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[Printed exclusively for private circulation.]

By A. P. SINNETT.

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HUGHES.

The following explanation of the circumstances under which I have been led to pay attention to occultism, is prepared for the benefit of any friends who may wish for information on the subject. It consists of little more than papers which have either been published or privately circulated before; but I have now gathered these together, so that they may be more readily available for reference.

The grandeur of occult science as a study turns on the fact, —as I now have reason to believe it,—that its superior adepts possess an extraordinarily enlarged comprehension of the origin, powers and destinies of the human soul. Inattentive readers of newspaper paragraphs often imagine that occultism has to do merely with the production of phenomena which appear on the surface to be a species of conjuring. This is like supposing that spectrum analysis has to do merely with the production of pretty colours on a screen. The colours are watched for the revelations they may make as to the composition of the sun and stars. The occult phenomena, for the evidence they afford that men exist who have so developed their will-power and psychological forces generally, that their thought will control matter even across vast distances, while they themselves, perfectly clairvoyant and clairaudient, are elevated into a position of immeasurable superiority to the rest of mankind.

For reasons which it would take long to explain, these men live secluded lives. We must make the best of the one opportunity which offers itself, at present, for obtaining some glimmerings of the science with which they are concerned. That is to say, we must examine the manifestations which take place through Madame Blavatsky's instrumentality, for evidence of the presence about her of forces and powers transcending those of ordinary humanity.

Madame Blavatsky, the authoress of *Isis Unveiled*, has devoted some thirty-five years to the study and practice of occult science in Egypt, Syria, India, and Thibet. She is a woman of great natural capacity for occult development; that is to say, she possesses, in a high degree, by nature, those attributes which spiritualists describe (without professing to understand) as "mediumship." I will here take up a narrative written last year concerning my first acquaintance with her. It will serve to introduce the more important experiences I gathered later.

"Madame Blavatsky has, undeniably, the power of producing, at will, the raps which are ordinarily called spirit-raps. I have been enabled to test this in scores of ways. Not merely would the raps come, in a clearly-defined way, when she rested her hands on a table, but they would come on a pane of glass, when one could stand on the other side and see plainly that nothing but her motionless hands were touching it. I have, repeatedly, in the evening, when the glass-door into the verandah would not be so readily available as in the day time for the experiment, taken a large glass clock-shade to the hearth-rug, and setting it down where there was no hard object in contact with it, have had Madame Blavatsky take off her rings and rest her hands on the top. Putting a lamp on the opposite side, you could see their under-surface all the time. Under these conditions the raps would still come just as clearly as ever,—sonorous raps as if made with the point of a pencil,—and these raps, when this was desired, would respond to any given idea; that is to say, if we asked them to spell a name, and the alphabet was called over, as at a spiritual *séance*, they would spell the name accordingly. If we assumed that there was a spirit present, and asked questions, the raps would spell out any nonsense Madame chose to make them spell.

"Now, here is a (between will and ma any explanation as reply is—No! Th the secrets of initia ing will-power, so as possessed, in high sons scattered abou eastern countries, fi is one of the stran after all, the West gives a shock to man but Madame Blav eastern 'adepts,' a from them. In its ordeals of the most t close any part of th mena as she may h great deal may be le of the mystery, and

"Yog-vidya, as th of which, in ancien there are now. It i purification and asc coarse and revoltin ascetics practise. and impulses from t essential a part of that he can only of mankind. This who are not yogees development is to affairs that is enti independent of time in a spectral shap at pleasure. This body.' The expres given to the medi science, but which ether which pervas body is said to be occult powers. Th abnormal and unh that they are look themselves, have ac way the yogee can fundamental ideas

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"Now, here is a clear case of a connexion established between will and matter. You will ask, does Madame give any explanation as to how the raps are produced? The reply is—No! The mystery hinges on to what she calls the secrets of initiation. It appears that the art of developing will-power, so as to produce objective effects, is now only possessed, in high development, by a small number of persons scattered about the world, chiefly, if not entirely, in eastern countries, from whom alone it can be learned. This is one of the strange features of the subject. To find that, after all, the West has to come to the East for knowledge, gives a shock to many of our established theories of progress; but Madame Blavatsky appears to be a disciple of these eastern 'adepts,' and to have gathered all her knowledge from them. In its pursuit she has gone through trials and ordeals of the most terrible kind. She is not at liberty to disclose any part of this knowledge except such of its phenomena as she may have special permission to disclose; but a great deal may be learned from her about the external aspects of the mystery, and these I will briefly describe.

"Yog-vidya, as the occult knowledge is called, is a science of which, in ancient times, there were more devotees than there are now. It is attained through long courses of self-purification and asceticism, though this need not be of the coarse and revolting kind which the lower type of Indian ascetics practise. The entire elimination of selfish aims and impulses from the whole nature of the yog student, is so essential a part of his training, that it ensues, *ex hypothesi*, that he can only hold and exercise his powers for the good of mankind. This is a fortunate circumstance for the people who are not yogees, as the ultimate result of the will-power development is to give the yogee a control over human affairs that is entirely superhuman. To begin with, he is independent of time and space. He can go about anywhere, in a spectral shape which he can render visible or invisible at pleasure. This spectral shape is spoken of as his 'astral body.' The expression is derived from one of the names given to the medium which is hypothetical for ordinary science, but which yog, apparently, knows all about—the ether which pervades all space. The power of leaving the body is said to be the first and most easily-acquired of the occult powers. The allegation is, that persons who, in an abnormal and unhealthy condition, will sometimes dream that they are looking, from an external point of view, at themselves, have accidentally got out of their bodies, in the way the yogee can do at any time, at will. It is one of the fundamental ideas of Yog-vidya that an adept shall never

make a boast of anything he can do. And he must never show off. How then, you say, has it happened that Madame Blavatsky has, to a certain extent, shown off?—for though she has not done much for us, she is reported to have done a great deal in America. The explanation appears to be that she was sent to America on a distinct mission by 'the Brothers,' as the superior adepts are called by their disciples. The Brothers were pleased, apparently, to think that spiritualistic theories were assuming an erroneous and extravagant development, and Madame Blavatsky got her orders accordingly to go to America and try to establish a more correct view of the subject. In the fulfilment of this mission she was not only empowered to use her own skill, but aided to perform phenomena of overwhelming effect by the great unseen Brothers themselves.

