism, we must give a prominent place to apparitions, because they are of such frequent occurrence. That of La Salette, which sets the clergy themselves at loggerheads, is no new thing for us. We cannot affirm that the fact asserted really took place, because we have no sufficient proof of its having done so; but we regard it as possible, because thousands of recent facts of a similar character are known to us, and because we can perfectly explain how such a phenomenon might take place. Let the reader only refer to the theory that we give, further on, concerning apparitions, and he will see that the phenomenon referred to is as simple and as probable as are a great number of other physical phenomena which are only regarded as prodigies because no key has yet been found to them. The identity of the personage said to have been seen at

La Salette is another question; for that identity is by no means proved. We simply aver that such an apparition may have presented itself; more than this we are not competent to allege, and we leave every one free to form his own judgement. Spiritism has not to occupy itself with the matter. All we say is, that tile facts of spiritism reveal to us new laws, and give us the key to a multitude of things which used to be considered supernatural; and that, as many things, which used to pass for miraculous, find a logical solution in spiritism, we need be in no haste to deny what we do not understand.

Spirit-phenomena are sometimes contested because they appear to contradict known laws, and people therefore cannot see how they are to be accounted for. Give them a rational explanation of these things, and their doubt ceases. Explanation is the true means of conviction; and we constantly see those who have never witnessed any spirit-phenomena as fully convinced of the reality of those phenomena as we are ourselves, because they have read, and have comprehended their possibility. Were we to believe nothing that we had not beheld with our own eyes, the sum of our convictions would be reduced to a minimum.

CHAPTER III PLAN OF PROCEEDING

■ 18. A very natural and praiseworthy desire of all spiritists, a desire which cannot be too much encouraged, is to make proselytes. It is with a view to facilitate their task, that we propose here to suggest to them the surest method, in our opinion, of attaining this end, and of sparing themselves the labour of making efforts that may prove of no avail.

We have already said that spiritism is a new science, a new philosophy; he who wishes to understand it should therefore, as the first condition of doing so, lay himself out for serious work, with the full persuasion that this science, like every other, is not to be attained by making a play of it. Spiritism, as we have said, touches on every question that interests humanity; its field is immense, and it is especially in the vastness and importance of its consequences that the experimenter will find this to be true. A belief in spirits is undoubtedly its basis; but this belief no more suffices to make an enlightened spiritist, than the belief in God suffices to make a theologian. Let us, then, consider the mode of proceeding which is best fitted to enable propagandists to attain the end they have in view.

19. It is generally supposed that, in order to convince, it is sufficient to demonstrate facts. Such would indeed appear to be the most logical method; nevertheless, experience shows us that it is not always the best, for one often meets with persons whom facts the most irrefragable do not convince in the slightest degree. The reason of this failure we shall now try to make apparent.

In spiritism, the question of spirit-communications is secondary and consequential; it is not the starting-point. Spirits being nothing else than the souls of men, the proper ground for argument is the existence of the soul. But how can we get the materialist to admit that beings exist outside the material world, when he believes that he himself is nothing but matter? How can he believe in spirits outside himself, when he does not believe that he has a spirit within himself? In vain will you urge the most conclusive arguments on such a one; he will contest them all, because he does not admit the principle which is their basis. All methodical teaching should proceed from the known to the unknown; what the materialist knows about, is matter; take your stand, then, on matter, and endeavour, above all things, while bringing his mind on to your standpoint, to convince him that there is in himself something beyond the laws of matter; in a word, before trying to make him a spiritist try to make him a spiritualist,1 but, for that purpose, you must appeal to quite a different order of facts, and adduce arguments of a very different character. To talk to a man of spirits, before he is convinced that he has a soul, is to begin where you should end; for he cannot admit the consequence, if he do not admit the premiss. You should, before undertaking to convince the incredulous, even by facts, make sure of their Opinion respecting the soul, that is to say, ascertain

^{1.} See Vocabulary for this distinction.

whether they believe in its existence, in its survival of the body, in its individuality after death; if their answer be negative, to speak of spirits would be trouble thrown away. This is the rule; we do not say there are no exceptions to it, but, in the exceptional cases, there is probably some other cause which renders your interlocutor less recalcitrant.

