

A CALIFORNIA GIRL.

A Continued Story.

SYNOPSIS.

The story opens up with Sir Roydon Garth, a young mining expert, in California, where he had been sent by an English syndicate to develop mining property. In the discharge of his duties at Leadman's Gulch he had the misfortune to break his leg, and during his illness he cared for in a rough squatter's cabin by Seth Marvel and his son Lance. Lance, the old man's niece, is also a member of the old man's family. Sir Roy, impressed by her beauty and gentleness, falls in love with her and proposes, but she, realizing the difference in their positions, refuses his offer. After his recovery he foolishly exhibits a large sum of money which he carried in his belt. This aroused Lance's cupidity and he drags Sir Roy with the intention of robbing him. Liliac overhears Lance's plans and succeeds in arousing Sir Roy from his stupor, help him mount his horse and accompanies him along the trail. She finally yields to his persuasion to marry him upon his return from a proposed prospecting trip to Nevada. Arriving in San Francisco he places her in the care of Major Emmott and his daughter, English people traveling in the west, and arrangements are made that she shall accompany them to England to make the acquaintance of Sir Roy's aristocratic mother during his enforced absence.

CHAPTER XVII.

At the Seven Cents mine in Nevada, Sir Roy was thinking every hour of Liliac, and working hard to enable him to get home quickly to end her trial, the hardness of which he could only partly realize. It was very pleasant to sit at night in his log hut over a fire of pine logs, and think of the girl who was so simple, so good and so unselfish. His loneliness in a camp of rough men, uncheered by the society of women, made him feel more than ever in love with her; and every night he wrote parts of diary-like letters, to be dispatched to Delverton as soon as opportunity offered.

While Liliac was wondering at home whether the baronet really loved her, Sir Roy was every day counting more and more upon her love. He looked forward anxiously to the time to come for him to receive a letter from her saying that she had reached England safely, little guessing what would accompany that letter.

It was a happy evening for him when he was able to add to his long epistle, full of expressions of love and tenderness for the girl he hoped soon to make his wife.

"My now darling little girl, thanks to the energy with which the thought of you has inspired me, I was able to see the end of my work here definitely approaching today. In a week at the utmost now I shall be able to start for England to join my little wife—first a fortnight earlier than I thought possible. The journey will take three weeks; so that two months from today will see you my own little wife. It seems almost too wonderful to be true. I wonder whether you have been as lonely as I have, darling, and have looked forward as much to our reunion?"

He stopped when he had written these words and paused with his pen in his hand to enjoy the thoughts that crowded into his mind. How pleasant it was to think that, while he was looking forward so much to the time when he could hold his little "prairie-flower" in his arms again, with no doubts to disturb their perfect happiness, Liliac herself at home was looking forward just as eagerly to his return. It really did seem too wonderful to be true.

If Liliac could only have seen him as he sat thinking of her with the light of true love in his deep, grave eyes—if she could only have read his words! But she was never to see them. As Sir Roy dipped his pen in the ink again, preparatory to writing another sentence, he paused and then laid the pen down, his attention attracted by a sound that he had listened for every evening of late—the sound of a horse's hoofs on the road that led from the nearest township fifty miles away.

With an involuntary movement he covered the sheet on which he had revealed the tenderest emotions of his heart, and walked to the door of his log hut. A horseman was approaching at a gallop, and Sir Roy hailed him as soon as he was within hearing.

"Ahoy there! Letters?"

His heart beat a little more quickly when the answer came that he expected. He was to hear from Liliac at last, and the world looked very beautiful to him.

The man pulled up his panting horse at the door, and from the mail-bag fastened around him handed out three letters. Roy glanced at the writing quickly before he said a word. One was addressed to Evangeline's neat hand; and one in a girlish hand not so well formed. This must be from his love. The writing on the other he did not recognize, and he threw it with Evangeline's upon the table behind him. Liliac was the only letter he could think of at that moment. But, before he allowed himself the luxury of reading it, he had to offer some hospitality to the messenger after his long ride.

