

this. Every act of our lives is a transformation of nervous force into motor; and that nervous force may be correlated into light is demonstrated by abundant facts. Phosphorescent animals become so under an impulse of the will, through the agency of the nervous system, evolving light as a transformation of its energy; and in some cases of consumption, witness that distinguished physician, Dr. Brown-Séquard, light appears at the head of the sufferer, and may even radiate from him into the room.

One other extract must suffice:—

The conclusion naturally flowing from these facts, and from many more, the bearing of which it seems to me that Dr. Carpenter, in his theory of unconscious cerebration, and George Henry Lewes, in his theory of instinct, have overlooked, is that the life of nervous tissue is self-determining, and that whenever this tissue is present the fundamental principle of intelligence is also present. It is evident, therefore, that self-directed volition is a primary property of nervous organization.

The reader now sees how it is that the will of a spiritual medium may intelligently yet unconsciously act in the production of the so-called spiritual phenomena; also, how it is that nerve-atmosphere, invisible, imponderable, but entering into intimate molecular relation and contact with surrounding bodies and with surrounding nervous organisms, is susceptible both of sensory impressions and of motor impulses. He sees how it is that, as in the case of Florence Cook, a person in trance may produce a visible phantom, and control its movements, or may even visit a person, living at considerable distance, as an apparition, write a message, and float away or waste away into the invisible. I have among my memoranda no observed instances of this phenomena; but Robert Dale Owen, in his "Footprints on the Boundary of Another World," relates an instance of it in some respects analogous to the case of Captain Densmore, the authenticity of which there is no occasion to doubt. How wonderful our unconscious operations are—far more wonderful than our conscious—facts daily indicate to the observer who studies human life in its deeper psychological aspects; also, how superficial it is to fly to spiritual agencies, or to presumptions like the psychic-force theory, to furnish the explanation of phenomena purely incident to morbid nervous states.

The reader is now satisfied, I think, that the nervous state termed clairvoyance is the centre around which all the phenomena of spiritualism, psychic as well as dynamic, naturally group themselves; also that reflex excitability of the nerve centres constitutes the physiological basis of this state,

and that in vital temperaments it develops motor aspects, while in cerebral temperaments it develops the singular sensory phenomena described in the *nervo-psychic* series; furthermore, that this state is the constant exponent of the epileptic neurosis.

I find no exception to this view of the case in the more than fifty mediums of whom I have collected memoranda; and, without indulging in any unpleasant criticism, I must be permitted to say that the association of either class of facts with the agency of departed spirits is quite unwarranted and gratuitous. Neither the sensory nor the dynamic phenomena of spiritualism presume intelligences or forces not explainable by physiology. I must ask scientific men, however, calmly to investigate the facts incident to these nervous states, and to assimilate them to systematic psychology—a task calling for the limits of a volume.

In concluding this section, permit me to add that my own observations have led me insensibly during the last ten years to the opinion that, in its motor aspects particularly, the nervous conditions necessary to so-called spiritual phenomena coexist generally with a low type of physical organization, and, with very few exceptions, the same criticism applies to mediums of the sensory class; facts sufficing in themselves to disconnect both classes of phenomena from the higher spiritual activities of human nature. But, what the real nature of nerve-aura is, can only be described by the term nerve-aura. It is not electrical, though it may be correlated as electricity; it is not psychic, though it may be correlated into apparently psychic phenomena.

Very likely, however, some clever scientific man will one of these days invent an auroscope, by which it will be possible to test the relative capacities of mediums, and to distinguish between motor and sensory, without putting them to the trouble of *séances*; and in the observations thus far submitted, I have sought to get together the materials and experiments necessary to an exact scientific demonstration of the subject. What is wanted now is, that some scientific professor, or some medical psychologist, having the opportunity to study it in all its attitudes, should experiment and observe carefully as to the action and reaction of nerve-ether with various bodies, until such an instrument can be constructed as to determine its presence by an unerring test. Then, let this auroscope be applied to one of Mr. Home's phantoms or to those of Mrs. Jenny Holmes, of Philadelphia, by way of determining the constitution of the former and the genuineness of the latter; and the demonstration will be as complete from the standpoint of exact physics as it seems to me from the standpoint of physiology.