

The Ancient Magic Crystal and Its Probable Connection to Mesmerism

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"My brethren, there are men who, whether designedly or not, are in league with the fallen spirits — *wizards and necromancers*, using *enchantment* and divination and producing divers effects beyond the power of man — real and natural effects, by the *help of the Devil*, upon both the minds and bodies of their fellow-creatures. I shall endeavour this evening, by God's help, to follow that branch of the subject, and to show you what I conceive to be the connection between the agency of those fallen spirits and the lying *wonders* performed in these later times, amongst which I have no hesitation in reckoning *mesmerism*, which is now performing its real effects — real supernatural, but diabolical."

— REV. HUGH McNEIL, Liverpool, April, 1842.

"Were we to believe nothing but what we could perfectly comprehend, not only our stock of knowledge in all the branches of learning would be shrunk up to nothing but even the affairs of common life could not be carried on" — TUCKER.

To the Editors of "*The Zoist*".

The surprising coincidence of the phenomena elicited by the ancient practice of invocation by the crystal with the later discoveries of animal magnetism has for some years attracted the attention of the curious, and I have long been desirous of seeing the subject investigated by some of your able contributors with the attention which it eminently deserves, and though there may be cause to fear that those opponents of mesmerism who, like the Rev. Hugh McNeil, are already too prone to attribute to satanic agency everything connected with animal magnetism which is beyond their limited comprehension, might, by its apparent alliance to the art of divination by the crystal, find an additional reason for denouncing it; yet, considering that the very surprising revelations made by clairvoyants under magnetic influence, whether attributable "to the agency of spiritual beings" or to "the divinity that stirs within us and points out hereafter", have opened a wide field of enquiry into some of the hitherto least understood arcana of psychology, and that many of your readers, whether rationalists or spiritualists, notwithstanding the rhapsodies of all the above learned and reverend gentlemen, may feel desirous of investigating those occult laws of nature which, in spite of the poet, yet "lie hid in night." I have been [Page 10] induced upon perusal of Gamma's article in the last number but one of the *Zoist* to offer the following notes upon the subject, trusting they may prove the germ of a more full and able essay by one of your learned correspondents. It would trespass too much upon your space to attempt to elucidate the origin and

various modes of divination by the crystal, of the antiquity and wide-spread belief in which there exist innumerable testimonies, sacred and profane; from divine responses by Urim and Thummim mentioned in the Old Testament [It would seem from the observations of Sir Gardner Wilkinson that this form of divination was employed by the Egyptians before the time of Moses. Not only the form but the symbols, and even titles connected with it, are all related to those of Egypt. The Urim and Thummim connected with, if not part of the breast-plate of judgment of the High Priest (Exodus xxviii. 30), and interpreted as Light and Truth, or Revelation and Truth, correspond most remarkably with the figure of Re (the Sun), and Thmei (Truth) in the breast-plate of the Egyptian priest; and Aelian and Diodorus Siculus are quoted as authorities for the custom of the Egyptian priest, when acting as arch-judge, hanging around his neck a sapphire stone which was called Truth. (*Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, ii. 22, V. 28.). Good accounts of the Urim and Thummim, or rather of what is understood concerning them, may be found in Winer's *Biblisches, Realverterbuch*.. In the Rev. D. Kitto's *Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature* are extracted the observations and woodcuts of Sir Gardner Wilkinson, before whose researches ultra-theologians endeavoured to make the world believe that the immense and ancient Egyptian nation had only copied the Jews, whose Urim and Thummim they had learnt after Solomon had married a daughter of Pharaoh! Dr. Kitto. though, we daresay, quite orthodox, is not among these, but cheerfully admits the force of Sir G. Wilkinson's observations; just as other orthodox divines cheerfully allow us to admit the fact of the existence of countless worlds for millions of years, and of the sun not going round the earth but the earth round the sun, and to agree with the Chevalier Bunsen and others that the current views of history derived from the Old Testament are untenable. — *Zoist*] to Josephus, who in his history declares it to be more than two hundred years since the stones of the Ephod had given an answer by their extraordinary lustre; and from Porphyry, Iamblichus and Psellus, to the magicians of Cairo and the peepers and speculators in England at the present day with respect to the "superstitious rites", "the long fastings, the mystical words, the concentric circles, the perfumes", which ["I" is rather unfortunate in his "most approved modern author". Barrett was a mere book maker, and his *Magus* is a transcript from Agrippa and a MS. of Rabbi Solomon and the conjurations therein given were never intended for crystal work] — "I" deems only worthy of the knaves who employed them, it is to be regretted that many mesmerists, who justly deprecate their favourite science being deemed a deception and its professors impostors, yet so readily bestow the same abusive epithets indiscriminately upon the advocates of any doctrine which may be opposed to their own preconceived opinions. It is to be remembered that divination by the crystal is, more than any other species of modern magic, derived immediately from the Jews, — a people whose numerous ceremonials of the same kind were enjoined, we are taught to believe, by divine command; and their followers, the Cabalists, though not perhaps, strictly speaking, the utilitarians of their day, yet remembering "how much better it is to get wisdom than gold, and understanding than fine silver, [Proverbs xvi. 16] were diligent investigators of the occult properties of nature, and the efficacy [Page 11] of their "concentric circles" we must leave undecided until it can be explained how an invisible line drawn across the path of a somnambulist instantaneously arrests his progress — a fact which, although of daily occurrence, as yet remains equally inexplicable. Of the use of strict previous fasting we have continued examples from Exodus XXXIV.28, where Moses "did neither eat bread nor drink water", to Matthew iv., where Jesus "led up of the spirit into the wilderness, fasted forty days and forty nights". Now, as Jesus was "harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners" — had no fleshly lust to mortify, no sluggishness of spirit to overcome, why, then, did he fast ? Fasting was also enjoined to the candidates previous to their admission to the ancient mysteries; thus proving how old is the belief that rude health, so needful for the laborious struggles of everyday life, is incompatible (as mesmerists also experience) with a high degree of spiritual perception and clairvoyance, but that by fasting, prayer, and other purifications, it is possible to attain an insight into physical causes, which by constant contemplation becomes at length intuitive perception. And passing over for the present the Esoteric doctrine of the vestments and pentacles, it must be observed that the extraordinary, though little known and appreciated, properties of perfumes derived from the animal, vegetable, and mineral