It was ten minutes before he could tear open with reverent fingers, the message sent to him; and the newcomer, who had spent the time in attending to his horse, was sitting at the table, improvised out of a packing-case, too much engrossed in doing justice to the meal which the baronet had laid before him even to speak. Roy was glad of his silence, for it enabled him to give his undivided attention to the letter he had waited for so long.

But, alas, the letter was a little disappointing! The fatal doubt in the Californian-girl's mind as to whether her conscience would ever allow her the happiness of becoming the wife of the man she loved could not but restrain her expressions of love. After the impassioned words which Sir Roy himself had just been writing, her letter seemed cold and formal, and the young baronet was conscious of a sense of disappointment.

"Any letters to take back?" asked the messenger, looking up from his meal.

"You are not going back tonight?"

"No; but I shall start in the morning before you are awake, I guess—four at the latest."

"Then I will bring down my letter and bring it down to you in the camp," said Roy. "You put up for the night at Wilson's store, I suppose?"

"That's so."

"Then I will bring down my letters in half an hour. Good night!" as the man rose to resume his journey.

As soon as he was gone, Roy sat down again to finish his long letter to Liliac; but, as he was doing it, a thought occurred to him that he must read his other letters first, lest they should alter his plans.

Evangeline's letter was written in her pleasant, cousinly style, saying that she would welcome Liliac as a sister, and adroitly toning down the hostility which Lady Garth felt toward the match. His pleasant epistle made Liliac's more constrained epistle seem all the colder by contrast; and a vague uneasiness had already crept into the baronet's mind when he opened the third envelope and found that the contents were from Major Emmott.

He was glad that the messenger had left him, and that no human eyes could watch him as he read the bitter accusations which the old major, urged on by his daughter, made against the woman of his choice. His face grew white and a mist rose before his eyes while almost prevented his seeing the major's big, bold handwriting. His heart was filled with a fierce resentment against Liliac; but he tried to combat it. It was not her fault, he told himself, that she could not love him, and had met in a person of Mark Mowbray a man for whom she cared more. Was it like that in the new life that he himself had opened out for her that she would care nobody for whom she would care more than for himself? She had liked him—he felt sure that she had liked him although she had refused to be formally engaged to him; but was it not only because he was the first man with refinement like her own whom she had met in her isolated Californian life? Now she must have met many, of course, and it was scarcely to be held that he could retain his pre-eminence.

Well, Liliac's happiness must be secured, he told himself, even if it be his heart; and Roy took to the fonder he had been preparing for her to hold her into fragments. If she had for this Mark Mowbray, for whom, according to the major, she had given her affection so unmistakably would not stand in her way by emphasizing the cruelty of the blow she was striking at his happiness.

So, in place of the diary-like letter which had occupied him so long, he wrote a short little note, begging Liliac to care for anybody more than himself, not to have any scruples in his account in admitting the facts, as soon as he had sealed it, he tore it in a white heat, down to the camp, together with a similarly short note to his mother, announcing his almost immediate return. At all costs, he must home now, he told himself, and a-kin personally whether all hope of happiness was at an end for him, as seemed too likely.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Thanks to the friendship of Evangeline Garth, which had become a day dearer to her, Liliac had found weeks pass at Delverton Hall far more quickly than she had imagined possible. Owing to Evangeline's failing help, as well as to her intuitive taste, it would have been difficult for anybody to discover her speech or manner a single moment due to her previous life.

In each of the letters which she wrote to her lover every week allowed more of her real self and love to show themselves as horses of making the baronet a suitable increased. It was unfortunate that the first of these letters reached the mining camp in Nevada after her departure.

The feeling that, in spite of her fears, her life was to be one of perfect, overwhelming happiness after her wife was increased by the long letters which she received from her fiancée giving her every detail of life at the mines in a way that Liliac she was always in his. She had read them over and over until she knew every word, and kisses the passages she loved that without glancing at them at all.