20. We must especially distinguish two classes among the materialists. In the first class we may place those who are so theoretically. With these, it is not doubt, but negation, absolute, and rational from their point of view; in their eyes, man is only a machine, which goes as long as it is wound up, but of which the spring wears out; a being of which, after death, nothing remains but the carcase. The number of such thinkers being happily very limited, it seems hardly necessary to insist upon the deplorable effects which the generalisation of such a doctrine would exert on social order; we have been sufficiently explicit in regard to this point in *The Spirits' Book* (147 and *Conclusion*, III.) In saying that the incredulous cease to doubt when met by a rational explanation,

In saying that the incredulous cease to doubt when met by a rational explanation, we must except those ultramaterialists who deny all power and intelligence outside of matter; pride renders the majority of these obstinate, and they persist in their denials from personal vanity; they resist all proofs, because they do not wish to have to change an Opinion expressed by them. With such persons you can do nothing, not even when they feign sincerity, and say: "Let me see, and I will believe." Others, more frank, say plainly: "If I saw, I should not believe."

21. The second class of materialists, and by far the most numerous (for materialism is a sentiment contrary to nature), comprehends those who are such through indifference, and, so to say, for want of something better; they are not materialists from conviction, and they would rejoice to be able to believe, for their state of uncertainty is a torment to them. In such men, there is a vague aspiration after the future, but this future has been represented to them under aspects that their reason could not accept; hence their doubt) and, as the consequence of their doubt, their unbelief. With such persons, incredulity is not theoretic; present to them a theory which is rational, and they will accept it gladly; such men can understand us, for they are nearer to us than they think. With the first class, speak not of revelation, of angels, or of "paradise," for they would not understand you, but, placing yourself on their own ground, prove to them, first of all, that the laws of physics are not able to explain everything; the rest will come in due time. It is altogether different with the incredulity which is not a foregone conclusion; in such cases, belief is not absolutely null, there is a latent germ, stifled by creeds, but which a ray of light may vivify; such doubters are like a blind man whose eyes you may open, and who will rejoice to behold the day, or like a ship wrecked mariner, who will seize the plank of safety you hold out to him.

22. Besides the materialists, properly so called, there is a third class of the incredulous, who, though spiritualists, at least in name, are none the less troublesome to deal with on that account; they are the *incredulous through ill-will*. They find it unpleasant to believe, because it would trouble their enjoyment of material pleasures; they fear to see in spiritism the doom of their ambition, of their selfishness, of the human vanities which are their delight; they shut their eyes, that they may not see, and stop their ears,

that they may not hear. We can only pity them.