kingdoms, have long been known to students of the occult sciences, and amongst others the following remarkable relation is to be found in Eckhartshausen's *Key to Magic*, p. 57, Munich, 1791, and is thus related by Jung-Stilling, in his admirable *Theory of Pneumatology*. [Longman, 12mo, p, 200, 1834]

"Eckhartshausen became acquainted with a Scotsman, who, though he meddled not with the conjuration of spirits, and such like charlatanry, had learned, however, a remarkable piece of art from a Jew , which he communicated to Eckhartshausen and made the experiment with him, which is surprising and worthy of perusal. He that wishes to raise, and see any particular spirit, must prepare himself for it for some days together both spiritually and physically; there are also particular and remarkable requisites and relations necessary betwixt such a spirit and the person who wishes to see it, relations which cannot be otherwise explained than on the ground of the intervention of some secret influence from the invisible world. After all these preparations a vapour is produced in a room, from certain materials which Eckhartshausen with propriety does not divulge, on account of the dangerous abuse which might be made of it, which visibly forms itself into a figure which bears a resemblance to that which the person wishes to see. In this there is no question of any magic lantern or optical artifice, but the vapour really forms a human figure similar to that which the individual desires to behold. I will now insert the conclusion of the story in Eckhartshausen's own words. [Page 12]

"Some time after the departure of the Scotsman I made the experiment for one of my friends. He saw as I did, and had the same sensations.

"The observations that we made were these; as soon as the ingredients were thrown into the chafing dish a whitish body forms itself, that seems to hover about the chafing dish as large as life. It possesses the likeness of the person whom it is wished to see, only the visage is of an ashy paleness.

"On approaching the figure one is conscious of a resistance similar to that which is felt when going against a strong wind which drives one back. If one speaks with it one remembers no more distinctly what is spoken, and when the appearance vanishes one feels as if awaking from a dream; the head is stupified and contraction is felt in the abdomen. It is also very singular that the same appearance presents itself when one is in the dark or when looking on dark objects. The unpleasantness of this sensation was the reason why I was unwilling to repeat the experiment, although often urged to do so by many persons.