In spite of Lady's Garth's presence, Liliac felt very happy every evening, at the end of five weeks she sat in the drawing room attended to Evangeline's sweet voicing an air from "Cavalleria Rustica" to the accompaniment of her. For the first time her ladyship called her "Liliac" in place of "Miss Marvel," and there into the girl's heart a faint glimmer of hope that some day she might make the old lady care for her as she wished that she had the countess to her about her son, to her how anxious she was not to sin the way of his prospects, how she was to sacrifice her own happiness and release him from his professed subject of the engagement existed between them had been carefully by her ladyship; and Liliac could help feeling that the young baronet's mother looked upon her as an aunt all costs to keep Roy to a rash. She was very eager, therefore, to hear the exact state of her own mind on the subject; and when at that time she saw the letter which Liliac had written, she was anxious to see it, and she was anxious to see it, and she was anxious to see it.

"I do not think that there is much 'making' required," said her ladyship quickly. "Before you crossed his path I never had the least doubt about my son's feelings for his cousin, and that is what makes me think that you have mistaken Roydon's feeling towards yourself. Your beauty may have momentarily dazzled him—pardon my speaking so, but I feel that I can be quite candid with you—and the romantic nature of your meeting increased the spell. But I cannot help perceiving that only a generous desire to help you and to repay the sacrifice of a home, which you made for his sake, led him to suggest marriage."

As the haunting fear that had been with Liliac more or less strongly from the moment that Sir Roydon had first showed her the ring he had bought for

her was thus put ruthlessly into words, Liliac wondered how she could sit so silently listening to her companion. Her ladyship went on relentlessly.

"There was only one consideration which prevented my son from arranging a marriage with his cousin before he left England. It was his Quixotic sense of honor which made him afraid of the very appearance of marrying for money. You are not going, dear?"—for the girl had risen from her seat, a strange dazed look in her wide-open eyes.

"I should like to be alone, if you do not mind, Lady Garth, to think over what you have said."

"That is right, dear. I am sure you will do what is sensible when you comprehend how matters stand," said her ladyship, not ill-pleased with the interview as a whole, and the clearness with which she had expressed herself, and she had little room in her heart for pity for the friendless girl as Liliac walked from the room slowly and as if in a dream.

"I think I can guess, dear Lady Garth."

"You know that he cares for you, then?"

"Yes—of course I do. I should never have come here if Roy had not told me that he loved me."

"And so Roydon told you that he loved you, did he, dear?" she said. "I was afraid that the romantic circumstances of your meeting had made him misinterpret. You must not think too seriously of what he said when he was ill."

Liliac's flush had disappeared, leaving her face deathly pale; but she did not reply, and her ladyship went on rather hurriedly:

"It seems to me that Sir Roydon has been placed in a position in which he could not very well avoid offering you marriage as the only solution of the difficult problem with which you are faced. I can quite understand that he was attracted greatly by your personal charms, which I do not deny are very great." She smiled graciously, as if she expected the girl to be pleased with the acknowledgment; but Liliac's pale, statue-like face did not relax.

"You must remember that I know Roydon better than you do, dear."

"I prefer to think not, Lady Garth," said Liliac quietly; but her ladyship hastened on without noticing the interruption.

"My feelings are hostile to the idea of your marriage with my son; but you may pardon me when you know its cause. It is not that I have the slightest dislike to you, dear. Personally I am becoming very fond of you, in spite of the havoc you seem destined to play with the happiness of those I hold dear and with my own most treasured projects."

There was a pathetic tremor in her staid voice which touched Liliac.

"Indeed I would rather die, Lady Garth," she said earnestly, "than bring unhappiness to Roy's friends, if by dying I should not make him unhappy."

Her ladyship wiped her eyes.

"You are a dear, good girl," she said, "and I believe that you mean what you say; I cannot tell you how painful it is to me to have to speak to you in this way. I should not do it if I were not sure that you wished to do what is best for Roydon's interests. Let me speak to you candidly, dear. I have always been my fondest hope that Roydon and Evangeline should marry. Not only do they seem particularly suited for each other, but the marriage would tend to reunite the estates that have been in the family for many years. At present Roydon has not enough, apart from what he earns by his profession, to keep up the hall as it always has been kept up. It is a necessity that he should marry wealth. But it is not a question of money that affects me so deeply. It is my fear that Evangeline's heart will be broken if she loses my son's love. The dear girl carries her troubles very bravely, I know, and possibly she has not allowed you to guess her secret."

"Her secret?"

