

# JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

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VOL. XXXI

1939—1940

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*For Private Circulation among Members  
and Associates only*

THE SOCIETY'S ROOMS  
31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

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# JOURNAL

OF THE

## Society for Psychical Research

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*NOTICE OF MEETING*

### A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

*On WEDNESDAY, 25 January, 1939, at 5.30 p.m.*

WHEN

MR C. V. C. HERBERT

WILL SPEAK ON

“Recent Work Carried Out by the Society”

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*N.B.—No Tickets of Admission will be issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.*

## NOTICE OF FEBRUARY MEETING

THE attention of Members is called to the statutory notice of the Annual General Meeting of the Society, which accompanies this issue of the *Journal*. The Meeting will be held on the 22nd February.

## A WELL-EVIDENCED PRECOGNITIVE DREAM

DR. W. H. C. TENHAEFF, the holder at Utrecht University of the first academic appointment to be allotted to psychical research, and an Hon. Associate of the S.P.R., reports below a case which has come under his own observation. Most of our readers cannot avail themselves of the account in Dutch<sup>1</sup> which was briefly mentioned in our "Notes on Periodicals" last November; and besides the evidential interest of the case Dr Tenhaeff puts forward an interesting problem about the kind of precognition that may be involved.

In dreaming of an accident much resembling one which occurred two days after the dream, is the dreamer to be thought of as making use of her own future knowledge of the event—that is, as anticipating the impressions that she herself will later receive on learning of the accident—or as making use of some clairvoyant prevision of the scene, which she did not in fact see when it subsequently occurred? The accident was not fatal in reality, but in the dream it was. Dr Tenhaeff and a co-worker of his point out that a confused impression that the accident was fatal could well be received by an eye-witness, whereas the published news of the accident did not convey the idea of a fatality.

The point cannot be definitely judged in this case, since the dreamer first learned of the accident through her husband's verbal report of the news, and we do not know what impression she first received from his words; and in any case the dream-mind itself may be looked to as the most likely source of emotional and dramatic additions to the verifiable details in a dream. But it is a point for further observation, whether evidence for precognition suggests only a paranormal anticipation of the percipient's own future experience, or requires a theory of "second sight" by which the percipient observes future event directly as it will occur.

The following is Dr Tenhaeff's report of the case:

On 18 November 1937, Mrs O. of Amsterdam was put in touch with me by a lady whom she had met. Dr J. D., a physician at Amsterdam, had also advised her to communicate with me. Mrs O. is a very simple woman (her husband is a house-painter), mother of three children. From what she told me, she was in a nervous con-

<sup>1</sup>*Tijdschrift voor Parapsychologie*, x. 4. 161.

dition which certain people were inclined to attribute to mediumship, developing and not understood.

Mrs O. seemed very susceptible to hypnosis. I made some simple experiments with her, intended as preliminary trials, advised her not to have dealings with certain dabblers in parapsychology who appeared to be anxious to commiserate with her, and promised that I would investigate the question of her possessing latent paranormal faculties.

On 19 November 1937, Dr J. D. wrote to me as follows :

“Mrs O.—W. has requested me to write to you about her. I lay particular stress on the fact that I am not her family doctor, but only acted as go-between to obtain her admission some months ago to a women’s clinic, for a slight uterine disorder. She was operated on under hypnosis. Meanwhile I found that she had already been under treatment for a long time by a doctor in this place who had regularly hypnotised her. Recently she came to me spontaneously for advice about her psychical constitution. She felt, internally, extremely on edge and was anxious for some means of self-expression. I had a few interviews with her and she proved to be very easily susceptible to hypnosis. The only thing I could do was to talk with her and to warn her as to the influence of others. When she asked me what I thought about her applying to you I immediately gave my approval. . . . I can’t tell anything more about her but I hope that she can get from you the help which she so ardently desires.”

On Saturday evening, 27 November 1937, I received a letter from Mrs O. running as follows :

“I intended writing to you yesterday by way of a safety-valve. You will understand this, I expect, for of course I am in a very tense condition. But I have had to wait until to-day in order to write you something else. You had told me that I was to pay attention to my dreams. Now I had a dream last night, and everything was so clear that I have a vivid recollection of it.”

(Numbers are inserted in Mrs O.’s following account of her dream, for future reference.)

“I saw a level-crossing (1) and a long road (2) and meadows (3). Behind the gate (4) to the left stood a working lorry (5). A car came driving very quickly (6) which was in a hurry to cross (7), but in the middle a tyre burst and the car drove full speed into the gate (8) and into the lorry (9) which was standing behind. Someone was killed on the spot (10). I saw him lying there, and it was Prince Bernhard (11). What do you think of that? Also deception? I hope this letter will not be of any value and that it will be indeed a deception. I write this really for the same reason as that letter to that old lady (12). But as a safety-valve too, for otherwise I walk

about all day long with it and see it always before me. Now I shift it on to you. You will certainly be able to deal with it better than I. Don't you think it silly that I have written all this to you but I am so glad that you will help me. . . . I am glad that I have written to you, and it makes me somewhat calmer again.—Yours faithfully,  
(Signed) MRS O."

This letter was dated: "Amsterdam, 27 November 1937" and it appears from the postmark that it was posted in the morning hours (probably under the first impression of the dream). I put the letter away in my desk. On Monday morning, 29 November 1937, I heard, by chance, the wireless report (9.45 a.m.) that Prince Bernhard had met with a motor accident. The letter of Mrs O., of which I had not thought since that evening, was immediately brought out.

Although, happily, we cannot speak here of a prophetic vision fulfilled in complete detail, it will be for many an obvious presumption that we have to deal with a prophetic dream with its details partially correct—what is called a Dunne effect.<sup>1</sup>

Let us trace exactly, on a basis of the particulars supplied by the newspapers, what Mrs O. foretold and what occurred in reality. The figures between brackets inserted in Mrs O.'s letter will simplify this for us.

(1) The accident took place in the immediate neighbourhood of the viaduct of the railway-line Hilversum-Amsterdam.

A photograph reproduced in the paper *Het Nieuws van den Dag* of 30 November 1937, shows us (2) a long road with

(3) Meadows. This is the highroad from Diemen to Amsterdam.

(4) In the photograph a gate<sup>2</sup> is to be seen.

(5) In front of this viaduct, work was being done on the railway embankment. Sand was being dug, and loaded on to lorries. A moment before the Prince's car passed, a lorry driven by the driver D.Z. had descended the improvised starting place. The man in charge of the work, Mr de Baat, was arranging for the lorry to cross safely. He waited a moment for a car coming from Amsterdam; after that the lorry crossed the road, turned to the left and was standing so that it faced in the direction of Amsterdam, when the right front wing of Prince Bernhard's car collided with the rear of the lorry on the left hand side.

(6) The Prince's two-seater was travelling at a great speed. A

<sup>1</sup>J. W. Dunne, *An Experiment with Time*.

<sup>2</sup>The gate by which the lorry emerged on to the road, from the foot of the railway embankment. There is no level-crossing in the photograph, which shows, however, a railway bridge crossing the road close to the scene of the accident. Another railway line runs, unfenced, alongside the road. Ed.

motorist behind him speaks of 90 km. (*Het Nieuws van den Dag*, 30 November 1937.)

(7) It was not the Prince's car but the lorry that crossed the road.

(8) There is nothing said of the bursting of a tyre or a collision with a gate.

(9) As we have seen, the Prince's car did collide with the lorry.

(10) Incorrect.

(11) "Meanwhile, people came rushing from a house in the neighbourhood with blankets and mattresses, and the two wounded men were laid on them to await the arrival of the doctors." (*Het Nieuws van den Dag*.)

(12) This refers to a spontaneous telepathic experience which she said she had had in relation with an old lady whom she knew, and seemed to perceive lying very ill in bed. She could have obtained this knowledge only in a paranormal manner. I have not been able to verify this case, which must have happened a long time ago.

On Tuesday, 30 November 1937, I received a letter from Mrs O. (dated 29 November 1937) as follows :

"You will have received my letter of Saturday. You can imagine my fright when my husband, coming home at noon, said that Prince Bernhard had met with a motor accident. I could not believe it at first and thought he was joking. I had not heard it on the wireless. It had to be that I should not write to you on Friday. I wrote the letter on Saturday morning when I was not yet even dressed, I had such an impulse. You can see now that nearly everything harmonises. That lorry too, and close by it the gate and also close by the railway viaduct. I am quite upset about it and had not thought to get a proof so soon of what you had told me. Did not it startle you? Could I speak to you? You understand that I am in great need of it. I had told it on Saturday to my husband and a few other people, not thinking that it would be realised so soon. On Sunday morning I had the same thing constantly in my mind's eye. Then I said to my husband : 'How wretched—I am always seeing that motor accident!' I have told it to Dr J. D. He thought it very remarkable. I only hope that the rest will not come true and he (*i.e.* Prince Bernhard) will soon be better. But now I see that all dreams are not deception. . . ."

As I have remarked above, the presumption will be clear to many that we are here concerned with a prophetic dream, partially correct in detail, referring to the accident met with by Prince Bernhard on 29 November 1937. Nevertheless it cannot be said with certainty that we have to do here with a Dunne effect. We must take into consideration the possibility that this is a case of "second sight".