"A young gentleman once came to me and would *par force* see this phenomenon. As he was a person of tender nerves and lively imagination I was the more reluctant to comply with his request, and asked the advice of a very experienced physician to whom I revealed the whole mystery. He maintained that the narcotic ingredients which formed the figure must violently affect the imagination, and might be very injurious according to circumstances; he also believed that the preparation which was prescribed contributed much to excite the imagination, and told me to make the trial for myself with a very small quantity and without any preparation whatever. I did so one day after dinner, when the physician had been dining with me; but scarcely had I cast the quantity of ingredients into the chafing dish when a figure presented itself, I was, however, seized with such a horror that I was obliged to leave the room. I was very ill during three hours, and I thought I saw the figure always before me. Towards evening, after inhaling the fumes of vinegar and drinking it with water, I was better again, but for three weeks after I felt a debility; and the strangest part of the matter is, that when I remember the circumstance and look for

some time on any dark object, this ashy pale figure presents itself very vividly to my sight. After this I no longer dared to make any experiments with it". [It is surprising that Eckhartshausen should have thus violated the rules expressly laid down for his guidance, and then complain of the unpleasant sensations he experienced]

And in support of this singular development of the hidden properties of nature the following curious receipt, "How to make a Ghost" is extracted from the *Monthly Magazine* for June, 1848. "If chloride of barium is put upon a plate in a dark cellar and a hand placed beneath it, so soon as the warmth of the hand has penetrated the plate the form of the hand is [Page 13] delineated in phosphoric delineations on the upper surface of the plate". Thus the heat communicated by the hand to the chloride of barium gives rise to certain luminous emanations, which have the extraordinary property of seizing at the same time the form of that which gave them birth, and proves that the minutest atom of creation possesses elementary powers which it would be far wiser to attempt to explain than to deny. [Of the desirableness of investigating the physiological influence of perfumes, gases, and exhalations there can be no doubt; and in the history of witchcraft and of ancient divination we find these influences so closely connected with the quasi-mesmeric phenomena that the recent discoveries of anaesthetic agents — "weak masters though they be" — that took so many by surprise, only came as instalments of the expectations and partial fulfilment of the predictions of the observers of mesmeric nature and students of its antiquities. At the same time there is nothing in the anecdote of Eckhartshausen, as related with its unspecified drugs and uncertified results, that enables us to say that it is more than a case of intoxication by narcotics. It is very unsafe to say positively what influences and incidents will not produce the mesmeric state, but caution is always required in judging matters so liable to mistake; above all we have a right to demand the best evidence in the best form so far as obtainable. If the illustration said to be gained from the experiment with the plate of *barium* goes for anything, it goes to prove that the image in the vapour was that the experimenter himself, and "ashy paleness and stupified head", not to say alarm, may account for the non-recognition of it. If the warmth of the hand gave rise to emanations, these must, we suppose, take place at the portions warmed by the hand, and therefore represent its figure. — *Zoist*] In this mode of divination crystal has not solely been used; its scarcity and difficulty of cutting having caused it from the earliest ages to be superseded by olive oil, black liquids, glass, and particularly by bottles and basins of water. Porphyry, under the heads of Hydro and Lecano-mancy, says that demons were compelled by invocatory songs to enter a vessel filled with water and give answers to the questions propounded, or represent therein the issue of any required event. Psellus also states that the Assyrians were much addicted to prophesying in a basin of water. And Dr. Kerner relates [*Seeress of Prevorst*, p. 74, London, 1845] that the *Seeress of Prevorst* appeared to him to have had her inward or spiritual eye excited by soap bubbles, glass mirrors, etc. Dr. K. relates that a "child happening to blow soap bubbles, she exclaimed, 'Ah, my God! I behold in the bubbles everything I think of, although it be distant, not in little, but as large as life, but it frightens me'. I then made a soap bubble and bade her look for her child who was far away. She said she saw him in bed, and it gave her much pleasure. At another time she saw my wife, who was in another house, and described precisely the situation she was in at that moment — a point I took care immediately to ascertain. She was, however, with difficulty induced to look into these soap bubbles. She seemed to shudder and she was afraid that she would see something that would alarm her. In one of these she once saw a small coffin standing before a neighbouring house. At that time there was no child sick; but shortly after the lady who lived there was confined; the child lived but a few months and Mrs. K. saw it carried from the house in a coffin. If we wished her to recall dreams which she had forgotten, it was only necessary to make her [Page 14] look at a soap bubble, and her memory of them immediately returned. She often saw persons that were about to arrive at the house, in a glass of water; but when she was invited to this kind of divination, and did it unwillingly, *she was sometimes mistaken.*"