"Her love for her cousin. To me, of course, it is no secret, for I have watched them grow up together, and have been more anxious than I care to confess at the change which has come over my beloved Evangeline since you were first mentioned in Roy's letters. How can I help all my sympathies going out to the girl whom I have always loved as my own child?"

"But do you not think Evangeline cares for Roy only as a sister?" asked Liliac, who had almost persuaded herself that it was so.

Lady Garth shook her head.

"You cannot have observed her very closely if you have not discovered that the poor girl is deeply in love."

"I have more than suspected it," said Liliac thoughtfully; "but I did not think it was of Roy that she was always thinking. There may be another."

"No—I am quite sure there is no other," said her ladyship, honestly believing that she was speaking the truth. "I have watched her very jealously for Roy's sake."

She spoke with eager conviction, stealing herself against the look of pain and fear that had come into Liliac's eyes. The girl spoke calmly, however.

"I hope you are wrong, Lady Garth, but even if you are right, it does not rest with me to confer happiness upon Evangeline. I cannot make Roy love her."

"I do not think that there is much 'making' required," said her ladyship quickly. "Before you crossed his path I never had the least doubt about my son's feelings for his cousin, and that is what makes me think that you have mistaken Roydon's feeling towards yourself. Your beauty may have momentarily dazzled him—pardon my speaking so, but I feel that I can be quite candid with you—and the romantic nature of your meeting increased the spell. But I cannot help perceiving that only a generous desire to help you and to repay the sacrifice of a home, which you made for his sake, led him to suggest marriage."

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MADE SPIRITUALISM A STUDY

Admits the Possibility of Psychological Phenomena, But No More.

Studies in psychical research, carefully conducted, have a decided fascination for the investigating mind. The idea that there may be something really worth considering in mental telepathy, thought transference and hypnotism has been impressed upon many interested persons. Spiritualism has many followers, but skeptics abound. It has seemed more and more desirable that some person or aggregation of persons find an answer to the question, "What is the truth?"

In his book entitled "Studies in Psychical Research," Mr. Frank Podmore, author of "Apparitions and Thought Transference," has presented his own record of a number of investigations conducted by the Society of Psychical Research. This society was formed in 1882. In the opening chapter Mr. Podmore explains the purpose of his book, and says that "neither society nor any of my colleagues are in any way committed to the views expressed in this book." He says:

"In the chapters which follow an attempt will be made to estimate the value of the work done up to the present time by the society through its committees and by individual members, on the several lines of inquiry thus mapped out, and to sketch briefly the conclusions reached or indicated at the present stage."

Mr. Podmore's book was published by the Putnam's some months ago and contains a most interesting and comprehensive view of the subject. Of the spirit and method of the investigations, the author says:

"We did not, as already said, in undertaking the inquiry, assume to express any opinion beforehand on the value of the evidence to be examined. Whatever the private bias of individual members towards belief or disbelief, it cannot fairly be said that any such bias has been allowed to pervert the method of inquiry. To ascertain the facts of the case, at whatever cost to established opinions and prejudices, has been the consistent aim of the society and its workers. If some of our investigations have resulted in the detection of imposture, the discovery of unsuspected fallacies of sense and memory, and the general disintegration of some imposing structures built upon too narrow foundations; whilst others have revealed the occurrence of phenomena which neither chance nor fraud nor fallacy of sense can plausibly explain, and for which the present scientific synthesis can as yet find no place, it is pertinent to remember that the investigators were in each case the same, the methods pursued the same, and the object in all cases was simply the discovery of the truth."

"There is another not unnatural misconception of the nature of our work. Though fraud, and fraud of a particularly gross kind, is the most active force in producing some of the spurious marvels which have been the subject of our inquiries, yet fraud is, on the whole, neither the prolific nor the most dangerous source of error. In our experimental work in thought-transference and the like, we have mainly had to guard against an innocent deception—the sub-conscious communication of information by indications too subtle to be apprehended by the normal self, but readily seized upon and interpreted by the automatic or somnambulic consciousness. And in that part of our work where experiment is precluded by the nature of the facts, which has consisted, therefore, mainly in obtaining and recording the testimony of others to such spontaneous phenomena as visions and apparitions, the real source of error is again the sub-conscious sophistication of the record, owing to the instinctive tendency of the imagination to dramatic unity and completeness. It is enough to say here that our researches have led us gradually to attach more and more importance to the effect of time on the value of testimony."