According to Dunne it has to be assumed that the subject has anticipated, in a paranormal manner, her own future knowledge of facts. This could only be her future knowledge of the report in the paper, and the first report of the accident from her husband (see her letter of 29 November), for she was not an eye-witness. Would reading about the accident (and hearing of it) after the event have led to such an emotional dream? Presumably not. Why then should it do so before the event? My co-operator Mr J. C. M. Kruisinga, who has studied Dunne effects thoroughly, is of the opinion "that it is more a case of 'second sight' than a classic Dunne effect in the sense that Dunne conceives. When we read that the subject sees a tyre burst and says the driver was killed on the spot, we think rather of the account of a confused eye-witness than of the account of a newspaper reader. Anyone who obtained the news from a paper immediately had the impression that the accident was not fatal. I myself read the report in the *Handelsblad* and did not get any impression of a fatal accident—it was not until later that we came to the conclusion that the driver had escaped death by a miracle. It would be of great importance to know exactly what the subject's husband told her about the accident, when he came home on the Monday."

During the months of December, January and February Mrs O. came to see me repeatedly, and I utilised these visits in trying to trace the subjective factors to which we could attribute her dreaming of just this accident. To my regret I have not sufficiently succeeded in doing so.

W. H. C. TENHAEFF.

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#### MR TYRRELL'S ELECTRICAL APPARATUS

AT Mr Tyrrell's suggestion, the Research Officer made a careful inspection of the apparatus after its re-erection at Mr Tyrrell's new address. It was found to be in perfect working order. It has always been Mr Tyrrell's practice to make periodic tests of the mechanism during the course of his experiments, and it has now been decided that specific tests of the key relays, the box relays, and the safety relay<sup>1</sup> shall be made as a routine before and after every sitting; also that each sitting's results shall be recorded on a single length of paper tape, at the beginning and end of which will appear the records of the routine tests. In this way, each sitting's record will bear its own evidence that the mechanism was in proper working order when the work was started, and was still working properly after the sitting was finished. This course has been adopted, not because the apparatus is

<sup>1</sup> See 1936, *Proc.*, Vol. 44, p. 120.

likely to go out of adjustment—it has been found in the past to be very free from breakdown—but in order that any chance of trouble from this source may be rendered as remote as possible.

The apparatus in its present form is suitable for experiments both in pure clairvoyance (i.e. extra-sensory perception in which no other incarnate mind than that of the subject is involved) and in mixed perception (where a telepathic element may be operating): also, to some extent, for experiments in precognition. For work in pure clairvoyance, numbers selected automatically by an electrical device are fed to the apparatus without the operator knowing what these numbers are. This is an improvement over the previous arrangement in which automatically selected numbers, known to the operator, were passed into the apparatus through a commutator, the setting of which was unknown to the operator. Here at first sight it looked as though telepathic interaction between operator and subject could have no effect upon the results, since the operator, though he knew the numbers, did not know which of his keys was connected to which of the subject's boxes. But for a given setting of the commutator, a given key is always associated with the same box; and so the subject, once she had scored a success with that box, could, if she possessed a telepathic faculty, associate that box with the particular key, and could repeat her success whenever that key was depressed. The same would apply to the other keys and boxes.<sup>1</sup>

It must not be thought from this that it is in any way considered that telepathy is a faculty which can be taken for granted, or which is not worth investigating. Far from it. Though there is probably a good deal more evidence for telepathy than for the other paranormal faculties which have been postulated, it is always extremely difficult to produce satisfactory experimental evidence for its reality. Though many people have no doubt as to the existence of telepathy, the faculty cannot by any means be said to be absolutely proved beyond all question. It is probable that official scientific opinion—in so far as there is any official scientific opinion on these matters—rejects telepathy. But in any experiments in supernormal perception, it is very important, if possible, to differentiate between effects which might be due to telepathy and effects which must be

<sup>1</sup> It was this possibility, and this alone, that the Research Officer had in mind when discussing the matter with Mr Soal on the occasion referred to by him in *Light* of 1938, June 9, and quoted by Mr Tyrrell in the *October Journal*. It seems possible that Mr Soal may have misunderstood the point, as his reference appears to imply that the commutator fails to serve the purpose for which it was designed and suggests that it may even be a source of information to the subject. This is, emphatically, not the case.

independent of this faculty. And apart from this important consideration, there is another of even greater importance. If the subject in an experiment is in a position to receive relevant information telepathically from the operator, he is also in a position, if within sight or hearing of the operator, to receive information normally by means of sensory cues given unconsciously. In telepathic experiments, therefore, extreme pains have to be taken to guard against such leakage, not because such leakage is probable, but in order to make it impossible, or as nearly so as the technique will admit. Whereas, in non-telepathic experiments, such precautions are unnecessary—the operator cannot transmit to the subject information which he has not got.

In its present form, the apparatus should be capable of demonstrating without reasonable doubt the existence of non-telepathic extra-sensory perception, or clairvoyance. And also, if operator and subject are sufficiently separated to make the giving of unconscious cues *impossible* (as can easily be done with the present arrangement) it should be equally capable of use in telepathic tests. The apparatus should prove a powerful instrument of research, and we wish its inventor every success in his difficult work.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

### SPONTANEOUS AND EXPERIMENTAL CASES

SIR,—I have read with considerable interest Mr Maby's plea that psychical researchers should give preference to the study of spontaneous cases [*Journal* October 1938, p. 272].

A common objection to such cases is that the chances against their being the products of pure coincidence are often impossible or at least extremely laborious to estimate. I admit that this probably does not apply to certain of the best cases obtained through, say, Mrs Piper or Mrs Leonard—*i.e.*, cases in which there is a great wealth of verified detail. But it certainly applies to many of the simpler spontaneous experiences. An even more serious objection is that in spontaneous cases it frequently happens that many relevant facts remain unascertainable. One such unsuspected circumstance might, if revealed, change the whole complexion of the case. There is usually a strong element of uncertainty present in cases of telepathic dreams, prevision, etc.

But, putting aside this element of uncertainty, I agree with Mr Maby that spontaneous cases are often far more illuminating than the results obtained by the use of, say, Zener cards.

Unfortunately it is now clear that orthodox scientists and psychologists will pay scarcely any attention to even the most carefully recorded reports of telepathic dreams or experiences with mediums. Intrinsically, I suppose, my carefully recorded experiences with Mrs Blanche Cooper were of much greater interest than any of the negative statistical investigations which I have published since 1925. But while these experiences were widely discussed in many educated circles I do not think that a single review of them appeared in any reputable psychological journal. I fancy that there are still a great many psychologists (as well as other scientists) who consider that sitting with spiritualist mediums is scarcely respectable, and to be deprecated. Mediums are still associated in the academic mind with charlatanry and "baby talk". However regrettable this attitude may be the ordinary scientific worker is bound to be influenced by it and he can only devote himself to the kind of studies advocated by Mr Maby under penalty of having his patient work completely ignored. He will be told that his methods are hopelessly "unscientific". On the other hand a good many psychologists—in this country at any rate—are becoming more or less favourably impressed by laboratory experiments with Zener cards provided such experiments are carried out in a rigorously scientific manner. Such experiments are at least free from much of the odium that, justly or unjustly, attaches to spiritualism and researches into the problem of survival.

Thus, while I may be disposed to assent privately to many of Mr Maby's contentions, I am compelled as a matter of *policy* to disagree with him. The vital objective of psychical research at the present time must be to render itself *respectable* in the eyes of orthodox science. Our paramount object should be to get our studies taken up seriously by the Universities, and University psychologists are only impressed by the methods of the laboratory.—Yours faithfully,  
S. G. SOAL.

#### MENTAL AUTOMATISM AND TELEPATHY

SIR,—One or two points of great significance seem to me to be brought out in Mr Maby's "Case", in the October *Journal*,<sup>1</sup> and they are surely worth emphasizing.

(1) "There was also a sense of slight uncertainty about some, but not all, of the proper names . . ."

This surely parallels in an interesting manner the proper-name difficulty in the cases of mediums.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. xxx, p. 264.

(2) The point that telepathic rapport seemed to decrease in proportion to the lack of personal affection and sympathetic understanding between agent and percipient throws much light upon the difficulty of obtaining results in experimental thought-transference, and why it is that spontaneous cases are so much more striking and convincing, as Mr Maby emphasizes. This is of course generally recognized, but little in the way of verification of the belief has been adduced in the past.

(3) Mr Maby's discussion of the "core" of a possible communication, giving rise to subliminal "padding" by the psychic or medium, but nevertheless instigating it, has many interesting analogies with dreams, and was discussed at great length by Hyslop in his Piper Report. The old difficulty of sifting the wheat from the chaff is here brought to the fore, showing the error of trying to prove that such material is either *all* wheat or *all* chaff.—Yours, etc.,

HEREWARD CARRINGTON.