Aubrey, in his *Miscellanies*, [*Miscellanies*, by J. Aubrey, 1696, p, 128] gives the form of the crystals as commonly used in his time. Dr. Dee used several stones, one of which is now in case No.20 of the Mineral Room at the British Museum; it belonged, with his MSS., to the collection of Sir R. Cotton. Another, composed apparently of a flat, circular and highly polished piece of Cannel coal, about six inches in diameter, came to the hands of Lord Peterborough, and from thence passed to the possession of Horace Walpole, and was sold at the Strawberry Hill sale, in 1842, and most probably was the one alluded to by Butler. [*Hudibras*, Canto III., line 631:-

"Kelly did all his feats upon
The devil's looking-glass, a stone,
Where, playing with him at bo-peep
He solved all questions ne'er so deep."]

Upon referring to that very remarkable and scarce work, entitled, "A true and faithful Relation of what passed between Dr. John Dee and some Spirits, [London, Folio, 1659] edited by the learned Dr. Merie Casaubon, which although a goodly folio of 500 pages, formed but a small portion of Dr. Dee's experiments, or, as he termed them, "Actions" ; yet sufficiently attest that both Dee and Kelly (his seer) were *firm believers* in the truth of their researches; and the very singular coincidences arising from a perusal of this work, with the revelations made to Dr. Kerner by the Seeress of Prevorst and by the Somnambulist described in Dr. Henry Werner's work, entitled, "Guardian Spirits; or remarkable Cases of Vision by two Seeresses into the Spiritual World, [Stuttgart, 1839; New York, 1847, Translated by A. E. Ford] will repay an attentive perusal, although, unfortunately, it would occupy too much of your valuable space to allow parallel passages from such voluminous works. [Dr. Dee relates in his diary, published by the Camden Society in 1842: " 16th March, 1575. Her Majesty (Elizabeth) willed me to fetch my glass so famous, and to show unto her some of the properties of it, which I did; her Majestie being taken down from her horse by the Earle of Leicester did see some of the properties of that glass, to her Majestie's great contentment and delight]

Dr. Collyer, the able lecturer on mesmerism, appears to see the subject only in a rationalist point of view, and in support of his theory, gives in his *Psychography* on the embodiment of thought, the following account of a modern magical experiment, performed at the instance of Lord Prudhoe and Major Felix, a British officer, when travelling in Egypt, who were [Page 15] among the first persons who astonished the European world with their report of the magic mirror experiment; being men of high character and sense, their statement created a considerable sensation (although a matter of daily occurrence in many parts of England, especially in Lancashire), and was first reported by the interlocutors in the "Noctes Ambrosianae" of *Blackwood's Magazine* for August, 1831. [See also an article in No.356 of *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*; containing an account of some of the Egyptian magician's failures]

"Lord Prudhoe and Major Felix being at Cairo last autumn, on their return from Abyssinia, where they picked up much of that information which has been worked up so well by Captain Bond Head, in his 'Life of Bruce', found the town in a state of extraordinary excitement, in consequence of the recent arrival in those parts of a celebrated magician from the centre of Africa, somewhere in the neighbourhood of the mountains of the moon. It was universally said and generally believed that this character possessed and exercised the power of showing to any visitor, who chose to comply with his terms, any person, dead or living, whom the same visitor pleased to name. The English travellers, after abundant enquiries and some scruples, repaired to his residence, paid their fees, and were admitted into his *sanctum*. They

found themselves in the presence of a very handsome young Moor, with a very long black beard, a crimson caftan, a snow-white turban, blue trousers, and yellow slippers, sitting cross-legged on a Turkey carpet, three feet square, with a cherry stalk in his mouth, a cup of coffee at his left elbow, a diamond-hafted dagger in his girdle, and in his right-hand a large volume clasped with brazen clasps.