There are some interesting scientific hints in the conclusions of the investigators. The fourth dimension of space may have a bearing upon so-called supernatural effects. Mr. Podmore says of one investigation:

"Zoller found experimental confirmation of his hypothesis of a fourth dimension of space—a dimension which should stand to the known dimensions of cubic space, height, length and breadth, in the same relation which height now bears to the two dimensions of plane space. Given the fourth dimension, the existence of which is mathematically foreshadowed, Zoller pointed out that, to a man or a spirit endowed with the capacity of dealing with it, the abstraction of objects from a closed box, the knotting of an endless cord, or the removal into invisibility of a solid object would be tasks of no special difficulty."

Speaking of the extreme credulity of many Spiritualists, Mr. Podmore concludes:

"The attitude of Spiritualists in general, then, was that of persons who had been more or less thrown off their balance by sudden exposure to experiences of a novel and surprising kind. Being for the most part ignorant of even the rudiments of natural science, they had accepted almost without question to any explanation which appeared on a superficial examination adequate to explain the facts; and had then exalted this explanation to the dignity of a religious tenet. Such a mental attitude was likely to be more conducive to beatific contemplation than to laborious analysis. The activities of the convert naturally took the form of missionary enterprise rather than of scientific investigation; and the séance-room became not a laboratory, but a propagandist institution."

"And the same childlike faith marked

the attitude of Spiritualists in general to the mental phenomena of trance-speaking, and the like. But between these is a broad distinction to be drawn. Whilst there is little room to doubt that the great majority—at any rate—of the so-called physical manifestations were due to deliberate and preconcerted fraud, such phenomena as trance-speaking, automatic writing, and the visions seen at seances were probably in many cases the genuine outcome of states more or less abnormal. . . . Perhaps the commonest form of automatic was the inspirational address or sermon. In many cases, no doubt, these addresses were actually composed and delivered in a state of somnambulism, or at least without the conscious co-operation of the speaker. But there is rarely anything in matter of the discourse which should lead us to look for inspiration beyond the speaker's own mind."

"This is Mr. Podmore's suggestion as to the prevalent belief that 'mediums' are 'controlled' by the spirits of the dead."

"While scientific men were content, for the most part, with recording the facts which they had observed, or believed themselves to have observed, and awaiting for the explanation, and Sergeant Cox and his adherents attributed the phenomena to psychic force radiating from the finger ends, or to the enlarged sensory powers of the psychic body, the mass of Spiritualists failed to find satisfaction in either attitude. As the peasant referred the movement of the steam engine to the only motive force with which he was acquainted, and supposed that there were horses inside, so the Spiritualists, recognizing, as they thought, in the phenomena the manifestations of will and intelligence, not appearing to be of any person visibly present, invoked the agency of the spirits of the dead. We can hardly call this belief an hypothesis or an explanation; it seems indeed at its outset to have been little more than the instinctive utterance of primeval animism. Later, when this explanation had become stereotyped, and had afforded the attitude even of honest mediums using them to claim for their most trivial automatic utterances an external inspiration, it became difficult even for intelligent students to free themselves from the prevailing belief—a belief so widely tested by the phenomena themselves."

Again Mr. Podmore says: "On the one hand, as shown in the last chapter, was an important source of error, the movement of an international character, which claimed a considerable number of more or less credulous adherents, and was based on certain alleged occurrences, which in many cases were unquestionably due to deliberate and systematic imposture. On the other hand, there was a small body of men whose opinions and testimony on this matter could not be lightly disregarded, who believed in and testified of their own experience to things which seemed, and perhaps still seem, inexplicable by any known cause. It was our duty to dismiss the whole subject as unworthy of investigation. The explanation of the facts recorded by Mr. Crookes and others does not lie on the surface. It may be that these facts will ultimately find their explanation in causes neither remote nor unfamiliar. But certainly not one at that time, and perhaps not now, is in a position, with such certainty as we bring to the other affairs of life, what the explanation may be."