#### EXPERIMENT IN EXTRA-SENSORY PERCEPTION

SIR,—From Mr Soal's letters to the *Journal*, it seems that he makes a special claim to conduct investigations with every possible scientific safeguard. I wonder if this is always so. Early last October I watched Mr Soal testing the card-guessing powers of a subject who gives public performances to display faculties of this kind. The subject was given a playing-card, looked at it, and handed it back. Mr Soal then shuffled it with other cards, under a table, and slid the cards on to the table one by one, face downwards. The table was highly polished, and from time to time the colour, at least, of the card could be seen reflected from the surface, before the card was laid down flat. The late Miss Warren and I spoke to Mr Soal of this at the time, and said that we could see enough reflection sometimes to be fairly sure of the card.—Yours, etc.

M. K. VARVILL.

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#### REVIEW

*The Riddle of Life.* By WILLIAM McDUGALL, M.B., F.R.S.  
Methuen. 7s. 6d. net.

This little volume, unhappily the last of Professor McDougall's works, poses vividly before the reader's mind the question of whether or not experimental science is on its way towards solving the riddle. The authors of the astonishing variety of biological theories reviewed in this brief, but admirably clear conspectus, would, no doubt,

answer this question in the affirmative ; but, for the most part, their confidence appears to be sustained by their lack of acquaintance with methodology and theory of knowledge, which is no uncommon thing with scientific specialists. The doubt rises in the reader's mind as to whether many of them see the wood for the trees.

The author ranges the theories in order, from the sheer mechanism of Hogben and Needham to the advanced teleological theories of J. S. Haldane and Whitehead, and subjects the entire series to incisive criticism. Though his style is descriptive rather than polemical, he indicates his own position with clearness, saying that "any biology which neglects or ignores the efficacy of psychical activities is doomed to a relative sterility".

One of the curiosities of contemporary biological theory is its return to mechanism at a time when mechanics has become an anachronism in physical science. This recrudescence of mechanics is due to the Mendelian discoveries and the theory of genes, which have revived a belief in mechanical genetics. The brilliant protagonists of this latter theory have claimed that it provides a solution of the problem of morphogenesis and that it explains that marvellous combination of stability with lability, which is the outstanding feature of living things. But the author traces their arguments back into the region of the ultra-microscopic and shows that there the causal gap between spatio-temporal arrangements of molecules and the ensuing adult dispositions is never bridged. The theory may to some extent *describe* ; but it does not *explain*. Curiously enough, the most far-sighted of the mechanists, in their more candid moments (notably E. B. Wilson), confess to a fundamental ignorance, which their theories do not dispel.

After all we have heard about the importance of genes, it is astonishing to read (p. 23) that R. Goldschmidt, a geneticist of the highest authority, has recently published an article throwing doubt on the whole of the evidence for their existence!

The main crux of biology is, of course, the dispute between Mechanism and Teleology ; and the author, after passing in review the Organicist, Emergentist and *Gestalt* theories, considers that group of theories which centres round the conception of Holism, in which teleological or psychical causation is accepted as a *vera causa*. Here two themes are introduced, which are of great importance for psychical research, namely the theory of memory and McDougall's monadic conception of the structure of the organic being. Monadism, it is argued, is the view to which the dual nature of the organism points ; for organic beings are simultaneously unitary and multiple. Sometimes, when a part is grafted onto an organism, the grafted part

subordinates its growth to the pattern of the whole : but at other times the graft rebels and follows its own scheme in defiance of the total pattern. So also in psychology, it is a mistake to regard the unity of personality as a primary datum. It is rather " an achievement, a product of organic organization, an integration, a harmonization, actively maintained and only too liable to fail and lapse in favour of some state of conflict. . . ." In this personal integration the monads are conceived as being arranged in a hierarchy, with the self-conscious ego as the dominant member, while communication between members is telepathic. Should " telepathic " sound too outrageous a term for the scientific reader, he may say that the monads manifest a direct and " purely psychical integration ", which comes to the same thing!

Finally, the author turns to two outstanding biologies of the dualistic type—those of Professors Henri Bergson and Hans Driesch. In *Matière et Mémoire*, Bergson marshalled many facts pointing to the view that memory is of two kinds, (1) routine memory, which is really physiologically ingrained habit, and, (2) true memory, or memory of *meaning*, which exists, he maintains, without any material or physical basis. Here is something of central biological importance, since, " the immaterial basis of memory and the reality and the efficacy of the teleological activities of organisms are the two main supports of any thorough-going non-mechanical biology." It must be remembered that the wide problem of instinct is closely allied to that of memory. McDougall holds that Bergson's theory of memory contains much that is of importance for psychical research and that it has been unduly neglected by workers in that field.

He speaks with appreciation of the work of Hans Driesch, pointing out that in so far as the latter postulates in the higher organism a number of co-operating entelechies, his view becomes identical with the monadic theory combined with psycho-physical dualism.

Whoever reads with detachment this interesting review of biological theories, so confidently put forward by their various sponsors and yet so contradictory of one another, is likely to feel that all scientific hypotheses lie shrouded in mist behind those fundamental problems of epistemology, which the human mind has never yet solved.

G. N. M. T.

# JOURNAL

OF THE

## Society for Psychical Research

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### *NOTICE OF MEETING*

## The Annual General Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

*On WEDNESDAY, 22 February, 1939, at 4 p.m.*

*To transact the business set out on the formal notice dated  
the 16th January, 1939, and already circulated.*

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N.B.—*Members alone have the right to take part in the Business of the Annual General Meeting, but Associates may be present. Tea, to which Members and Associates are invited, will be served after the Meeting.*

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 NEW MEMBERS

**Betjeman, John**, Garrard's Farm, Uffington, Berks.

**Collins, B. Abdy**, Deccan House, Aldeburgh, Suffolk.

**Librarian**, King's College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 2.

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 MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

THE 368th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W. C. 1, on Wednesday, 11 January, 1939, at 3.15 p.m., THE HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTELTON, G.B.E., in the Chair. There were also present: Mr Whately Carington, Lord Charles Hope, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Mr W. H. Salter, Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt, R.N., and the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas; also Miss E. M. Horscell, Assistant-Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Three new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

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 PRIVATE MEETING

THE 161st Private Meeting of the Society was held in the Society's Library, on Wednesday, 25 January, 1939, at 5.30 p.m., Mr Kenneth Richmond in the Chair.

The Research Officer, Mr C. V. C. Herbert, read a paper entitled "A Preliminary Investigation into the Platform Clairvoyance of Mrs Helen Hughes". This paper will be published later in *Proceedings*. The following members took part in the discussion: Sir Ernest Bennett, Mr B. Abdy Collins, Dr E. J. Dingwall, Mr J. T. Evans, Mrs A. Peel Goldney, and the Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E.

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 CASE : A COINCIDENCE OF DREAMS

THE following case has been communicated to the Society by Monsieur Palthe of Uccle, Belgium, in a letter dated 18 October 1938.

On 7 October 1938, Monsieur X<sup>1</sup> attended a reception at the house of Madame Y<sup>1</sup> in Brussels. He left at 10.30 p.m. The same night Madame Y had the following dream :

<sup>1</sup> The real names and addresses are known to the Society.

She is at the railway station with a gentleman (unknown); several friends see her off including Monsieur X. Suddenly the train starts, and Madame Y leaves without having time to take all her luggage. She calls through the open window to Monsieur X: "Please bring me my luggage, and don't forget the yellow suitcase."

Arrived at her destination, she goes up to the luggage depôt and finds all her luggage except the yellow suitcase. Monsieur X is there too, and the lady severely rebukes him for his negligence.

The next morning, 8 October 1938, Madame Y related her dream to a witness, Monsieur Z;<sup>1</sup> and an hour or so afterwards, while Monsieur Z was still present, Monsieur X arrived, and before anything was said to him about Madame Y's dream, he recounted his own dream of the previous night, which was as follows:

He finds himself at the station, and is in charge of Madame Y's luggage. A yellow suitcase is especially recommended to his care. He transports all this with great pains, but the yellow suitcase is somehow lost. He mounts the stairs to the luggage depôt, and there meets Madame Y. She gives him a severe scolding for his bad behaviour.

Madame Y has contributed the following signed statement:

Brussels, 31 October.

I told Monsieur Z about my dream before hearing Monsieur X's statement, and the latter, in turn, related his dream to Monsieur Z before hearing my description.

I have actually a yellow suitcase, but Monsieur X says that if he ever saw it, he never paid to it any special attention. He never travelled with me actually. However, about two weeks before the occurrence of the coincident dreams he helped me to transport some luggage from one apartment to another. Among this luggage there was no yellow trunk.

Monsieur X has added a signed endorsement:

I hereby certify that the above letter is a true and correct statement of fact.

Monsieur Palthe reports that the persons concerned are all trustworthy witnesses.

<sup>1</sup> Monsieur Palthe has interviewed the witness and vouches for the truth of his statement.

## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR 1938

(1) *Research Department.* There has been no lack of material since the publication of the last Annual Report. Thirteen "spontaneous" cases have been examined, of which four have been considered sufficiently evidential for printing in the *Journal*. Two have already appeared, and two are in the press. In addition to these, three cases of hauntings, and seven *poltergeist* cases have been investigated. None was worth printing. The records of all these cases are preserved in the Society's files, and may be seen by Members and Associates on application to the Research Officer.