"Colonel Olcott's conversion is, in itself, a very curious and striking circumstance. A man originally of good position and means in New-York, he has now cast all civilised life entirely aside, and has constituted himself the devoted follower and disciple of the Brothers; Madame Blavatsky being for these earlier years of his probation his guide and teacher. A probation of seven years is exacted from the neophyte, and at the expiration of this, Colonel Olcott hopes to be initiated into the first degree of that knowledge in which, I am given to understand, there are nine degrees in all, of which nine, Madame Blavatsky has taken five. For twenty-five years or so, in America, Colonel Olcott was an ordinary spiritualist, though he had given up the practical pursuit of phenomena for the greater part of that time, disgusted at the unprogressive character of *séance* research. Shortly before the period at which he met Madame Blavatsky, he had been induced to visit the Eddy Homestead in Vermont, to examine into the genuineness of the materialisations alleged to be taking place there. At the Eddy Homestead he met Madame Blavatsky, who ultimately convinced him that the phenomena he was witnessing, under the impression they were produced by spiritual agency, could be produced at will by means of the science practised by oriental sages. On this head you may read masses of more or less obscure explanation in *Isis*. The end of it all was, that Colonel Olcott resolved to undertake the life he has been leading ever since. The immediate task on which he as well as Madame Blavatsky are at present engaged here, is the development of the Theosophical Society, which, I may add, has branches in London and America, and which any one interested in occult research would do well to join. The society may be described as a limb of the mighty yog organization. In its

superficial aspect it is a scientific society, though in its initiation, and masonic devotion to psychology, but it has been found to be the superior adepts, and its progress.

"When the Theosophical Society came into existence in America, it was authorized and authorized to perform miraculous feats, no stand, be found in the world. Colonel Olcott tells me that Madame Blavatsky, saw enough to understand that the feats accomplished, were not mere notions to have them were merely related to objects which yogis know things are susceptible of effort of will on the extraordinary manner or astral light, as it is called, act of creation, or manifestation. The Native Editor tells me that he possess a certain amount of duplicated for him by Madame Blavatsky. This was before the eyes, of many similar stories, a factory for people who of yog power what they concluded from giving them connexion with such matters defend herself, even result of imposture.

"During her visit to America and Colonel Olcott and Swami Dayananda were engaged in occult matters. What was the result: it was a phenomenon occurred: it was in the midst of us, just as they came in spiritual *séances*; they came in light; they came in a manner.

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superficial aspect it is simply a society like any other scienti- fic society, though involving some little innocuous forms of initiation, and masonic signs of recognition ; its attention is devoted to psychological inquiry and oriental philosophy, but it has been founded in accordance with the directions of the superior adepts, who are supposed to take a warm inter- est in its progress.

“ When the Theosophical Society was first being pushed into existence in America, Madame Blavatsky was apparent- ly authorized and assisted to perform a great number of miraculous feats, notice of which will, I am given to under- stand, be found in the New York papers of the time. Colo- nel Olcott tells me that he, being always with Madame Blavatsky, saw enough to set up fifty men in a robust faith. Certainly his faith is now very robust ; but I can well under- stand that the feats Madame Blavatsky is reported to have accomplished, were *too* outrageously opposed to ordinary notions to have their proper effect on persons to whom they were merely related. One of the theories about material objects which yog philosophy appears to teach, is that all things are susceptible of reproduction or duplication, by an effort of will on the part of the trained adept. In some extraordinary manner, the universal medium,—ether, akase, or astral light, as it is variously called,—is employed in the act of creation, or whatever else one may like to call it. The Native Editor of the *Anurita Bazar Patrika* is said to possess a certain mirror which was thus miraculously duplicated for him at his request in Bombay by Madame Blavatsky. This was done apparently in the presence, and before the eyes, of several persons. Colonel Olcott relates many similar stories, but they would be horribly unsatis- factory for people who have never seen any manifestations of yog power whatever. Madame Blavatsky is so far pre- cluded from giving any account of the *modus operandi*, in con- nexion with such manifestations, that she cannot adequately defend herself, even, from suspicion that they may be the result of imposture.

“ During her visit to us, we went down to Benares, with her and Colonel Olcott, to see a certain Hindoo reformer called Swami Dayanand Saraswati, who is a great ally of theirs in occult matters. While we were there, one abnormal pheno- menon occurred : two or three roses fell, one evening, in the midst of us, just as such things are sometimes brought at spiritual séances ; only in this case they were brought in the light ; they came down in the most clearly supernatural manner.

" The upshot of all this is, that certainly there is more in the oriental theory of magic than most of us have yet supposed. As regards its bearing on the interpretation to be put on the occurrences at spiritual *séances*, Isis will tell you more than I possibly can in a letter. Madame does not absolutely deny that departed spirits ever communicate; but her position is, that in the vast majority of the cases where spiritualists think they are getting *bonâ fide* communications, they are being misled by occurrences ensuing from the unconscious play of the forces residing in the medium, added to which she relegates an immense number of alleged phenomena to the regions of pure imposture. She has gone to *séances* with friends in London, who have fancied they were in the habit of getting real communications from spirits through inspirational mediums, and has written out beforehand what the spirit would say. Her comprehension of the forces at work enabled her to control the medium and make the alleged spirit say what had been previously arranged.

" The interest attached to the apparent phenomena of Yogvidya itself are two-fold; *first*, there is the light it throws on science, holding out the prospect of great achievements, beyond any yet attained, in the direction of extending man's control over matter. The theory that the ego in the living man may accomplish the remarkable result hitherto supposed to be only possible for beings in another state of existence, is very striking. The late Lord Lytton, it appears, was largely imbued with a knowledge of eastern yogeism, and his imaginative account of the achievements accomplished by Vril, in the *Coming Race*, are altogether inspired from that fount. Then the experience which the yogee apparently obtains, of an existence out of the body, constitutes not so much a proof, as a direct foretaste, of a conscious disembodied existence after the death of the body."