"Mr. Crookes' interest in the phenomena of Spiritualism has been the source of congratulation to many believers in the wonders of the seance room. Mr. Crookes was a well known and careful scientist, an investigator of natural phenomena, before he became interested in psychical research. . . . Mr. Podmore records that many cases of disinterested fraud have been discovered. He says: 'In the squalid annals of spiritualism have been brought to light other cases where fraud was practiced without the attraction of pecuniary or any obvious social advantage. . . . "Moreover, the fuller knowledge gained in recent years of subconscious mental activities affords ground for thinking that deception of this kind may, in the beginning at any rate, be only semi-conscious. The line between what is conscious and what is not so conscious is at times hard to draw; since no one but the patient and not always the patient himself, is in a position to speak with authority. It is not unlikely that seemingly motiveless deception of the kind met with in these investigations may occasionally be the result of a disingenuousness foreign to his normal self. In considering the question, therefore, whether the phenomena occurring in the presence of certain persons are due to trickery or to 'psychic force' we should not be justified in pressing too far the argument drawn from the improbability of willful deception. We are bound to assume abnormality somewhere, and the latter may be easier to suppose the medium abnormally dishonest, than to credit him with abnormal 'psychic powers.'"

Mr. Podmore formulates some general propositions, as follows:

- "1. The conditions under which the phenomena generally occur—conditions for the most part suggested and continually enforced by the medium, such as to facilitate fraud and to render its detection difficult.
- "2. Almost all phenomena are known to have been produced under similar conditions by mechanics.
- "3. Almost every professional medium has been detected in producing results by trickery.
- "4. There are several cases on record in which private persons, with no obvious pecuniary or social advantage to secure, have been detected in trickery.
- "5. The condition of emotional excitement, in which investigators have for the most part approached the subject, and the antecedent bias produced by reports of the marvelous, are calculated seriously to interfere with calm and dispassionate observation.
- "6. It has been shown that very few persons are capable of exercising the continuous attention necessary to detect a conjuring trick.
- "7. The phenomena upon which Spiritualists rely are such as to require the exercise of continuous observation and experiments designed to dispense with the necessity for such observation have invariably failed.
- "8. Abnormal substances of various kinds are alleged to have been seen by numerous observers, but the mediums have never revealed anything abnormal.
- "9. The marvels recorded imply not one new force, but many."

The conclusion at which Mr. Podmore has arrived after his investigation of "premonitions and previsions" is "That belief in the possibility of supernatural foreknowledge is not justified."

Mr. Podmore is extremely cautious in attributing trance-intelligence to some influence outside of the subject, yet he admits the possibility of a directing intelligence, controlling the medium's subject. That was the possibility in the investigator and the cultivation of psychical forces Mr. Podmore admits frankly, but he discredits utterly most of the prevalent spiritualistic phenomena.

the attitude of Spiritualists in general to the mental phenomena of trance-speaking, and the like. But between these is a broad distinction to be drawn. Whilst there is little room to doubt that the great majority—at any rate—of the so-called physical manifestations were due to deliberate and preconcerted fraud, such phenomena as trance-speaking, automatic writing, and the visions seen at seances were probably in many cases the genuine outcome of states more or less abnormal. . . . Perhaps the commonest form of automatic was the inspirational address or sermon. In many cases, no doubt, these addresses were actually composed and delivered in a state of somnambulism, or at least without the conscious co-operation of the speaker. But there is rarely anything in matter of the discourse which should lead us to look for inspiration beyond the speaker's own mind."

"This is Mr. Podmore's suggestion as to the prevalent belief that 'mediums' are 'controlled' by the spirits of the dead."