A number of minor experiments have been carried out either at the Rooms of the Society, or by correspondence with the persons concerned. Records of these are available for examination. The study of the paranormal healer, mentioned in the last Annual Report, has been continued, but no definite conclusions have yet been reached. It is hoped that further work on these lines may be possible with the collaboration of a member of the medical profession who has lately joined the Society.

An investigation has been begun of Mrs Helen Hughes, the well-known platform clairvoyante. Shorthand notes of two complete demonstrations (one a public meeting held at the Caxton Hall, and the other a private meeting at the London Spiritualist Alliance) are in the possession of the Society, together with annotations by many of the recipients of messages. The Society is greatly indebted to the Council and Secretary of the London Spiritualist Alliance for their kind co-operation during the course of this work. The investigation is being continued, and a report will be issued in due course.

Among other mediums examined is Mr Frank Leah, the artist, who makes sketches of alleged communicators. Several sittings have been arranged by the Society, the notes of which may be seen on demand.

Through the kind offices of Colonel A. H. Bell, the President of the Society of Dowsters, an experiment in map reading was carried out with four members of that Society. The results with one subject were sufficiently striking to warrant further tests being made, and it is hoped that these may be arranged shortly.

In collaboration with Mr Whately Carington, an experiment in connection with his word-association technique is being conducted by the Research Officer. A first series of tests has been completed and a second series will be carried out during 1939.

Many photographs having lately appeared in the press showing mediums at séances in a state of apparent levitation, it was considered that it would be valuable for the Society to investigate the appearance of a person in the act of jumping, photographed with a short exposure. A series of twelve pictures of a jumping model has been produced, photographed under similar conditions to those which would occur in the séance room, and many of these show practically no trace of any movement in the figure. This series suggests that it would be easy to give an illusion of levitation by means of a simple jump, if the flashlight apparatus is discharged either by an accomplice or by the medium himself. The series of photographs is available for comparison with any levitation pictures which may be produced in future.

During the closure of the rooms in the summer, an experiment in long distance telepathy was carried out with three percipients, all of whom had reason to suppose that they possessed some telepathic faculty. The results were sufficiently promising to justify further tests.

At the request of Dr A. Tanagras, of Athens, a series of tests has been arranged of telepathic transmission between London and Athens. A group meets at the Society's rooms every Tuesday afternoon, and an attempt is made to transmit images to a similar group sitting in Athens, and also to receive images transmitted by them. Four sittings have already been held, which have shown interesting results. Further sittings will be held in the new year.

In view of the controversy which has arisen over the results of the E.S.P. experiments carried out by Professor Rhine and other American investigators, the Council decided that it would be very valuable for a series of tests with Zener cards to be carried out by the Society's officers, such tests to avoid as far as possible those weaknesses of technique which have been alleged against the American procedure. The Society has obtained for this purpose a series of cards which has been specially made by Messrs De La Rue. After a certain amount of experiment, it was found to be quite easy to prepare cards which avoided the more obvious defects of legibility from the back and irregularity of pattern which had been noted in the E.S.P. cards previously on sale. The other details of the technique have been worked out with great care, and it is hoped that the Society's present procedure is completely proof against the chance of normal leakage, while at the same time allowing the subjects all possible freedom. A few tests have already been carried out, and a full programme of work in this field has been arranged for the new year. If any Member or Associate would like to take

part in these E.S.P. tests, which include pure telepathy, pure clairvoyance and a combination of the two, he should communicate with the Research Officer.

As a further contribution to the study of Extra Sensory Perception a Committee has been formed, consisting of Professor C. D. Broad, Mr Whately Carington, Mr Oliver Gatty and Professor R. H. Thouless, all of whom are now resident in Cambridge, with the object of conducting experiments under strict conditions. From the work already done, both within and outside the Society, it is obvious that the study of Extra Sensory Perception is full of technical difficulties and that little progress is likely to be made unless the investigators are fully aware of these and will both devise and scrupulously maintain the conditions appropriate for dealing with them.

(2) *Presideney.* The Council were so fortunate as to secure Lord Rayleigh's consent to serve as President of the Society for a second year of office. During the year 1938, he contributed to our *Proceedings* two papers, "The Question of Lights supposed to have been observed near the Poles of a Magnet", and "Some Recollections of Henry Sidgwick", in addition to his Presidential Address which was delivered in 1937.

(3) *Changes on the Council.* The Council deeply regret to record the death of Dr William McDougall, F.R.S., which took place in the United States in November. Dr McDougall joined the Society in 1902, and a few years later became a member of Council, and President of the Society in the years 1920-21. His eminence as a psychologist is too well known to call for remark, but it should be noted that in his numerous and influential books he more than once put the strongest emphasis on the importance of psychical research, at a time when few psychologists of position showed any interest in the subject.

The Council have co-opted Sir Robert Gower, M.P. as a member of Council.

(4) *Miss Newton's Retirement.* As foreshadowed in the Council's last Annual Report, Miss Newton's retirement from the post of Secretary, which she had so long and so successfully filled, took place at Ladyday, 1938. A few days later she read to the Society a paper entitled "A Study of certain Leonard Phenomena" which has been since printed in *Proceedings*. This was a notable occasion, as during the many years that she had been Secretary, Miss Newton's modesty prevented her giving the Society in the form of a paper

the benefit of her great knowledge of all branches of psychical research.

The Council decided that in view of the importance of the research side of Miss Newton's work, a Research Secretary should be appointed to assist Mr Herbert. After careful consideration they appointed Miss V. Warren, the appointment to be considered as provisional until the end of 1938. Unfortunately, Miss Warren died early in November.

(5) *The Editorship of the Journal.* The Council have appointed Mr Kenneth Richmond to act as Editor of the *Journal*, on Miss Nea Walker's resignation which was announced in the last Annual Report.

(6) *Publication of Books relating to the Society's Work.* In the last Report mention was made of a series of books being prepared by different members of the Society, dealing with various aspects of the Society's work. Five books in this series have been published, and while, of course, neither the Council nor the Society take any responsibility for the deductions or theories contained in the books, they consider the objects of the Society will be promoted by making readily accessible to the general public much material contained in our *Proceedings* and *Journal*; they have accordingly given the authors permission to quote several cases from the *Journal*, with due concealment of the names of persons concerned, or with their permission, where necessary.

(7) *Special Autumn Lectures.* Another way in which the Council considered that knowledge concerning past work done by the Society could be made available, both to non-members and to members who had recently joined and might not be familiar with it, was by holding during the Autumn two series of Lectures, one in the afternoon and one in the evening, to which the public were invited on payment. Unfortunately, the Lectures had been fixed to take place at a time when everyone's attention was distracted by international affairs, and the attendance was not as good as had been hoped. There were, however, interesting discussions after the Lectures which served a useful purpose in putting forward a broader view of psychical research in relation to its historical background than can be expected at most of our meetings which deal with current work in detail. The Council wish to record their thanks to Mrs Varvill for the great trouble she took in helping to organise these Lectures.

(8) *Hon. Members.* As a token of their admiration for her work as Secretary and her services to psychical research, the Council elected Miss Newton an Honorary Member of the Society.

**ACCOUNTS OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 1938**

**Dr.**

**GENERAL FUND.**

**Cr.**

<p>To Subscriptions:</p> <p>Members (1937) - - - - - £14 7 0</p> <p>Members (1938) - - - - - 812 16 0</p> <p>Members (1939) - - - - - 42 0 0</p> <p>Associates (1934) - - - - - £869 3 0</p> <p>Associates (1935) - - - - - 1 0 5</p> <p>Associates (1936) - - - - - 1 0 5</p> <p>Associates (1937) - - - - - 1 0 5</p> <p>Associates (1938) - - - - - 184 2 7</p> <p>Associates (1939) - - - - - 1 1 0</p> <p>Donation - - - - - 189 5 3</p> <p>Sale of Publications:</p> <p>Per Secretary to Members - - - - - 45 8 5</p> <p>Secretary to Public - - - - - 43 13 9</p> <p>F. W. Faxon Co. - - - - - 7 1 6</p> <p>Rent from Society's Tenant (Year to September 1938) - - - - - 96 3 8</p> <p>Interest on Investments - - - - - 225 0 0</p> <p>Grant from Endowment Fund towards Miss Warren's Salary - - - - - 220 14 9</p> <p>Sale of "Through a Stranger's Hands" - - - - - 87 10 0</p> <p>Special Lectures - - - - - 0 14 3</p> <p>Less Lecturers' Fees - - - - - 8 11 2</p> <p>Balance, 31st December 1937: - - - - - 1700 0 1</p> <p>On Current Account - - - - - 93 12 2</p> <p>In Secretary's hands - - - - - 13 13 5</p> <p>Due from Research Fund - - - - - 89 4 6</p> <p>Life Members' Subscriptions - - - - - 196 10 1</p> <p>Legacy - - - - - 83 8 4</p> <p>Repayment of Income Tax - - - - - 50 0 0</p> <p>113 7 5</p>	<p>By Printing of Publications:</p> <p>Journal (Nos. 538-547) - - - - - £171 19 5</p> <p>Proceedings (Parts 150-154) - - - - - 207 12 3</p> <p>Binding - - - - - £379 11 8</p> <p>Postage - - - - - 15 12 11</p> <p>Salaries: - - - - - 74 18 9</p> <p>Secretary—One Quarter to March 1938 - - - - - 50 0 0</p> <p>Assistant-Secretary - - - - - 189 0 0</p> <p>Editor of Journal - - - - - 25 0 0</p> <p>Miss Warren (Seven Months) - - - - - 87 10 0</p> <p>Pensions:</p> <p>Miss Alice Johnson - - - - - 120 0 0</p> <p>Miss I. Newton—Three Quarters to December 1938 - - - - - 131 5 0</p> <p>Librarian - - - - - 240 0 0</p> <p>Rent - - - - - 46 5 5</p> <p>Rates - - - - - 17 7 0</p> <p>Insurance - - - - - 18 16 11</p> <p>Repairs - - - - - 51 12 10</p> <p>Fuel and Lighting - - - - - 9 9 10</p> <p>Furnishing - - - - - 383 12 0</p> <p>Apparatus - - - - - 7 0 0</p> <p>Caretaker's Wages and Uniform and Cleaning Expenses - - - - - 157 1 2</p> <p>Expenses of Meetings - - - - - 9 7 11</p> <p>Stationery and General Printing - - - - - 32 1 4</p> <p>Telephone - - - - - 12 18 11</p> <p>Clerical Assistance - - - - - 34 5 6</p> <p>Audit Fee - - - - - 15 15 0</p> <p>Sundry Expenses - - - - - 7 16 4</p> <p>Commission on Sales, Cheques, etc. - - - - - 22 13 2</p> <p>Legal Expenses - - - - - 4 14 0</p> <p>Purchase of copies of "Through a Stranger's Hands" - - - - - 1 15 0</p> <p>Balance, 31st December 1938: - - - - - £268 2 2</p> <p>On Current Account - - - - - 11 5 11</p> <p>In Secretary's hands - - - - - 89 4 6</p> <p>Due from Research Fund - - - - - 368 12 7</p>
<p>£2143 5 11</p>	<p>£2143 5 11</p>