During the past summer Madame Blavatsky visited my wife and myself at Simla, and the occurrences which took place there became the subject of much discussion in the newspapers. This was first set going by the publication of the following statement in the *Pioneer* :—

" On Sunday, the 3rd of October, at Mr. Hume's house at Simla, there were present at dinner Mr. and Mrs. Hume, Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett, Mrs. Gordon, Mr. F. Hogg, Captain

P. J. Maitland, M and Madame Blavatsky, recently seen me Blavatsky's presence, and in the Mrs. Hume if there was something she her, namely, a small possessed, but had it to pass out of said if she would definitely in her endeavour to procure it, remembered the art breast brooch set and the back, mad drew a rough sketch then wrapped up cigarette papers, hoped the brooch evening. At the the paper in which little later, in the would not be bro looked for in the accompanying her, brooch fall into a the way to such prolonged and ca eventually a small papers, was found being opened on exactly correspond Mrs. Hume identified. None of the party or heard of the bro years. Mrs. Hume she parted with it. She herself stated Madame asked her to have, that the mother, flashed a

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P. J. Maitland, Mr. Beatson, Mr. Davison, Colonel Olcott, and Madame Blavatsky. Most of the persons present having recently seen many remarkable occurrences in Madame Blavatsky's presence, conversation turned on occult phenomena, and in the course of this Madame Blavatsky asked Mrs. Hume if there was anything she particularly wished for. Mrs. Hume at first hesitated, but in a short time said there was something she would particularly like to have brought to her, namely, a small article of jewellery that she had formerly possessed, but had given away to a person who had allowed it to pass out of her possession. Madame Blavatsky then said if she would fix the image of the article in question very definitely in her mind, she, Madame Blavatsky, would endeavour to procure it. Mrs. Hume then said that she vividly remembered the article, and described it as an old-fashioned breast brooch set round with pearls, with glass at the front, and the back, made to contain hair. She then, on being asked, drew a rough sketch of the brooch. Madame Blavatsky then wrapped up a coin attached to her watch-chain in two cigarette papers, and put it in her dress, and said that she hoped the brooch might be obtained in the course of the evening. At the close of dinner she said to Mr. Hume that the paper in which the coin had been wrapped was gone. A little later, in the drawing-room, she said that the brooch would not be brought into the house, but that it must be looked for in the garden, and then as the party went out accompanying her, she said she had clairvoyantly seen the brooch fall into a star-shaped bed of flowers. Mr. Hume led the way to such a bed in a distant part of the garden. A prolonged and careful search was made with lanterns, and eventually a small paper packet, consisting of two cigarette papers, was found amongst the leaves by Mrs. Sinnett. This being opened on the spot was found to contain a brooch exactly corresponding to the previous description, and which Mrs. Hume identified as that which she had originally lost. None of the party, except Mr. and Mrs. Hume, had ever seen or heard of the brooch. Mr. Hume had not thought of it for years. Mrs. Hume had never spoken of it to anyone since she parted with it, nor had she, for long, even thought of it. She herself stated, after it was found, that it was only when Madame asked her whether there was anything she would like to have, that the remembrance of this brooch, the gift of her mother, flashed across her mind.

"Mrs. Hume is not a spiritualist, and up to the time of the occurrence described, was no believer either in occult phenomena or in Madame Blavatsky's powers. The conviction of all present was, that the occurrence was of an absolutely un-

impeachable character, as an evidence of the truth of the possibility of occult phenomena. The brooch is unquestionably the one which Mrs. Hume lost. Even supposing, which is practically impossible, that the article, lost months before Mrs. Hume ever heard of Madame Blavatsky, and bearing no letters or other indication of original ownership, could have passed in a natural way into Madame Blavatsky's possession, even then she could not possibly have foreseen that it would be asked for, as Mrs. Hume herself had not given it a thought for months.

"This narrative, read over to the party, is signed by—

<p>" A. O. HUME. M. A. HUME. FRED. R. HOGG. A. P. SINNETT. PATIENCE SINNETT.</p>	<p>ALICE GORDON. P. J. MAITLAND. WM. DAVISON. STUART BEATSON."</p>
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A week or two later the following letters appeared in the *Pioneer* of the 23rd October:—

"SIR,—The account of the discovery of Mrs. Hume's brooch has called forth several letters, and many questions have been asked, some of which I may answer on a future occasion, but I think it only right to first contribute further testimony to the occult powers possessed by Madame Blavatsky. In thus coming before the public one must be prepared for ridicule, but it is a weapon, which we who know something of these matters, can well afford to despise. On Thursday last, at about ½ past 10 o'clock, I was sitting in Madame Blavatsky's room conversing with her, and in a casual way asked her if she would be able to send me anything by occult means when I returned to my home. She said 'No;' and explained to me some of the laws under which she acts, one being that she must know the place and have been there—the more recently the better—in order to establish a magnetic current. She then recollected that she had been somewhere that morning, and after a moment's reflection remembered whose house it was she had visited.* She said she could send a cigarette there, if I would go *at once* to verify the fact. I, of course, consented. I must here mention that I had seen her do this kind of thing once before; and the reason she gives for sending *cigarettes* is, that the paper and tobacco being always about her person, are highly magnetized, and therefore more

* The house at which the cigarette was found was Mr. O'Meara's. He is quite willing that this should be stated.

amenable to her power, and is not supernatural, but is known to us. To continue the paper and slowly to I never taking my eyes from the corner which I at once put in possession I can declare the remainder of the paper. The experiment which might result of no consequence with that cigarette into the fire once to the gentleman's should find in the place of the cigarette paper I it was, and in the present opened out the cigarette exactly. It would be useless in connection with these reasonable to expect any other experience had proved that one asks or expects is, the members of the community amount of evidence now being placed all over Europe that the majority should be satisfied; it is within the power to convince himself of their