"On hearing their errand he arose and kindled some spices on a sort of small altar in the middle of the room, he then walked round the altar for half an hour or so, uttering words, to them unintelligible, and having at length drawn three lines of chalk about the altar, and placed himself upright beside the flame, desired them to seek a *seer*, and he was ready to gratify them in all their desires. There were in the olden days whole schools of magicians here in Europe, who could do nothing in this line without the intervention of a *pure seer*, to wit a *maiden's eye*. This African belongs to the same fraternity. He made them understand that nothing could be done until a virgin's eye was placed at his disposal. He bade them go out in the streets of Cairo and fetch any child they fancied under ten years of age. They did so, and after walking about half an hour selected an Arab boy, apparently not above eight, whom they found playing at marbles; they bribed him with a few halfpence and took him into the studio of the African Roger Bacon. The child was much frightened at the smoke, and the smell, and the chatter, but by-and-bye he sucked his sugar candy, and recovered his tranquillity, and the magician made him seat himself under a window, *the only one that [Page 16] had not been darkened*, and poured a tablespoonful of *some black liquid into the boy's right hand*, and bade him hold the hand steady, and keep his eye fixed upon the surface of the liquid ('here', the doctor says, as with the magic mirrors of old, is the medium used to embody the idea, which has been conveyed by the operator to persons in correspondence, the angle of direction from the boy's mind must be in accordance with the angle from the person in correspondence); and then resuming his old station by the brazier, sang out for several minutes on end, 'What do you see? Allah bismil-lah — what do you see?' All the while the smoke curled up faster and faster; presently the lad said, 'Bismillah, I see a horse — a horseman — I see two horsemen — I see three — I see four — five — six — I see seven horsemen, and the seventh is a sultan!' 'Has he a flag?' cried the magician. 'He has three', answered the boy. 'Tis well', said the other; 'I now halt', and with that he laid the stick right across the fire, and standing up addressed the travellers in these words: 'Name your name; be it of those that are upon the earth, or of those that are beneath it, be it Frank, Moor, Turk or Indian, prince or beggar, living and breathing, or solved into the dust of Adam, three thousand years ago; speak, and this boy shall behold and describe'. The first name was *William Shakespeare*. The magician made three reverences towards the window, waved his wand nine times, sang out something beyond their interpretation, and at length called out, 'Boy, what do you behold?' 'The sultan alone remains', said the child, and beside him I see a pale-faced Frank — but not dressed like these, Franks — *with large eyes*, a pointed beard, a tall hat, roses on his shoes, and a short mantle! 'The other asked for *Francis Arouet de Voltaire*, and the boy immediately described a lean, old, yellow-faced Frank, with a huge brown wig, a nutmeg grater profile, spindle shanks, buckled shoes, and a gold snuff box. Lord Prudhoe now named *Archdeacon Wrangham* and the Arab boy made answer and said, 'I perceive a tall grey-haired Frank, with a black silk petticoat, walking in a garden with a book in his hand — he is reading the book; his eyes are bright and gleaming, his teeth are white; he is the happiest looking Frank I ever beheld'. Major Felix now named a brother of his, who is in the cavalry of the East Indian Company, in the presidency of Madras. The magician signed, and the boy again answered, 'I see a red haired Frank, with a short red jacket and white trousers; he is standing by the sea-shore, and behind him there is a black man in a turban holding a beautiful horse richly caparisoned! 'God in heaven!' cried Major Felix. 'Nay', the boy resumed, "this is an old Frank; he has turned round while you are speaking, and by Allah, he has but one arm!' Major Felix's brother lost his arm in the campaign of Ava".

"It is here evident," says Dr. Collyer, " that he did not see any real spirit or apparition, but merely the *embodied idea* of the travellers, who [Page 17] depicted in their minds the image of Shakespeare as he is *generally* represented, etc., etc.."

Dr. Collyer then proceeds to state that he has proved the "possibility of mental transfer " beyond the remotest chance of doubt: he relates several experiments in which the recipients exactly described what the spectators wished them to perceive, it being necessary that the latter should form clear and vivid images, in their own minds, of what was to be seen by the patients. One of these experiments is described as follows: —

"New York
"February, 1841.

"Magnetised Miss — , found her condition one of the most exalted. At the request of her father, who is one of the most eminent artists in the country, I brought before her *spiritual* vision the shade of Napoleon, whom she recognised at once, then Byron and Alexander the Great. The experiment was performed with much care, so that she could not have previously known our intention. I repeated the experiment on a series of persons with like success. I was obliged to embody the image of those personages in my own mind, before they could be recognised by the recipients; whose brain during the congestive state was so sentient, that the impression was conveyed to the mind, similar to the photographic process of Daguerre".