## ENDOWMENT FUND FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

To Balance, 31st December 1937:			
On Current Account -	-	£1097	2 6
Interest on Investments -	-	418	10 10
Repayment of Income Tax -	-	247	4 9
<span style="float: right;">£1762 18 1</span>			
BY <i>Research Officer's Salary</i> - - - - - £200 0 0 <i>Contribution towards Salary of Research Secretary</i> - - - - - 87 10 0 <i>Purchases of:</i> £810 3% Funding Stock 1959/69 - - - - - £800 19 9 £480 3% Funding Stock 1959/69 - - - - - 460 5 0 <hr style="width: 80%; margin-left: 0;"/> <i>Cost of Cheque Book</i> - - - - - 1261 4 9 <i>Cost of Duplicate Income Tax Vouchers</i> - - - - - 0 5 0 <i>Balance, 31st December 1938:</i> On Current Account - - - - - 213 17 4 <hr style="width: 80%; margin-left: 0;"/> <span style="float: right;">£1762 18 1</span>			

### MEMORANDUM OF ASSETS.

#### GENERAL FUND.

£58 11	2 2½% Annuities.		
£1139 4	5 2½% Consolidated Stock.		
£219 8	7 3½% Conversion Stock 1961.		
£86 11	11 4% Consolidated Stock.		
£309 9	9 3½% War Stock 1952.		
£800 0	0 York Corporation 3% Redeemable Stock 1955/65.		
£250 0	0 Commonwealth of Australia 3% Stock 1955/58		
£1,200 0	0 Nigeria Government 3% Inscribed Stock 1955.		
£1,161 0	0 London Midland and Scottish Railway Company 4% Debenture Stock.		
£562 0	0 London Midland and Scottish Railway Company 4% Preference Stock.		
£1,540 0	0 East Indian Railway Irredeemable Debenture Stock.		
£520 0	0 East Indian Railway Deferred Annuity Class "D".		
	300 South Staffordshire Tramways (Lessee) Co. (in voluntary liquidation) Deferred Shares of 5s. each fully paid.		
£423 0	0 5½% Second Mortgage on Mardy Estate.		

#### FREDERIC W. H. MYERS MEMORIAL FUND.

£750 0	0 5% Conversion Stock 1944/64.		
£250 0	0 3½% Conversion Stock 1961.		

#### ENDOWMENT FUND.

£1,460 0	0 4% Consolidated Stock.		
£2,300 0	0 3% Funding Stock 1959/69.		
£580 0	0 3½% War Stock 1952.		
£908 0	11 India 3½% Stock 1931 or after.		
£550 0	0 India 4½% Stock 1958/68.		
£1,797 0	0 London and North Eastern Railway Company 4% Debenture Stock.		
£1,055 0	0 Great Western Railway Company 5% Rent Charge Stock.		
£800 0	0 Great Western Railway Company 5% Guaranteed Stock.		
£2,258 0	0 London Midland and Scottish Railway Company 4% Preference Stock.		
£514 0	0 London Passenger Transport Board 4½% "T.F.A." Stock.		
£260 0	0 East Indian Railway 3½% Debenture Stock.		
£1,260 0	0 East Indian Railway 4½% Irredeemable Debenture Stock.		
£700 0	0 Great Indian Peninsular Railway 4% Debenture Stock.		

We have examined the above Accounts and compared them with the Society's Cash Books, Receipt Books and Vouchers, and certify that they are in accordance therewith. We have also verified the investments of the General, Endowment and Myers' Memorial Funds as set forth in the above Statements.

9 Idol Lane, E.C. 3, 31st January, 1939

MIALL, SAVAGE, AVERY & Co., Chartered Accountants.

During the summer one of the Society's most distinguished members, Dr Sigmund Freud, took up his residence in England. For twenty-seven years he has been a Corresponding Member of the Society, and now that he is living among us the Council considered it more proper that he should be elected an Honorary Member.

(9) *Library.* During the year 75 Members borrowed 427 books, and 89 books were borrowed by the National Central Library. Several Members availed themselves of the privilege of borrowing books from other Libraries through the Society and the National Central Library.

(10) *Obituary.* In addition to Dr McDougall, the Council regret to record the deaths of Dr Eugène Osty, a Corresponding Member ; also of Sir Reginald Johnston, Mr J. R. K. Duff and Dr W. H. Maxwell Telling.

(11) *Membership of the Society* During the year 51 new Members and 1 Student Associate were elected. The total loss in Members from deaths, resignations and other causes was 47 Members and 16 Associates, leaving a net increase of 5 Members and a decrease of 14 Associates. The total membership of the Society now stands at 688.

The Council welcome back to membership of the Society several members who had been compelled to resign in recent years on the ground of financial stringency. They regard their continued interest in the Society's work, evidenced by their resumption of membership, as most gratifying.

The Council wish that more young men and women would avail themselves of the opportunity of becoming Student-Associates under the scheme, particulars of which were printed in the *Journal* for July 1933. They hope that members who come in contact with young men and women interested, or likely to be interested, in psychical research will endeavour to persuade them to join the Society under these conditions.

(12) *Finance of the Society.* This is the first full year since the Society obtained exemption from income tax as mentioned in the last Report. Although the relief so obtained is appreciable, it is essential that the strictest watch on expenditure should be maintained and that no opportunity should be lost of increasing the Society's income. The Council wish to draw special attention to the seven years' Deed of Covenant recently circulated to all members, with an explanatory statement by the Hon. Treasurer. They hope that every member will respond to the Hon. Treasurer's appeal by

executing the Deed of Covenant. If this were done, a substantial increase in the Society's income would result.

(13) *Publications.* Five Parts of the *Proceedings* were published during the year: Part 152 in January, Part 153 in February, Part 154 in June, Part 155 in October and Part 156 in December.

The Secretary's sales to the general public amounted to £45 8s. 5d. and to members of the Society, £43 5s. 6d., an increase in both departments on sales for the past two years. Returns from the Society's agent in the United States amounted to £7 1s. 6d.

(14) *Meetings.* The following meetings have been held during the year:

- 26 Jan. "Two Series of Experiments in Automatic Writing", by Count Perovsky-Petrovo-Solovovo.
- 23 Feb. "Experiments with Mrs Eileen Garrett", by Mrs Goldney and Mr S. G. Soal.
- 30 Mar. "A Study of certain Leonard Phenomena", by Miss I. Newton.
- 27 Apr. "Recent Work carried out by the Society", by the Research Officer.
- 25 May. "The Leonard Communicator-Personality", by Mr Kenneth Richmond.
- 29 June. "Some Early Experiments providing apparently Positive Evidence for Extra-Sensory Perception", by Mr Whately Carington.
- 28 Sept. "Some Examples of Abnormal Phenomena from Africa", by Dr J. H. Driberg.
- 27 Oct. "The Contributions of Psychical Research to Psychotherapeutics", by Dr T. W. Mitchell.
- 30 Nov. "Henry Sidgwick and Psychical Research", by Professor C. D. Broad.