"SIR,—I have been at the instance which took place on the evening of that day. Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Sinnett's house in Simla. In various matters, Madame Blavatsky experimented in a manner with Mr. Sinnett. She then searched her pocket and marked the lines in pencil. She then passed each paper across the lines. At the same time Madame Blavatsky tently watched her proceed two feet from her hands. She then tear the papers, alleging that they become imbued with the

amenable to her power, which she most emphatically declares is not supernatural, but merely the manifestation of laws unknown to us. To continue my story. She took out a cigarette paper and slowly tore off a corner as zig-zig as possible, I never taking my eyes off her hands. She gave me the corner which I at once put into an envelope, and it never left my possession I can declare. She made the cigarette with the remainder of the paper. She then said she would try an experiment which might not succeed, but the failure would be of no consequence with me. She then most certainly put that cigarette into the fire, and I saw it burn, and I started at once to the gentleman's house, scarcely able to believe that I should find in the place indicated by her the counterpart of the cigarette paper I had with me, but sure enough there it was, and in the presence of the gentleman and his wife I opened out the cigarette and found my corner piece fitted exactly. It would be useless to try and explain any theory in connection with these phenomena, and it would be unreasonable to expect any one to believe in them, unless their own experience had proved the possibility of such wonders. All one asks or expects is, that a few of the more intelligent members of the community may be led to look into the vast amount of evidence now accumulated of the phenomena taking place all over Europe and America. It seems a pity that the majority should be in such utter ignorance of these facts; it is within the power of any one visiting England to convince himself of their truth.

"ALICE GORDON."

"SIR,—I have been asked to give an account of a circumstance which took place in my presence on the 13th instant. On the evening of that day I was sitting alone with Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott in the drawing-room of Mr. Sinnett's house in Simla. After some conversation on various matters, Madame Blavatsky said she would like to try an experiment in a manner which had been suggested to her by Mr. Sinnett. She thereupon took two cigarette papers from her pocket and marked on each of them a number of parallel lines in pencil. She then tore a piece off the end of each paper across the lines, and gave them to me. At that time Madame Blavatsky was sitting close to me, and I intently watched her proceedings, my eyes being not more than two feet from her hands. She declined to let me mark or tear the papers, alleging that if handled by others they would become imbued with their personal magnetism, which would

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counteract her own. However, the torn pieces were handed directly to me, and I could not observe any opportunity for the substitution of other papers by sleight of hand. The genuineness or otherwise of the phenomena afterwards presented appears to rest on this point. The torn-off pieces of the paper remained in my closed left hand until the conclusion of the experiment. Of the larger pieces Madame Blavatsky made two cigarettes, giving the first to me to hold while the other was being made up. I scrutinized this cigarette very attentively, in order to be able to recognize it afterwards. The cigarettes being finished, Madame Blavatsky stood up, and took them between her hands which she rubbed together. After about twenty or thirty seconds, the grating noise of the paper, at first distinctly audible, ceased. She then said the current* is passing round this end of the room, and I can only send them somewhere near here. A moment afterwards she said one has fallen on the piano, the other near that bracket. As I sat on a sofa with my back to the wall the piano was opposite, and the bracket, supporting a few pieces of China, was to the right, between it and the door. Both were in full view across the rather narrow room. The top of the piano was covered with piles of music books, and it was among these Madame Blavatsky thought a cigarette would be found. The books were removed, one by one, by myself, but without seeing anything. I then opened the piano, and found a cigarette on a narrow shelf inside it. This cigarette I took out and recognized as the one I had held in my hand. The other was found in a covered cup on the bracket. Both cigarettes were still damp where they had been moistened at the edges in the process of manufacture. I took the cigarettes to a table, without permitting them to be touched or even seen by Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott. On being unrolled and smoothed out the torn, jagged edges were found to fit exactly to the pieces that I had all this time retained in my hand. The pencil marks also corresponded. It would therefore appear that the papers were actually the same as those I had seen torn. Both the papers are still in my possession. It may be added that Colonel Olcott sat near me with his back to Madame Blavatsky during the experiment, and did not move till it was concluded.

" P. J. MAITLAND, *Captain.*"

* The theory is that a current of what can only be called magnetism, can be made to convey objects, previously dissipated by the same force, to any distance, and in spite of the intervention of any amount of matter.

" SIR,—With referer your columns, on the manifestations, it may striking incident which I had occasion to call interview she tore off ing me to hold the sam of the paper she prepar and in a few moments c her hands. We were s I inquired if we were like a short pause Madame the dining-room, where top of a curtain hangin table and a chair place difficulty to reach and indicated. This cigar correspond exactly wi fore in the drawing-ro which I had retained in jagged edges of the to been rolled. To the b plete and satisfactory ; ing my opinion as to th ing sure that your read nomena will prefer exe ter. I merely give yo I saw. I may be per the Theosophist Societ in favour of occult scien the proclaimed object Olcott presides.

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" SIR,—As many joy about the recent broo the public that belie and powers have a Writers of light-hear sons who attested that able self-confidence i but this letter may p no doubt, to even you

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"SIR,—With referencé to the correspondence now filling your columns, on the subject of Madame Blavatsky's recent manifestations, it may interest your readers if I record a striking incident which took place last week in my presence. I had occasion to call on Madame, and in the course of our interview she tore off a corner from a cigarette paper, asking me to hold the same, which I did. With the remainder of the paper she prepared a cigarette in the ordinary manner, and in a few moments caused this cigarette to disappear from her hands. We were sitting at the time in the drawing-room. I inquired if we were likely to find this cigarette again, and after a short pause Madame requested me to accompany her into the dining-room, where the cigarette would be found on the top of a curtain hanging over the window. By means of a table and a chair placed thereon, I was enabled with some difficulty to reach and take down a cigarette from the place indicated. This cigarette I opened, and found the paper to correspond exactly with that I had seen a few minutes before in the drawing-room. That is to say, the corner-piece, which I had retained in my possession, fitted exactly into the jagged edges of the torn paper in which the tobacco had been rolled. To the best of my belief, the test was as complete and satisfactory as any test can be. I refrain from giving my opinion as to the causes which produced the effect, feeling sure that your readers who take an interest in these phenomena will prefer exercising their own judgment in the matter. I merely give you an unvarnished statement of what I saw. I may be permitted to add I am not a member of the Theosophist Society, nor, so far as I know, am I biassed in favour of occult science, although a warm sympathizer with the proclaimed objects of the society over which Colonel Olcott presides.

"CHARLES FRANCIS MASSY."