- They know well what spiritism really is, but they outwardly condemn it from motives of personal interest. Of these, there is nothing to be said, as, with them, there is nothing to be done. If the thorough materialist deceives himself, he has at any rate the excuse of sincerity, and may be brought round by showing him his error; with the others, it is a resolution against which all argument fails. Time will open their eyes and show them, perhaps to their cost, where their interest really lay; for, as they cannot hinder the current of truth, they will, at length, be swept away by the torrent, together with the artificial interests which they desired to secure.
- 24. Besides these different categories of opponents, there is an infinity of shades, among which we may enumerate those who are *incredulous from cowardice*, and to whom courage will come when they see that others do not injure themselves by avowing their belief; the *incredulous from religious scruples*, who will learn, through enlightened study. that spiritism rests upon the fundamental bases of religion, that it respects all beliefs, and that one of its effects is to produce religious sentiments where they did not formerly exist and to fortify them where they were formerly wavering; the *incredulous from pride*, from a spirit of contradiction, from carelessness, from levity, etc., etc.
- disappointment. This class comprehends those who have passed from an exaggerated confidence to incredulity, because their expectations have been deceived; discouraged in consequence, they have abandoned the whole thing, and cast it altogether aside. They are like people who deny that probity exists, because they have been taken in. This, also, is the result of an imperfect knowledge of spiritism. When a person is hoaxed by spirits, it is generally because he has asked them something they could not, or might not, tell; or because he was not sufficiently enlightened on the subject to discern truth from imposture. Many people, it is to be remarked, see in spiritism only a new mode of divination; they fancy that spirits may be made to tell their fortunes, and, accordingly, flippant and mocking spirits amuse themselves at their expense, preparing for them mystifications and disappointments to which serious and prudent persons would not have laid themselves open.
- 26. A very numerous class, perhaps the most numerous of all, is one which we cannot place under the head of opponents, viz., those who are undecided. These are generally spiritualists, in principle; with the greater number of them there is a vague intuition of spiritist ideas, and an aspiration after something which they cannot define. Such persons only require methodical instruction spiritism is, for these, like a sunrise; it is the brightness of day which dissipates the mists of night; they hail it with eagerness, because it delivers them from the agony of uncertainty.
- 27. If from these, we turn to consider the different categories of *believers*, we remark those who are *spiritists without being aware of it*; they are, properly speaking, a variety of the preceding class. Without ever having heard of the spiritist theory, they have

an innate sentiment of the grand principles which it embraces; and this sentiment is found reflected, in certain passages of their writings or their words, so clearly that they might almost be supposed to be completely initiated. We find numerous examples of this class among writers, both sacred and profane; among poets, orators, moralists, and philosophers, both ancient and modern.

- 28. Among those whom direct study has convinced, we may distinguish:—
 - 1. Those who believe purely and simply in the manifestations. For these, spiritism is a simple science of observation, a series of facts more or less curious; they may be called *experimental Spiritists*.
 - 2. Those who see in spiritism something more than its peculiar phenomena, and perceive its philosophical bearing; they admire its morality, but do not practise it, and its influence on their character is slight or null; they change none of their habits, and do not deprive themselves of a single enjoyment; the covetous man remains sordid, the proud man remains full of himself, the envious and the jealous remain the same. For them, Christian charity is only a beautiful ideal; they are *inconsistent spiritists*.
 - 3. Those who are not content with admiring the morality of spiritist doctrine, but who accept it practically, with all its consequences. Convinced that terrestrial life is only a brief trial, they strive to profit by its passing moments, and to advance, on the road of progress by which alone they can reach a higher degree in the hierarchy of the world of spirits, through activity in doing good, and in repressing their evil tendencies. Intercourse with such is always safe, for their convictions preserve them from all thought of evil, and charity is in all things their rule of conduct. They may be classed as *true spiritists*, or better yet, as *Christian spiritists*.
 - 4. Lastly, there are the *excited spiritists*. The human race would be perfect, if it took tip only the right side of a thing. Exaggeration is always hurtful; in Spiritism, it engenders a too blind confidence in everything that proceeds from the invisible world; a confidence which sometimes becomes puerile, causing people to accept, too easily, and unreasoningly, what reflection and examination would have shown them to be absurd or impossible. Unfortunately, enthusiasm finds it hard to reflect, and is apt to get dazed. Such adherents are more hurtful than useful to the cause of spiritism; they are unfit to convince, because their judgement is distrusted; they become the easy dupes, either of spirits who hoax them, or of men who practise on their credulity. If they alone had to suffer the consequences of their blindness, the latter would be less regrettable; but, unhappily, such persons unintentionally put arms into the hands of the incredulous, more desirous of opportunities for railing than of conviction, and prompt to impute, to all, the absurdities of the few.
- 29. The methods for convincing vary according to the individuals to be acted on; for what persuades one does not touch another. One man is convinced by physical manifestations, another by intelligent communications, but the greater number, by reasoning. It may even be said that, for most of those who are not previously prepared





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The Mediums' Book



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