It may interest readers of the *Journal* to know that Dr W. B. Yeats, whose death has lately been announced, always kept his interest in psychical research, though he had not been a member of the S.P.R. since 1929. After reading Mr G. N. M. Tyrrell's book, *Science and Psychical Research*, Dr Yeats expressed a desire to meet the author. Mrs Lyttelton who knew them both invited them down to her country home for a week-end. Unfortunately the date arranged fell in the week of the crisis last September and as the house was to be filled with hurriedly evacuated children, it was not possible for the meeting to take place.

## CORRESPONDENCE

## MR TYRRELL'S ELECTRICAL APPARATUS

Sir,—The important investigation by Mr Tyrrell of Miss Johnson's clairvoyant powers deserves the most critical study, since it is one of the most successful attempts to devise a method of experimenting in E.S.P. which should be proof against error. May I, therefore, without any unfriendly intention towards these admirable experiments, play the part of devil's advocate and suggest a possible doubt.

The outstanding feature of the results reported in Mr Tyrrell's latest publication ("The Tyrrell apparatus for testing extra-sensory perception", *The Journal of Parapsychology*, II, 1938, pp. 107-118) is the fact that his subject fails to score significantly above mean chance expectation when the number selector is used but does score significantly when the keys are pressed down in an order determined by a series of numbers previously obtained by means of the selector, the possibility of the subject being influenced by telepathy or unconscious whispering being ruled out by the fact that between each observation the connection between the keys pressed down by the experimenter and the boxes opened by the subject is altered in a manner unknown to both experimenter and subject by the action of a rotating commutator.

The obvious difference between these two sets of cases is that when the subject is successful the mechanical selector has not operated and that when she is unsuccessful it has been used. Mr Tyrrell, therefore, draws the obvious conclusion that it is the use of the mechanical selector that causes the failure because the subject has acquired a distrust of this piece of mechanism which inhibits success. The sceptical critic may notice, however, that there is another difference between these two series. The commutator was used in the successful series and not in the unsuccessful one. There seems to be a possibility, insufficiently guarded against, that the excess of right guesses in the successful series is due to some peculiarity of the commutator.

There seems to be nothing in the experiments reported that is inconsistent with this possibility. On p. 117, Mr Tyrrell mentions five tests of his apparatus in which no significant excess over mean chance expectation was obtained. In all of these tests, however, the commutator was kept in a fixed position, so the tests were not carried out with the apparatus used exactly as it was used when giving positive results with his experimental subject. If it were a defect

of the commutator that was causing the positive results, this would not have been detected by these tests.

On p. 116 there is a record of two series of successful results in which the subject was tested with and without a mechanism for delaying contact until after the choice had been made. Here the commutator was used (as mentioned on p. 114).

Obviously it may be a mere coincidence that, in these experiments, successes were scored when the commutator was used but not when it was not used, but the matter obviously requires testing. If the commutator were making contacts so that two of the boxes could be lighted instead of one in a sufficient number of the observations (18% in the last series of trials reported on p. 118) the successes would be explained without any hypothesis of extra-sensory perception. It is true that in his article in *Proceedings* ("Further Research in Extra-Sensory Perception", July 1936) Mr Tyrrell mentions that the commutator is fitted with a ratchet which presumably is intended to prevent double contacts, but it does not seem impossible that the ratchet might not be working properly. In any case, whether or not it is likely that the commutator is responsible for the successes, it is obviously desirable that its working should be tested and this does not appear to have been done.

May I suggest two further tests. First, the possibility that the commutator was sometimes making connection to two lamps could be very simply tested by having all the boxes open, and making a series of observations with the commutator used between each observation, and noticing whether two lights were ever lighted together. Secondly, the more general possibility that the commutator was influencing the results favourably in some manner unknown might be tested by arranging for Miss Johnston to open the boxes in some prearranged order (let us say, backwards and forwards from end to end), the experimenter's keys being pressed in a random order (as in the experiments) and the commutator being used between each observation. If the commutator is not favourably affecting the results, this experiment should give only an insignificant deviation from mean chance expectation when the number of observations was as large as that in experiments in which Miss Johnson had shown significant results.

To be quite convincing, the second test should be given immediately after a sitting in which the subject had shown positive results. I should also suggest, as a matter of general principle, that the results obtained should be actually published together with the positive results of the experiment itself, *i.e.* that the figures of the test

should be published and not merely a record of the fact that there was no significant deviation from mean chance expectation. If this were done, and if the results showed a significantly greater excess over mean chance expectation for the experimental subject than for the control test, I think it would be difficult for the sceptic to find any loop-hole for error in Mr Tyrrell's ingeniously designed experiment. I hope he will find time to do this.

While commenting on Mr Tyrrell's experiments, there is another point that I should like to mention. The statistical propriety of Mr Tyrrell's procedure of not counting results on days on which his subject stated, before the experiment, that she did not think she was going to be successful on those days, has already been discussed by Mr Soal and Mr Tyrrell and I have nothing to add to that discussion which has been brought to a close. I wish to suggest, however, that there is another reason for regretting that Mr Tyrrell has not recorded results for days when his subject felt that she was going to be unsuccessful. It has been stated by Dr Rhine, and by Mr Tyrrell himself, that there are psychological conditions affecting success in E.S.P. experiments but these statements rest on impressions formed by experimenters during the course of E.S.P. experiments and (so far as I know) there is no published quantitative evidence on the question. If Mr Tyrrell has that evidence available, it seems to me a great pity that he does not publish it. If Miss Johnson scores significantly lower when she says that she is not going to be successful, that is a most important fact in the psychology of E.S.P. and is also important evidence of her clairvoyant powers. It would seem to eliminate the possibility that I have suggested of error being due to a peculiarity of the commutator, since Miss Johnson may be supposed to have knowledge of her own mental states but foresight of the peculiarities of behaviour of a piece of mechanism would seem to require clairvoyant powers. On both of the grounds mentioned above, I suggest that it would be of value that the figures obtained on days on which lack of success was predicted should be published.

The above letter is written in no spirit of carping criticism of Mr Tyrrell's experiments. I think it difficult sufficiently to praise the ingenuity of his methods, the careful honesty of his work, and the care with which he has devised new experiments to test suggested normal explanations of his results. It is impossible for an experimenter to anticipate all possible future criticisms of his work, and an experiment can only become absolutely error-proof if everyone puts forward all possible objections. If all are tested in turn and all are found to be mistaken, the experiment becomes as good

as possible. It is very likely that my suspicions of the commutator will prove to be unfounded.

Yours faithfully, ROBERT H. THOULESS.

P.S.—The above was written before I had seen the Research Officer's report on the apparatus. Its statement that the apparatus was in perfect working order may mean that adequate tests of the commutator were carried out. This is not, however, specifically stated. If the statement means merely that Mr Tyrrell's previous tests were repeated, the commutator remains suspect. In any case, what is necessary is not to show that the commutator sometimes works satisfactorily but that it is working satisfactorily at the time Mr Tyrrell's subject gives positive results. I welcome the suggestion that tests should be made before and after each sitting's results, but repeat that such tests would be merely misleading if they were simply those already used. What is necessary is not specific tests of separate parts of the apparatus, but a test, such as I have suggested, in which the apparatus as a whole is used exactly as in the experiment.

Mr Tyrrell writes : The Commutator *is* in use with the Selector as well as with the keys. It is permanently in circuit. The ratchet drive is specially designed to make bridging or " double contacts " impossible. It is the Post Office engineers, and not I, who are responsible for this switch, which is thoroughly reliable. On more than one occasion every position of the Commutator has been tested as Dr Thouless suggests by opening all the boxes.

9,600 numbers have been taken from the Selector *through the Commutator* for testing purposes, by observing the lamps with all boxes open. There has never been a single case of double lighting. Let me add that I welcome Dr Thouless's criticisms, but have not the space here to answer them more fully.

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Owing to pressure on space further current correspondence, including a reply by Mr Soal on a point of experimental technique, is held over until the next issue of the *Journal*.

# JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

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*NOTICE OF MEETING*

## A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

*On WEDNESDAY, 29 March, 1939, at 5.30 p.m.*

WHEN A PAPER ENTITLED

“EXPERIMENTS IN AUTOMATIC WRITING”

BY

Miss GERALDINE CUMMINS

WILL BE READ

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*N.B.—No Tickets of Admission will be issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.*

## NEW MEMBERS

*(Elected on 16 February 1939)*

**Du Cros, G. L.**, 2 Eaton Mansions, Sloane Square, London, S.W. 1  
**Frew, Miss K.**, 347 Sutton Common Road, Sutton, Surrey.

*(Elected on 22 February 1939)*

**Agar, Miss E. M. F.**, York Corner, Chertsey, Surrey.  
**McAlpine, Mrs R. J.**, 10 Trevor Square, London, S.W. 7

*Student-Associate*

**Stubbs, Peter**, Station Road, Wigton, Cumberland.

## MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

THE 369th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Thursday, 16 February, 1939, at 4.30 p.m., PROFESSOR C. D. BROAD in the Chair. There were also present : Mr Whately Carington, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., the Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E., Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter and Mr H. F. Saltmarsh ; also Mr C. V. C. Herbert, Research Officer, and Miss E. M. Horsell, Assistant-Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Two new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

THE 370th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 22 February, 1939, at 3.15 p.m., SIR LAWRENCE JONES, Bart., in the Chair. There were also present : The Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E., Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mr H. F. Saltmarsh and Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt, R.N. ; also Mr Kenneth Richmond, Editor of the *Journal*, Mr C. V. C. Herbert, Research Officer, and Miss E. M. Horsell, Assistant-Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Two new Members and one Student-Associate were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

THE 371st Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 22 February 1939, immediately

after the Annual General Meeting, SIR LAWRENCE JONES, Bart., in the Chair. There were also present : The Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E., Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mr H. F. Saltmarsh, and Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt, R.N. ; also Miss E. M. Horsell, Assistant-Secretary.