These were again followed in the *Pioneer* of October 27th by the following letter from myself :—

"SIR,—As many jokes have been cut in the papers lately about the recent brooch incident, it seems desirable to show the public that believers in Madame Blavatsky's theories and powers have a good deal more than that to go upon. Writers of light-hearted criticism on the 'folly' of the persons who attested that incident, would have shown considerable self-confidence in any case, under the circumstances, but this letter may perhaps help to account for what seems, no doubt, to even your more cautious readers so strange, the

fact that several men of cultivated understanding have been induced to build (what seems) a new and startling faith on (what seems) a small foundation.

"*Firstly.*—Let the reader understand that phenomena of the kind with which I am dealing have nothing to do with spiritualism. A generation slow to take in new ideas will persist in talking as if occultism and spiritualism were one and the same. They are not only different in reality, but antagonistic. The theory of Theosophists,—I say 'theory' in deference to the frame of mind in which most of your readers will approach this letter, though I might as well talk of the theory that Simla is a place situated on the skirts of the Himalayas,—the theory of the Theosophists is that a development of their higher faculties has enabled certain persons to comprehend and practise a science that has been secretly handed down from adept to adept during a long course of ages. This science embodies various discoveries concerning the laws of matter and force, especially those of animal magnetism, and the human will as trained, not by clumsy self-mortification, but by a perfectly refined moral and intellectual discipline. If adepts are scarce, that may be held as explained sufficiently for practical purposes by remembering that an adept must be a man who, for a long course of years, has been absolutely chaste, absolutely abstemious, totally cleansed of all selfish aims and ambitions in life, and caring so little for the world that he is willing, by prolonged exile from it, to purify himself by degrees from all the 'bad magnetism' which contact with the common herd engenders.

"Now the adepts, though not mixing with the world more than they can help,—and by means of their own they can do what they have to do, while almost entirely withdrawn from the world,—are deeply interested in the world, as regards the humanity that inhabits it. It would take too long to explain even the little, relatively to what might apparently be learned in time, that I have been able to learn so far about them; but having said thus much I have cleared the way for an explanation as to the position in which Madame Blavatsky stands—one which is constantly misconstrued to her disadvantage. Madame Blavatsky has climbed some of the rough steps which lead to adeptship, but constantly assures us that she is not an adept herself. From her childhood, however, she has been clairvoyant, and what spiritualists call 'mediumistic.' In other words, she has natural peculiarities which have facilitated the development in her of the faculties required for the lower

grades of adeptship cultivated up to a Madame Blavatsky a way which no one possessing considerable This preliminary ex For brevity's sake unsupported by evidence story. Madame Bling any solid object window pane,—emit raps" at will. I have ways, and most of employed is sometimes never known it fail a repeatedly seen Ma clear of the table at ment, and,—no one with it,—by merely r each motion of her h knuckle. Many res ready to swear, or gi heard this in the any sane person absolutely certain ti force which ordinary heard them under s no conceivable the wise than absurd a another manifestatic the raps, the power bell-sounds to ring body of any kind to that I have heard th of different ways a when no one else l of people have been nesses to them beside

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grades of adeptship. The faculties, as I say, have been cultivated up to a certain point, and the result is that Madame Blavatsky is now *en rapport* with the adepts, in a way which no person not gifted in a remarkable way and possessing considerable occult training, could be *en rapport*. This preliminary explanation is, of course, mere assertion. For brevity's sake I had to give it in a straightforward way unsupported by evidence. I come now to this part of my story. Madame Blavatsky certainly has the power of making any solid object she likes,—any piece of furniture or any window pane,—emit the sounds which are known as "spirit-raps" at will. I have seen her do this in a hundred different ways, and most of her friends have seen it too. The force employed is sometimes strong, sometimes weak. I have never known it fail altogether, but when it is strong, I have repeatedly seen Madame Blavatsky stand or sit quite clear of the table at which she might be trying the experiment, and,—no one else being anywhere nearly in contact with it,—by merely making mesmeric passes at it, cause it, at each motion of her hand, to emit sounds as if knocked with a knuckle. Many respectable people here would be quite ready to swear, or give their words of honour, that they have heard this in the way I describe. Now, in course of time, any sane person studying these phenomena, must grow absolutely certain that they are produced by the agency of a force which ordinary science does not understand. I have heard them under so many different conditions that there is no conceivable theory of imposture, which could be otherwise than absurd as applied to them. Next we come to another manifestation. At will,—though as in the case of the raps, the power varies,—Madame Blavatsky can cause bell-sounds to ring out of the air where there is no tangible body of any kind to produce them. I should add explicitly that I have heard the bell-sounds scores of times in all sorts of different ways and places, in rooms and in the open air, when no one else but myself has been by, and when parties of people have been present. There are plenty of other witnesses to them besides myself.

"If any rational person will seriously think of the matter, he will see that having obtained, as I have described, absolute certainty, that Madame Blavatsky produces many superordinary effects by the exercise of peculiar forces and powers, one approaches the consideration of incidents like the brooch phenomenon in a frame of mind which would be impossible otherwise. It is not claimed that the more startling feats are accomplished by Madame Blavatsky's agency alone. They are said to be the work of superior adepts with

whom she is in occult communication. But either way a scientific observation, of which Madame Blavatsky is the visible agent, leads us from comparatively small beginnings, like the raps and bells, to the disintegration of matter and psychological telegraphy with persons at a distance. I may now describe some recent incidents which fortify the position of believers in the brooch incident.

"About ten days or a fortnight ago my wife accompanied our Theosophists one afternoon to the top of Prospect Hill. When there, Madame Blavatsky asked her, in a joking way, what was her heart's desire. She said at random, and on the spur of the moment, 'to get a note from one of the Brothers.' 'The Brothers,' I should explain, are the superior adepts. Madame Blavatsky took from her pocket a piece of blank pink paper that had been torn off a note she had received that day. Folding this up into a small compass, she took it to the edge of the hill, held it up for a moment or two between her hands, and returned, saying that it had gone. She presently, after communicating mentally, by her own occult methods, with the distant 'Brother,' said he asked where my wife would have the letter. After some conversation it was decided that she should search for the note in a particular tree. Getting up a little way into this she looked all about for a time and could not find any note, but presently turning back her face to a branch right before her at which she had looked a few moments before, she perceived a pink three-cornered note stuck on the stalk of a leaf where no such note had previously been. The leaf, that must have belonged to the stalk, must have been freshly torn off, because the stalk was still green and moist,—not withered as it would naturally have become if its leaf had been removed for any length of time. The note was found to contain these few words:—"I have been asked to leave a note here for you. What can I do for you?" signed by some Thibetan characters. Neither Madame Blavatsky nor Colonel Olcott had approached the tree during my wife's search for the note. The pink paper on which it was written appeared to be the same that my wife had seen, blank, in Madame Blavatsky's hand shortly before.