"While scientific men were content, for the most part, with recording the facts which they had observed, or believed themselves to have observed, and awaiting for the explanation, and Sergeant Cox and his adherents attributed the phenomena to psychic force radiating from the finger ends, or to the enlarged sensory powers of the psychic body, the mass of Spiritualists failed to find satisfaction in either attitude. As the peasant referred the movement of the steam engine to the only motive force with which he was acquainted, and supposed that there were horses inside, so the Spiritualists, recognizing, as they thought, in the phenomena the manifestations of will and intelligence, not appearing to be of any person visibly present, invoked the agency of the spirits of the dead. We can hardly call this belief an hypothesis or an explanation; it seems indeed at its outset to have been little more than the instinctive utterance of primeval animism. Later, when this explanation had become stereotyped, and had afforded the attitude even of honest mediums using them to claim for their most trivial automatic utterances an external inspiration, it became difficult even for intelligent students to free themselves from the prevailing belief—a belief so widely tested by the phenomena themselves."

Again Mr. Podmore says: "On the one hand, as shown in the last chapter, was an important source of error, the movement of an international character, which claimed a considerable number of more or less credulous adherents, and was based on certain alleged occurrences, which in many cases were unquestionably due to deliberate and systematic imposture. On the other hand, there was a small body of men whose opinions and testimony on this matter could not be lightly disregarded, who believed in and testified of their own experience to things which seemed, and perhaps still seem, inexplicable by any known cause. It was our duty to dismiss the whole subject as unworthy of investigation. The explanation of the facts recorded by Mr. Crookes and others does not lie on the surface. It may be that these facts will ultimately find their explanation in causes neither remote nor unfamiliar. But certainly not one at that time, and perhaps not now, is in a position, with such certainty as we bring to the other affairs of life, what the explanation may be."

"Mr. Crookes' interest in the phenomena of Spiritualism has been the source of congratulation to many believers in the wonders of the seance room. Mr. Crookes was a well known and careful scientist, an investigator of natural phenomena, before he became interested in psychical research. . . . Mr. Podmore records that many cases of disinterested fraud have been discovered. He says: 'In the squalid annals of spiritualism have been brought to light other cases where fraud was practiced without the attraction of pecuniary or any obvious social advantage. . . . "Moreover, the fuller knowledge gained in recent years of subconscious mental activities affords ground for thinking that deception of this kind may, in the beginning at any rate, be only semi-conscious. The line between what is conscious and what is not so conscious is at times hard to draw; since no one but the patient and not always the patient himself, is in a position to speak with authority. It is not unlikely that seemingly motiveless deception of the kind met with in these investigations may occasionally be the result of a disingenuousness foreign to his normal self. In considering the question, therefore, whether the phenomena occurring in the presence of certain persons are due to trickery or to 'psychic force' we should not be justified in pressing too far the argument drawn from the improbability of willful deception. We are bound to assume abnormality somewhere, and the latter may be easier to suppose the medium abnormally dishonest, than to credit him with abnormal 'psychic powers.'"

Mr. Podmore formulates some general propositions, as follows:

- "1. The conditions under which the phenomena generally occur—conditions for the most part suggested and continually enforced by the medium, such as to facilitate fraud and to render its detection difficult.
- "2. Almost all phenomena are known to have been produced under similar conditions by mechanics.
- "3. Almost every professional medium has been detected in producing results by trickery.
- "4. There are several cases on record in which private persons, with no obvious pecuniary or social advantage to secure, have been detected in trickery.
- "5. The condition of emotional excitement, in which investigators have for the most part approached the subject, and the antecedent bias produced by reports of the marvelous, are calculated seriously to interfere with calm and dispassionate observation.
- "6. It has been shown that very few persons are capable of exercising the continuous attention necessary to detect a conjuring trick.
- "7. The phenomena upon which Spiritualists rely are such as to require the exercise of continuous observation and experiments designed to dispense with the necessity for such observation have invariably failed.
- "8. Abnormal substances of various kinds are alleged to have been seen by numerous observers, but the mediums have never revealed anything abnormal.
- "9. The marvels recorded imply not one new force, but many."

The conclusion at which Mr. Podmore has arrived after his investigation of "premonitions and previsions" is "That belief in the possibility of supernatural foreknowledge is not justified."

Mr. Podmore is extremely cautious in attributing trance-intelligence to some influence outside of the subject, yet he admits the possibility of a directing intelligence, controlling the medium's subject. That was the possibility in the investigator and the cultivation of psychical forces Mr. Podmore admits frankly, but he discredits utterly most of the prevalent spiritualistic phenomena.

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