In the *Albany Argus*, Dr. Collyer says, " I have always advocated the philosophy that the nervous fluid was governed by the same code of laws which governed heat, light, etc., as radiation and reflection actually made a lady perform the same class of phenomena which is the wonder of travellers in the East. She was desired to look into a cup of molasses (any other dark liquid will answer the same purpose) and when the angle of incidence from my brain was equal to the angle of reflection from her brain, she distinctly saw the image of my thoughts at the point of coincidence, and gave minute descriptions of many persons whom she could have no idea of; she saw the persons and things in the fluid, only when the angles of thought converged".

With due deference to Dr. Collyer, is it not most probable that these ladies were influenced by the well-known mental control which magnetizers possess over their patients, and which has been aptly termed "suggestive dreaming"? Upon considering the relations just made, it cannot for a moment be supposed that Lord Prudhoe and Major Felix could have heard the persons and costumes thus described, in the same sequence in which they were formed in their own minds, without remarking the coincidence, still less could Major Felix have felt such astonishment at the description of his brother, with the accessories of the red-haired Frank, *etc.*, when, according to Dr. Collyer's theory, it was merely the reflex of his own imagination. [Page 18]

Mr. Salt, the late British Consul, a gentleman intimately acquainted with the language, people, and country, and less liable to be deceived than by a passing traveller, found himself completely puzzled on many occasions by the results of the magic mirror experiment. Having once, for example, private reasons for believing that some one of his servants had stolen various articles of property, Mr. Salt sent for a

celebrated Mugh'-reb'-ee magician with the view of intimidating the suspected person, and causing him voluntarily to confess if he were really guilty: the magician came and declared that he would cause the exact image of the guilty person to appear to any boy not above the age of puberty. A boy was taken incidentally from a band of several of them at work in Mr. Salt's garden, the forms were gone through and the magic mirror properly formed; after seeing various images, the boy finally described from the mirror the guilty person, stature, dress, and countenance; said that he knew him and ran down into the garden, where he apprehended one of the labourers, who, when brought before his master, immediately confessed that he was the thief.

Mr. Lane, the eminent Orientalist, who lived for several years in Egypt, and witnessed personally the operations of the Egyptian magicians, of which he has published many curious relations, states, that on one occasion the magicians' performances were ridiculed by an Englishman present, who said nothing would satisfy him but a correct description of his own father, of whom he was sure that no one of the company had any knowledge. The sceptic was a little staggered, when the boy described the man in a Frank dress, with his hand placed to his head, wearing spectacles, with one foot on the ground, and the other raised behind him as if he were stepping down from a seat.

The description was exactly true in every respect, the peculiar position of the hand was caused by an almost continual head-ache, and that of the foot by a stiff knee caused by a fall from a horse in hunting.

I am assured, continues Mr. Lane, that the boy described accurately each person and thing that was called for, and I might add several other cases in which the same magician has excited astonishment in the sober minds of Englishmen of my acquaintance. Mr. Lane candidly confesses that there is a mystery in the matter to which he cannot discover any clue. How then are such phenomena so perfectly coincident with the higher order of mesmeric clairvoyance as developed by Alexis Didier, and by Mr. Hands' patient, as described in No. XXV. of the *Zoist*? Dr. Collyer would certainly confess that it is utterly improbable, that these gentlemen should have been in that peculiar position in respect to the boy-seer, that the angle of incidence in all these cases equalled the angle of reflection, and a very slight perusal of Dr. Dee's work, will convince the reader that Dr. Dee could not have been so besotted during more than twenty years experiments (with different [Page 19] seers), not to have discovered that the visions and responses given by the crystal, were but the embodiment of his own thoughts.

That the phenomena thus elicited has a closer connection with the spiritual world than the rationalists of the present day are disposed to allow, the following extracts are given from that remarkable piece of autobiography, *William Lilly's History of his Life and Times from the year 1602 to 1681*. "All the ancient astrologers of England were much startled and confounded at my manner of writing, especially old Mr. William Hodges, who lived near Wolverhampton, he swore I did more by astrology than I could do by crystal and use thereof, which indeed he understood as well as anyone in England. His angels were Raphael, Gabriel and Uriel. John Scott, my partner, having occasions into Staffordshire, addressed himself for a month or six weeks to Hodges, assisted him to dress his patients, let blood, etc., being about to return to London, he desired Hodges to show him the person and features of the woman he should marry. Hodges carries him into a field not far from his house, pulls out his crystal, bids Scott set his foot to his, and after a while wishes him to inspect the crystal and observe what he saw there. 'I see', said Scott, a ruddy complexioned wench in a red waistcoat, drawing a can of beer. 'She must be your wife' said Hodges. 'You are mistaken, Sir', said Scott. 'I am, so soon as I come to London, to marry a tall gentlewoman in the Old Bailey'. 'You must marry the red waistcoat', said Hodges. Scott leaves the