Professor Henry Habberley Price, Wykeham Professor of Logic in the University of Oxford, was elected President for the year 1939.

Mr W. H. Salter was re-elected Hon. Secretary, Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt Hon. Treasurer, Mrs W. H. Salter Hon. Editor of the *Proceedings*, and Mr G. H. Spinney Hon. Librarian.

Committees were elected as follows :

*Committee of Reference and Publication* : The Earl of Balfour, Professor C. D. Broad, Mr Whately Carington, the Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E., Sir Oliver Lodge, Dr T. W. Mitchell, Mr J. G. Piddington, Mr W. H. Salter, and Mr H. F. Saltmarsh.

*House and Finance Committee* : Miss Ina Jephson, Mr G. W. Lambert, Mr W. H. Salter and Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt.

*Library Committee* : Professor E. R. Dodds, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Miss Isabel Newton, Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt and the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas.

Corresponding Members and Hon. Associates were elected for the year 1939 as follows :

*Corresponding Members* : Professor Henri Bergson, President Nicholas Murray Butler, Dr Max Dessoir, Professor Pierre Janet, Dr C. G. Jung, Count Carl von Klinckowstroem, M. Maurice Maeterlinek, Professor T. K. Oesterreich, Dr Rudolph Tischner, Carl Vett and Dr Ellwood Worcester.

*Honorary Associates* : Miss H. A. Dallas, David Gow, J. Arthur Hill, Professor R. F. A. Hoernlé, Rev. W. S. Irving, Professor J. H. Muirhead, Kenneth Richmond, Professor Charles Sage, Dr A. Tanagras, Dr H. W. C. Tenhaeff, Professor R. H. Thouless and Dr Th. Wereide.

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THE Annual General Meeting of Members of the Society was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 22 February, 1939, at 4 p.m., THE HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTELTON, G.B.E., in the Chair.

The following Members were present : Mr G. W. Fisk, Mrs A. Peel Goldney, Mr C. V. C. Herbert, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Mrs R. J. McAlpine, Count Perovsky-Petrovo-Solovovo, Mrs K. Richmond, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mr H. F. Saltmarsh,

Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt, R.N., Mrs Gale Thomas and Mr G. N. M. Tyrrell ; also Miss M. Candler (Associate) and Mr Kenneth Richmond (Hon. Associate).

The Hon. Secretary read the Notice convening the Meeting.

The Hon. Treasurer, in presenting the accounts for the year, reported that the Society had a surplus of about £50 in hand on its ordinary income and expenditure. The recovery of income tax on the Society's investments, which amounted to about £56 per annum, made a considerable difference to the Society's income. He urged members to support the Seven Years' Deed of Covenant plan, the response to which up to date had not come up to his hopes, only about one-third of the members who had been asked to sign the Deed having so far done so—but even this would make a difference of nearly £100 a year.

The Hon. Secretary said he hoped that members would do their utmost to increase the Society's membership. He pointed out that although the number of members was increasing, the Society was not replacing Associates because they could not afford to do so, and consequently the total number of Members and Associates together was very slightly decreasing. He hoped that more young men and women might be persuaded to join as Student-Associates and that members, particularly those in touch with universities and colleges, would help the Society to gain more recruits in this way.

Mrs Goldney made some suggestions for improving the Society's financial position, which the Hon. Treasurer said he would carefully consider.

Mr Salter moved the adoption of the Balance Sheet and the Annual Report. This resolution was seconded by Mr H. F. Saltmarsh, and carried unanimously.

The Chairman announced that there were no candidates for election to membership of the Council, other than the six members who retired by rotation and sought re-election. The following six members were accordingly unanimously elected: The Rt. Hon. The Earl of Balfour, Sir Ernest Bennett, M.P., Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Sir Oliver Lodge, F.R.S., Mr H. F. Saltmarsh and Mr S.G. Soal.

Messrs Miall, Savage, Avery & Co. were re-elected Auditors for the forthcoming year.

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THE Hon. Treasurer has pleasure in acknowledging the following contributions to the Society's funds :

Special Donation -	-	-	-	-	-	-	£13	6	0
„	„	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	0

## CASE.

## AN APPARITION OF A DEAD PERSON SEEN IN DAYLIGHT BY TWO PERCIPIENTS.

The following case was brought to the notice of the Hon. Secretary by Mr Arthur Findlay, a former member of the Society, who has himself contributed to the "Psychic News" of the 28th January, 1939, an account of it which is of considerable interest but does not give the percipients' report of the incident in their own words.

On the evening of Monday, the 5th December, 1938, a lady, Mrs X, living near Great Dunmow, Essex, first shot her husband and then committed suicide by shooting herself. The exact time when she did so is uncertain, but it was clearly established at the inquest, which was held on Friday, the 9th December, that it was round about 9 p.m. About 7.45 a.m. the following morning the "daily help" on going to the house found a note in Mrs X's hand-writing, "Don't go in, send for the police." Mrs X's body was found lying in the garden. The police were called in and sent for a surgeon at about 8.40 a.m.

The percipients, *Mr and Mrs Dawson*, live a mile or two away from the scene of the tragedy. The following is *Mr Dawson's* account as given in a letter to the Hon. Secretary on the 17th January, 1939:

DEAR SIR,—In reply to your letter of January 13th, my wife and I were motoring to London on December 6th, having left our house at 9.15 a.m. and some 5 minutes later we passed Mr and Mrs X's house, and walking towards us along the country bye-road outside the house was Mrs X, hatless.

We *both* "bowed good-morning" to her, and she acknowledged our salutations with a "bow and smile".

We commented to each other about having seen her and drove on without further mention of the subject.

At about 9 p.m. that night we were told that Mrs X had shot Mr X and herself at about 9.30 p.m. on the night of December 5th, some twelve hours before we saw Mrs X. We were naturally somewhat surprised at this and assured our informer that we had seen Mrs X at 9.30 a.m. on December 6th.

All times etc. were checked up afterwards.

In acknowledging this letter the Hon. Secretary pointed out that the suggestion was sometimes made in connection with apparitions seen out of doors that there had been a mistake in the identity of

the person seen and he inquired whether *Mr* and *Mrs Dawson* had had a clear enough view to be satisfied that nothing of that kind could have occurred. He also inquired whether *Mr* or *Mrs Dawson* first saw and recognised Mrs X, and whether *Mrs Dawson* would be willing to confirm the account given in her husband's letter of the 17th January.

To this *Mr Dawson* replied as follows :

23. 1. 39.

DEAR SIR,—Further to my letter of 17.1.39, I saw Mrs X first and said "There is Mrs X", and my wife must have first seen her at almost the identical moment that I did as we were in the front seat of the car and it has a very clear view to the front and sides.

Also Mrs X was the *only* person in sight on the road at the time, neither did we mistake any one else for her as she happened to be a very unmistakable woman owing to her style of hairdressing, etc. We passed within say 6 feet of her.

*Mrs Dawson* wrote at the foot of the letter of the 17th January, "I concur with the account given in the above letter."

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#### CASE : A DOCTOR'S IMPRESSION SUGGESTING DISTANT TELEPATHY FROM A PATIENT

EARLY one morning during February 1938 Sir Morton Smart, the well-known physician, while cruising in the West Indies, had a vivid impression of one of his patients, whom we will call *Mrs X*,<sup>1</sup> who appeared to be in need of his assistance. Sir Morton mentioned the incident to his wife the same day, and a note was made of the date, which was 11 February. On returning home Sir Morton found from his appointments book that Mrs X had called at his house at 12.30 p.m. on 11 February, and had seen a colleague who was attending to his practice during his absence.

On 29 March Sir Morton wrote to Mrs X describing the incident as follows : "When I was at sea in the West Indies I had a most distinct 'vision' of you and you appeared to be trying to ask me something!"<sup>2</sup>

In answer to a letter from the Research Officer Sir Morton and Lady Smart supplied the following signed statements :

From Sir Morton Smart, K.C.V.O., D.S.O., M.D. : With reference

<sup>1</sup> The patient's real name is known to the Society.

<sup>2</sup> A copy of this letter, made from the original by a Member of Council, is in the possession of the Society.

to your letter of 24 August, I write to confirm the experience I had at Sea with regard to [Mrs X]. I may say, however, that I have had many such experiences of what I call "seeing things" during my life, and in consequence I never pay much heed to them beyond perhaps making some remark to my wife.