"A few days after this Madame Blavatsky accompanied a few friends one morning on a little picnic in the direction of the waterfalls. There were originally to have been six persons present, including myself, but a seventh joined the party just as it was starting. When a place had been chosen in the wood near the upper waterfall for our breakfast, the things brought were spread out on the ground. It turned

out that there were people. Through some one professing would be too small but it does not matter. Madame Blavatsky serious idea in the present would try, the note Blavatsky as usual Brothers,' and then ate neighbourhood of the gentlemen spot on the ground. The place so chosen with thick weeds and gentleman with the with some difficulty interlaced. Cutting with the knife and I came at last on the out, as it was common. The saucer was also cup and saucer both pattern, with those constituted a seventh the place where we party appeared to this phenomenon, a course of the morning scientifically perfect that by means of saucer were up into the place where Every one knew that had certainly not been cavation discovered it was contended that about in digging traces of these. I it is otherwise than because three of them since considered them non as a test phenomenon to discuss the matter experience, beside ment, the two above (though in reality to

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out that there were only six cups and saucers for seven people. Through some joking about this deficiency, or through some one professing to be very thirsty, and to think the cups would be too small,—I cannot feel sure how the idea arose, but it does not matter,—one of the party laughingly asked Madame Blavatsky to create another cup. There was no serious idea in the proposal at first, but when Madame Blavatsky said it would be very difficult, but that if we liked she would try, the notion was taken up in earnest. Madame Blavatsky as usual held mental conversations with 'the Brothers,' and then wandered a little about in the immediate neighbourhood of where we were sitting, and asked one of the gentlemen with us to bring a knife. She marked a spot on the ground and asked him to dig with the knife. The place so chosen was the edge of a little slope covered with thick weeds and grass and shrubby undergrowth. The gentleman with the knife tore up these, in the first instance, with some difficulty, as their roots were tough and closely interlaced. Cutting, then, into the matted roots and earth with the knife and pulling away the *débris* with his hands, he came at last on the edge of something white, which turned out, as it was completely excavated, to be the required cup. The saucer was also found after a little more digging. The cup and saucer both corresponded exactly, as regards their pattern, with those that had been brought to the picnic, and constituted a seventh cup and saucer when brought back to the place where we were to have breakfast. At first all the party appeared to be entirely satisfied with the *bona fides* of this phenomenon, and were greatly struck by it, but in the course of the morning some one conceived that it was not scientifically perfect, because it was theoretically possible that by means of some excavation below the place where the cup and saucer were exhumed; they might have been thrust up into the place where we found them, by ordinary means. Every one knew that the surface of the ground where we dug had certainly not been disturbed, nor were any signs of excavation discoverable any where in the neighbourhood; but it was contended that the earth we had ourselves thrown about in digging for the cup might have obliterated the traces of these. I mention the objection raised not because it is otherwise than preposterous as a hypothesis, but because three of the persons who were at the picnic have since considered that the flaw described spoilt the phenomenon as a test phenomenon. In any case it is not worth while to discuss the matter further, because I come now to another experience, beside the perfection of which, as a test experiment, the two above described cannot but appear unimportant (though in reality to a student of occult mysteries the cup phe-

nomenon is by far the greater). It had come to pass that I had been permitted to enter into some direct correspondence with one of the Brothers. Of the letters I have received, I will only say that they are unequivocally written by a man of great culture, thought, and brightness of intelligence, that only here and there do they show the faintest traces of unfamiliarity with English idioms, though the writer, I have reason to know, is a native of this country, and that I cannot exaggerate my sense of the privilege of having thus formed the gifted Brother's acquaintance. We were bound on another picnic to the top of Prospect Hill. Just before starting I received a short note from my correspondent. It told me that something would be given to my wife on the hill as a sign from him. While we were having our lunch, Madame Blavatsky said the Brother directed her to ask what was the most unlikely place we could think of in which we would like to find a note from him, and the object which he proposed to send us. After a little talk on the subject, I and my wife selected the inside of her jampan cushion, against which she was then leaning. This is a strong cushion of velvet and worsted work that we have had some years. We were shortly told that the cushion would do. My wife was directed to put it under her rug for a little while. This she did inside her jampan for perhaps half a minute, and then we were directed to cut the cushion open. This we found a task of some difficulty as the edges were all very tightly sewn, but a penknife conquered them in a little while. I should add that while I was ripping at the cushion Madame Blavatsky said there was no hurry, that the letter was only then being written, and was not quite finished. When we got the velvet and worsted work cover cut open, we found the inner cushion containing the feathers sewn up in a case of its own. This, in turn, had to be cut open, and then, buried in the feathers, my wife found a note addressed to me and a brooch—an old familiar brooch which she had had for many years, and which, she tells me, she remembers having picked up off her dressing table that morning while getting ready to go out, though she afterwards put it down again and chose another instead. The note to me ran as follows:—'My dear Brother,—This brooch, No. 2, is placed in this very strange place simply to show to you how very easily a real phenomenon is produced, and how still easier it is to suspect its genuineness. Make of it what you like, even to classing me with confederates. The difficulty you spoke of last night, with respect to the interchange of our letters, I will try to remove.... An address will be sent to you which you can always use; unless indeed you really would prefer corresponding through pillows. Please to remark that the present is not dated from a 'Lodge,' but

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from a Kashmir Valley.' The allusions in this note have reference to various remarks I made in the course of conversation during dinner the preceding evening.