country, comes up to London, finds his gentlewoman married. Two years after going into Dover, on his return, he refreshed himself at an inn at Canterbury; as he came into the hall or first room thereof, he mistook the room, and went into the buttery, where he espied a maid, described by Hodges as aforesaid, drawing a can of beer, *etc.*. He then more narrowly viewed her person and habit, found her in all parts to be the same as Hodges had described; after which he became a suitor unto her, and was married unto her, which woman I have often seen", this Scott related to me several times, being a very honest person and made great conscience of what he spoke. Another story of Hodges is as followeth, which I had related from a person who knew well the truth of it. "A neighbour gentleman of Hodges lost his horse; who having Hodge's advice for recovering him did again obtain him. Some years after in a frolic, he thought to abuse him; acquainting a neighbour therewith, *viz.*, that he had formerly lost a horse, went to Hodges, recovered him again, but saith it was by chance, 'I might have had him without going unto him. I will leave some boy or other at the town's end with my horse, and then go to Hodges and enquire for him'. He did so, gave his horse to a youth, with orders to walk him till he returned; away he goes with his friend, salutes Hodges, thanks him for his former courtesy, and now desires the like, having lost a horse lately. [Page 20] Hodges, after some time passing, said, 'Sir, your horse is lost never to be recovered'. 'I thought what skill you had', replies the gallant, 'my horse is in a lane at the town's end'. With that Hodges swore (as he was much given to that vice), 'Your horse is gone and you will never have him again'. The gentleman departed in great derision of Hodges, and came to where he left his horse when he found the boy fast asleep upon the ground, with his arm in the bridle. He returns again to Hodges, desiring his aid, being sorry for his former abuse. Old Will swore, 'Begone, begone, go look for your horse'. This business ended not so, for the malicious man brought Hodges into the Star Chamber for sorcery, bound him over to the assizes, put Hodges to great expense; but by means of Lord Dudley, if I remember aright, or some person thereabouts, he overcame the gentleman and he was acquitted."

And again Lilly says, "I was with a Sarah Skelhorne, who had been speculatrix unto one Arthur Gauntlett, about Gray's Inn, a very lewd fellow, professing physic, this Sarah had a perfect sight, *and indeed the best eyes for that purpose I ever yet did see*. This Sarah lived along time until her death, with one Mrs. Stockman, in the Isle of Purbeck, and died about sixteen years since. Her mistress one time being desirous to accompany her mother, the Lady Beaconsfield, unto London, who lived twelve miles from her habitation, caused Sarah to inspect her crystal, to see if she, *viz.*, her mother, was gone, yea, or not; the angels appeared and showed her mother opening a trunk and taking out a red waistcoat, whereby she perceived she was not gone. Next day she went to her mother's, and there, as she entered the chamber, she was opening a trunk and had a red waistcoat in her hand."

Lilly wrote the account of his life to, and by the request of, Elias Ashmole (the founder of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), and in reference to these and similar relations, says, "I may seem to some to write *incredibilia*, be it so, but knowing unto whom, and for whose only sake I do write them, I am much comforted therewith, well knowing that you are the most knowing man in these curiosities of any man now living in England.

So far as my own experience extends, I feel convinced that nothing approaching a transmission of thought takes place between the caller and the seer, in fact the vision in the glass is quite unconnected with what is passing in the minds of either. In this country the seer generally inspects the crystal for himself, and the object he perceives is known only to himself, and concerns alone his own private affairs. Upon referring to a diary I formerly kept, I find the following entry [Nothing is more likely than that John Lilly may have encountered and even have produced many genuine phenomena as the class now known

as clairvoyance: but he is a confirmed charlatan in whose hands truth — to parody Burke — loses half its goodness in losing all its purity. His autobiography is nevertheless capital; it reads like a foretaste of Defoe, and as it is difficult to think that Defoe, as he wrote fiction, did not sometimes come to believe that what he related was fact, so Lilly, it is not at all impossible, was once or twice so far carried away by fervour and habit of invention as to feel as if he were telling the truth. — *Zoist*] Thursday, 9th October, 1834. This evening I charged [Page 21] my crystal (a glass sphere) and J. N. inspected it, she wished to see her mother who lived at Worcester. Upon commencing the call a second time, she perceived a straight streak of light which appeared to open like a pair of compasses, and then she saw the head, and gradually the whole person of her mother, shoulders. waist, etc., but she could not see any feet. She described her mother as dressed in a green gown with yellow spots, and a purple silk handkerchief with blue spots over her shoulders, her dark hair parted over her forehead, she said her mother appeared to be well. " M. inspected the crystal but had no vision." This J .N. was a young woman about twenty years of age, and although I knew the purpose for which she inspected, yet having no knowledge of the absent party, it certainly could not be a transmission of my thought. But, says the rationalist, it was the embodiment of her own. Granted — still the following experiment will show even that might not have been the case. Sunday, November 9th, 1834, I charged the crystal for E. T., she wished to see a gentleman of her acquaintance (but a perfect stranger to myself), and who then resided a short distance from London. Upon my first charging the glass she perceived only an eye looking at her, but on repeating the charge the whole face and body to the waist formed gradually. So distinctly did the vision appear, that she perceived even a scar on his right cheek, he was dressed in black, with *white* neckerchief, and *white* shirt studs.

"I afterwards charged for another person, but they had no vision". In this case the speculatrix had never seen the party in question in any other than a black silk neckerchief and jet studs, but it afterwards appeared that the gentleman being then in mourning for his deceased wife, he on Sundays wore a white neckcloth and diamond studs, a circumstance she was at the time perfectly unconscious of, and consequently the vision could not be the embodiment of her own thoughts. I will just add one more relation to prove the fallacy of Dr. C's. opinion.

"In 1842 an old and worthy friend, of whose strict veracity I have no possible reason to doubt, came from Burnham with a relative to transact some business in London, and during the time of my absence from home with his relation, he took up from sheer curiosity a small oval-mounted crystal, which I had been using (without effect) shortly before, and then stood upon the table: and after examining it and trying to guess its use, he observed it to become clouded; this at first he attributed to his breath, but upon further observing it, the cloud, as he expressed it, appeared to open like a pair of ostrich's legs which gradually resolved itself into the form of a skeleton. He has since told me that at the same time he felt so [Page 22] great an oppression of giddiness and alarm that he immediately replaced the crystal, and was a considerable time before he could throw off the unpleasant sensations it had produced. It was not until nearly two years after this that he ventured to tell me the circumstance: but I could never by any means induce him to inspect it again. It is remarkable that a few months after this happened his relative, with whom I was absent, *died*.

"In this case there was no embodiment of thought, no angle of incidence equalling the angle of reflection, and it would be difficult to persuade my friend, a hale and hearty farmer of fifty, that at noonday he was dreaming."

In "I's" article he considers this mode of divination as precisely analogous to one of Mr. Braid's methods of inducing sleep: but in that he is most certainly in error, there is not the slightest analogy between Mr. Braid's process of producing sleep by fatiguing the rectus and levator muscle of the eye and the method of inspecting the crystal. Mr. Braid's method is to fix a small but conspicuous object above the level of the eye (the stopper of a bottle was the first object he employed), and then desiring his subjects to fix their gaze steadfastly upon its outer extremity, their eyelids generally closed in sleep in a few minutes, often a few seconds, thus causing congestion by a rapid exhaustion of the natural sensibility of the retina and motive nerves of the eye and eyelids: or in Mr. Braid's own words, "My phenomena I consider arise entirely from the patient keeping his eyes fixed in one position, *and the greater the strain* on them the better, and the mind rivetted to one idea".

On the contrary, when inspecting the crystal, it is held in the party's hand, in the position most easy to himself, and he retains the full possession of his faculties and conversational powers. But if "I" is still wedded to his hypnotic theory, perhaps he will try a few experiments by squinting, say at a decanter stopper, and then favour us with his revelations. As for the visions in the crystal being as "I" supposes the result of merely "the earnest gaze and concentration of the mind to one idea", as well might he assert that Sir John Herschell, Adams, or Gasparis, when scrutinizing every point of the starry heavens with telescopic eye, were self-hypnotised, and their resplendent discoveries, which have placed them foremost in the ranks of science, were but the revelations of a neuro-hypnotic trance.

For myself I am content to believe that the faith of our forefathers were not such "wretched superstitious absurdities", and that "there are really things in Nature of which our modern philosophy does not permit us to dream".