"Madame Blavatsky, you will observe, claims no more in connection with this phenomenon than having been the occult messenger between ourselves and the Brother in Kashmir, who, you will observe, appears to have written the letter in Kashmir within a few moments of the time at which we found it inside our cushion. That persons having these extraordinary powers could produce even more sensational effects if they chose you will naturally argue. Why then play tricks which, however conclusive for the one or two people who may define their conditions, can hardly be so regarded by others, while the public generally will be apt to suppose the persons who relate them, liars or lunatics, rather than believe that anything can take place in nature except with the permission and approval of the Royal Society. Well, I think I perceive some of the reasons why they refrain, but these would take too long to tell. Still longer would it take to answer by serious argument the nonsense which the publication of the brooch incident No. 1 has evoked all over India. Let the jokers enjoy themselves. They *think* we, the occult minority, are wrong ; we *know* they are, and joking breaks no bones, though perhaps it is going a little too far, and trespassing beyond the limits of good form, when the question, whether Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott are cheats and imposters, is openly discussed. They are people, at all events, who have sacrificed for their work all that the world generally holds dear, having possessed these good things originally in ample measure in lands that would seem to most of us happier lands than this. They have come to labour here for the rest of their lives at a task which they have set before themselves as a duty, the spread of the ideas which they receive from the Brothers about the 'Universal Brotherhood,' and the development of their society. If Madame Blavatsky fails to convince this or that person that she has learned anything more than the general run of people know, there are ways in which men of good feeling may express their incredulity,—and other ways, which, in their eagerness to get as much fun as possible out of Mrs. Hume's brooch, too many writers in the Indian Press have preferred.

"A."

"SIMLA, 23rd October."

In reply to some of the numberless attacks which were made on the authenticity of the phenomena above described, I wrote the following letter in one of the papers under a *nom de plume* :—

“ SIR,—You have taken so much interest in the recent discussion about occult phenomena, though I am sorry to observe that it has not been prompted by a perception of its true importance, that you may be willing to give your readers the opportunity of reviewing with the help of some statements I am in a position to make, the conclusions to which they may have been impelled, so far, by your own reasoning. You lay much stress in the article published on Monday, on the theory that Mrs. Hume may have been led up by clever conversational methods to think of the brooch that Madame Blavatsky wished her to think of. If you refer to the original narrative you will see that it says Mrs. Hume had not spoken about the brooch to anyone since she parted with it, and that it was only when Madame Blavatsky asked her to mention something she would like to have, that she thought of it. Manifestly we can only have Mrs. Hume's testimony concerning her thoughts, but the testimony of all the persons who signed the statement should establish it as a fact which it is not more injurious to the witnesses than unintelligent to dispute, that the brooch was in no way the subject of conversation, clever or otherwise, during the famous dinner.

“ People like those who signed the narrative do not put their names publicly to a carelessly drawn statement. For some of the items in the statement it is obvious on the surface that some only of the witnesses can testify; for instance, it is only Mr. and Mrs. Hume who can testify about the identity of the brooch; but for any part of the statement of a nature to be supported by the combined testimony of the persons present, you must accept the narrative as disposing, *in limine*, of any objections which any of its clauses preclude. You may, perhaps, say that without the brooch being mentioned conversation may have artfully put it into Mrs. Hume's mind. I have reason to feel, certain, however, that no conversation took place which had the remotest bearing on it in any way whatever till Mrs. Hume announced that she had thought of something she would like to have, and proceeded to say what it was.

“ You remark that raps and bell-like sounds can be produced by conjurers. This is beside the question. 'A's statement was that Madame Blavatsky has produced them in

so many different ways all conceivable by imposture are elicited by many other people raps. Look how results of a long session puts her hands on wiseacre suggests only one hand on conceal any artifice from the table above, the raps sit table? She put frame, on a dozen sion, and from each the house where she about her, prepar houses at Simla a really come from come from—are they hand on your head something which shocks, and an attempt producing little when you say you their hands, one Madame Blavatsky puts the little throbs themselves in faint raps resting. When a times as I have, my mind by a person conjuring—Mask Sir, Maskelyne a nor for ten lakh rube.

“ That is why opportunity of overlooked, as an irrelevant argument about Blavatsky certainary science. I think I am mistaken have no faculties the bearing of people in distance of the persons v

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so many different ways, places and times in his presence, that
all conceivable hypotheses which would set them down to
imposture are eliminated for him; and remember that a good
many other people are in 'A's' position, too, about these
raps. Look how the argument proceeds: summing up the
results of a long series of experiments, Madame Blavatsky
puts her hands on a table, and raps are heard on it. Some
wiseacre suggests she does it with her thumb-nails; she puts
only one hand on the table; the raps come still. Does she
conceal any artifice under her hand? She lifts her hand
from the table altogether, and merely holding it in the air
above, the raps still come. Has she done something to the
table? She puts her hand on a window pane, on a picture
frame, on a dozen different places about the room in succes-
sion, and from each, in turn, come the mysterious raps. Is
the house where she stays with her own particular friends
about her, prepared all over? She goes to half-a-dozen other
houses at Simla and produces raps at them all. Do the raps
really come from somewhere else than where they seem to
come from—are they perhaps ventriloquism? She puts her
hand on your head, and from the motionless fingers you feel
something which resembles a minute series of electric
shocks, and an attentive listener beside you will hear them
producing little raps on your skull. Are you telling a lie
when you say you feel the shocks? Half-a-dozen people put
their hands, one on the other in a pile on the table; Madame
Blavatsky puts hers on the top of all; and each person feels
the little throbs pass through, and hears them record them-
selves in faint raps on the table on which the pile of hands is
resting. When a person has seen all these experiments many
times as I have, what impression do you think is made on his
mind by a person who says 'there is nothing in raps but
conjuring—Maskelyne and Cooke can do them.' My dear
Sir, Maskelyne and Cooke cannot do them for £10 a night,
nor for ten lakhs a night under the circumstances I de-
scribe.

"That is why intelligent persons, who have had the
opportunity of observing them, declare that they have estab-
lished, as an immovable fact at the basis of all this cur-
rent argument about Theosophy, the conclusion that Madame
Blavatsky certainly wields a force as yet unknown to ordi-
nary science. People who cannot weigh evidence may
think I am misrepresenting what has occurred. People who
have no faculties for scientific observation may fail to see
the bearing of the phenomena above enumerated. And
people in distant places, who may never have heard of any
of the persons whose names have lately been published in

support of the occult phenomena statements, may say 'perhaps they are all fools.' But is not this rather a self-confident position for anybody in this country to take up, and do you not think, on re-considering the matter by the light of these remarks, that your contributor introduced remarks that are a little irrelevant in the present stage of the discussion,—at all events as regards the raps,—when he trotted out the familiar old theory about Maskelyne and Cooke? The Chinese have a saying concerning people who are dull of apprehension, that they look at things 'with the eyes of an ox.' Are certain hard-headed and generally sensible persons who, with their wits well about them as a rule, can nevertheless find nothing but absurdity in statements about occult phenomena, even though made by certain other generally sensible persons,—are these good people,—so content with themselves and their knowledge,—quite sure that their contentment is not due to the fact they too are apt to look at strange appearances with the eyes of the ox?"

Some explanation of the theory of the brooch incident was contained in a letter I wrote to the *Pioneer* from Simla at the time. The passage referred to is as follows:—

"We are not always frivolous at Simla, and as you have already been notified, during the intervals of our dissipation, we, or at all event some of us, have been coquetting with the supernatural. That is a crude way of expressing the idea, because to the esoteric conception of the subject there is nothing supernatural at all in the phenomenon which recently took place at Mr. Hume's, but to the world at large, wonders not explainable by familiar scientific laws are all classed with revelations of the other world. Writing from the place in which the miracle of the brooch was performed, I may perhaps do some service by explaining the theory of such performances as understood by students of occult science. Such explanations, however rational, will of course be regarded by people who have never made natural mysteries a study, as mere superstition; but the guileless belief of the uninitiated world, that every occurrence they do not understand must be a 'plant' or a swindle of some sort, does not content the very large and growing body of inquirers who are aware that there is at all events a substratum of fact in the experience of spiritualism. People who have gained personal knowledge of this need not be much troubled by the babble of jokers who prejudge the questions at issue and deny without having investigated. The initiates are laughed at in very good company. Alfred

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of the brooch incident
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Wallace, in his book on *Modern Miracles*, gives a long list of persons eminent in science, literature, and politics who had already, when he wrote, avowed a belief in the phenomena of spiritualism, and if that book, brought out some ten years ago or more, were republished now, the list might be enormously increased. Trained experimentalists have tested the reality of the so-called psychic force, in methodical ways, and have published their conclusions, and it is merely ignorance of the literature of the subject which induces overconfident objectors to say sometimes—as one often hears in social talk about spiritualism—that its phenomena have never been brought to the test of scientific investigation. They have been brought to that test over and over again, and in Europe and America together there are now, it is estimated, about twenty millions of people who would endorse what I have just said. So an occurrence out of the common way, like the brooch incident, is not so much out of the common way as some of my readers at the first glance might suppose. Similar incidents have taken place in spiritualistic circles at home, times out of number, and under circumstances which preclude the possibility of trickery as completely as in the present case. I may point out here, by-the-bye, that the proof of superordinary agency in this matter turns upon the fact that the lady who asked for the brooch thought of that—amongst the hundred and one things she might have thought of—on the spur of the moment. It is no use to say that the public is not told how the brooch was lost, nor that there is a lady staying at Mr. Hume's house who is a spiritualist, nor that this or that circumstance is 'suspicious.' Objections of that sort are unintelligent, because they do not touch the essence of the wonder. *Unless Mrs. Hume were a confederate*, the incident stands on an immoveable pedestal of authenticity as an occult phenomenon, and that hypothesis I need only leave to the ridicule of the very considerable number of people in India, to whom the principal actors in the affair described are privately known.

"Now to the question 'How it was done.' This could only be expounded fully by a treatise many columns long on Indian Yog Philosophy, and even then, if I were the writer of the treatise, there would be many gaps in the explanation; but the broad outline of the theory is this: Readers who wish to learn more will find it in Madame Blavatsky's big book *Isis Unveiled*—and let them not be repelled by the very objectionable and catch-penny title of that book. It was originally, I am told, to have been called *The Veil of Isis*, which would not have been a bad title at all; but when it was half printed an obscure writer turned up who claimed

to have used this title for a comparatively insignificant work of his own, so a twist had to be given to the name of the new book in deference to the law of copyright. The theory which *Isis Unveiled* discloses is, that the proficient in Indian psychology have acquired and to this day exercise a control over matter which seems supernatural to ordinary observers, but is really due to more advanced acquaintance with certain of its laws than is possessed by western science in the present stage of its development. And besides this knowledge, be it remembered, the Indian psychologist is described as having so trained and enlarged his own spiritual faculties that he is a perfect clairvoyant and a perfect 'mesmeriser'. Now grant these faculties, a huge concession I know that most of your readers will be disinclined to make; but granting my hypothesis for the sake of comprehending the structure that might be reared upon it, if it were established, it will be seen that an occultist of this order, willing to assist in the illustration of the theory I am describing, might even, though himself at a distance, have been present clairvoyantly, or, shall we say, in spirit at Mr. Hume's, might as soon as the idea of the brooch was fixed in the mind of the person to whom it once belonged, follow it, on a flash of clairvoyant perception, to its then resting place. So far, so good, but how to bring it to Mr. Hume's garden? Now, I fear I am going to say something which will seem the merest gibberish to the ordinary mind; but for any of the twenty million spiritualists who may read these lines and who have vainly pondered over their unaccountable experiences concerning the instantaneous transmission of objects from a distance, the suggestion will perhaps afford a ray of welcome light. Objects transmitted or propelled by Indian occultists through space, or similarly brought by the agencies at work at spiritual *seances*, are not propelled bodily. They are disintegrated, in the first instance, by the exercise of that superior knowledge of the laws of matter of which I spoke just now, and conveyed as *infinitely* minute particles on currents of psychic force to any given place and then re-integrated, so as to become once more the solid tangible bodies they were at first. Of course, for recognized science, all this will be as meaningless as talk of quaternions, or inverse circular functions would be to young ladies whose mathematics had never carried them beyond the rule of three. However, there is the theory of the brooch incident roughly sketched, and if any reader thirsts for further enlightenment, he had better seek it in the bosom of the Theosophical Society, of which Madame Blavatsky is the guiding genius.