On this occasion we were on board ship somewhere in the West Indies, when I said to my wife, "I saw [Mrs X] in my room early this morning—I hope there is nothing wrong". During the forenoon I referred to the matter again as she continually came into my thoughts, and I was so impressed that I said to my wife that I must remember the date. I did not return till the beginning of March and had quite forgotten the incident until I had been at home for some days. When I remembered it, I asked my butler if there had been any message from [Mrs X], and he replied that she had come hoping to see me. I told him to look up the appointment book to see the date, and this proved to be the date I had noted, viz. 11 February. The time she came was 12.30 p.m., which would be equivalent to about 7.30 a.m. on the ship.

With regard to the proof of [Mrs X]'s call at this address, the Daily List of Patients shows that she had an appointment at 12.30 on 11 February with my colleague, Mr. Tucker, who was doing my work during my absence, and the Ledger also shows that the visit was made.

As I say, I have had many similar and even more remarkable experiences in my life, but I have made a rule that I merely accept them when they happen, and do not wish to make investigations about the why or the wherefore.

I see no reason, however, why you should not publish the account, such as it is, if [Mrs X] has no objection.<sup>1</sup>

The date on which I remembered the incident on my return and made inquiries to find out if there had been any message from [Mrs. X] was the date on which I wrote to [Mrs X] telling her of my experience.<sup>2</sup>

(Signed) MORTON SMART.

21 Grosvenor Square, W. 1.

31 August 1938.

From Lady Smart.

While on board ship in February 1938, my husband told me one morning that he had seen [Mrs X] in his room, and he felt so sure

<sup>1</sup> Mrs X has kindly consented to an account being printed, but prefers that her real name shall not appear.

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.*, 29 March.

that there was something wrong that a note was made of the date, 11 February.

Some time after our return, my husband told me that [Mrs X] had wished to see him and had actually called on the same date.

(Signed) LILIAN MORTON SMART.

31 August 1938.

In response to a further letter from the Research Officer, Sir Morton Smart very kindly verified from the Shipping Company the exact position of the ship at the time of his impression: she was alongside the wharf at Curaçao, and her clocks were set to local standard time. Inquiry from the Royal Geographical Society has elicited that the standard time of Curaçao is 4 hrs. 36 m. slow on G.M.T. 12.30 p.m. in London would thus coincide with 7.54 a.m. in the ship.

The following questions were addressed to Mrs X, whose signed replies are given in square brackets:

(1) When had you (approximately) last seen Sir Morton?

[Probably in the early spring of 1937].

When you called at his house on 11 February did you know that he was away or did you expect to find him?

[I expected to see him].

(3) Were you in the habit of visiting Sir Morton regularly?

[No, irregularly].

Mrs X was also asked if she could remember at what time she formed the intention of visiting Sir Morton, but she was not able to give any information on this point.

It is difficult to resist the conclusion that Sir Morton Smart's impression was a supernormal cognition either of Mrs X's arrival at his house (possibly conditioned by her disappointment at finding him away), or of the state of mind which prompted her visit to his consulting room. It is unfortunate that we have not an accurate record of the exact time of the impression, but it must clearly have been near enough to 12.30 p.m. G.M.T. to make an explanation by chance coincidence exceedingly improbable. If the visit and the impression are causally connected, the only alternative to a supernormal explanation seems to be that Sir Morton had an unconscious expectation that Mrs X would be likely to visit him at about this time, and that the expectation became dramatized in the form of the impression. If Mrs X had been in the habit of consulting Sir Morton at regular intervals, such an explanation might not be too remote; but she has stated that she is not a regular visitor, and gives the

early spring of the previous year as the probable date of her last visit.

The thanks of the Society are due to Sir Morton Smart for his kind co-operation in working out the case, and to Mrs X for her permission to print : also to Lady Smart for her statement, and to the Secretary of the Royal Geographical Society for verifying the time relation between Curaçao and London.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

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### EXPERIMENT IN EXTRA-SENSORY PERCEPTION

SIR,—I am afraid that your correspondent Mrs Varvill is under a complete misapprehension with regard to the objects and scope of our present experiments with “Marion”. We are not reporting on *any* playing card experiments in which the back of the card is visible to Marion. At this late stage of the investigation we have not the slightest interest in testing whether Marion can identify a card when it is mixed with five others and the cards are placed in front of him backs uppermost on the table. That question was settled in the affirmative once and for all in 1934.

In the experiments conducted during that year there was no possibility of Marion seeing the reflection of the cards in the surface of the table. Indeed he was in a large number of tests sent out of the room while the six cards were spread out face downwards on the table and afterwards he was not allowed to lift any card but merely to touch them with his finger tips. In other tests the lights were turned out and the light-proof shutter drawn and Marion was allowed to touch the card only in the dark. The cards were spread out on the table in the dark in certain cases.

We also made numerous tests with both playing cards and stiff millboard cards which proved fairly conclusively that Marion is able to identify a card by *touch* alone.

On the particular afternoon, 5 October 1938, when Mrs Varvill was present, the sole object was to discover whether Marion would be able to identify a card which he had previously held, and which had been mixed with five others, while he was wearing a black light-proof hood. I had carefully tested this hood which could be tightened up with strings at the collar and beyond question Marion could see nothing with it over his head. In 1934 Marion was allowed to hold the card to be identified in the dark and there was the disadvantage that we were not able to watch his movements in the dark. The hood allowed us to note all his manipulations.

As he was in total darkness reflections on the table were of no consequence and the cards were lifted off the table for him to hold one by one. Ten experiments of this sort were done and though Marion was not very successful on this particular afternoon, which was the first for this series, he succeeded admirably when wearing the hood in the succeeding weeks. Now there is no question that Marion can recognise cards by touch alone although it requires a great deal of fingering on his part.

It is true that on the afternoon of 5 October we did a few *preliminary* trials in which Marion was allowed to see the cards spread out before him face downwards on the table. But these were merely to give him confidence before starting on the real work of the afternoon. In these few trials we were not trying to discover anything; they were not *serious experiments*. Quite possibly Marion could catch a glimpse of a card reflected on the table but this does not matter since he was also able to identify the card quite easily from specks on the back or from the slight bend he gave it while holding it. I could have picked the card out every time without much difficulty. So probably could Mrs Varvill.

This elementary test has been repeated *ad nauseam* and there is no point at all in taking any elaborate precautions over it at the present stage. But the experiments with the hood had to do with the far more difficult feat of tactual recognition and these experiments have been carried out with the greatest care. It is *always* our practice before trying a new experiment with Marion to *allow* him to succeed at something that is very easy and obvious so as to create confidence for the coming test. On the same principle I always allow him to finish up with a few trials in which it is fairly easy for him to succeed. This creates a good impression.

Before Mrs Varvill made the totally irrelevant criticism which she has made she should have read carefully my previous report on Marion and made herself familiar with what has already been proved. At least she might have taken the trouble to ask what we were trying to discover on that particular afternoon.

Yours faithfully,

S. G. SOAL.

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MENTAL AUTOMATISM AND TELEPATHY ; SPONTANEOUS AND  
EXPERIMENTAL CASES

SIR,—I am much obliged to Mr Hereward Carrington and Mr Soal for their comments in the *Journal* on my recent paper on a case of

mental automatism and apparent telepathy. (See *S.P.R. Journal*, October 1938, pp. 264-74 and January 1939, pp. 8-10.)

The difficulty commonly experienced by automatists and mediums over proper names is, as Mr Carrington says, an interesting point. For it is noteworthy that in cases of old age and partial loss of memory proper names are first to lapse, though powers of ideation and sound reasoning may remain. The same thing happens when one is unwell or over-fatigued. In fact, in "dissociated" states generally the psychic entity in charge of the organism tends to lose control of that part of the mental machinery that deals in proper names and other "hard facts". Such states may prevent the subject from recollecting the names of even his or her loved ones, owing to failure or inhibition of the appropriate (? cerebral) mechanism, while retaining the ability to think and speak of them.

Judging by my own mental state when ill or fatigued, also from statements made to me by senile and partly deranged persons with whom I have had sympathetic conversations on their cases, I am satisfied that the failure of such subjects to recollect proper names or recent events, or even to express themselves coherently, in no way necessarily implies senility, insanity or breakdown in the ultimate psychic personality. The breakdown appears, rather, to be in the *physiological* component of being. If, then, a similar diagnosis may be made with respect to mediums and automatists, not to mention normal subjects when dreaming, it would be as unreasonable to blame them for certain shortcomings of memory, etc., as to blame a musician for being unable to give an orthodox performance on a broken or faulty instrument. His failure would not necessarily denote ineptitude or fraudulence.

Again, the state of affairs obtaining in trance, dream and dissociated or automatic states of mind often seems to resemble what happens when one rotates the tuning knob of a radio receiver, so as to obtain a succession of brief and conflicting excerpts from various broadcast programmes. What one hears is not by any means nonsensical: it only *seems* nonsensical to the listener.

With regard to Mr Soal's remarks, may I say that, though I appreciate his point, I am unconvinced of the wisdom of his decision. However desirable it may be to isolate a single factor, for reasons of simplicity or mathematical analysis, and to produce simple extra-sensory phenomena to order in the laboratory, I doubt that the first aim can ever be accomplished, whereas the second is by no means easy, as Mr Soal has good cause to know. On the other hand, it is a fact that spontaneous cases present a much greater wealth of material for investigation, and they also seem desirable in view of

the naturalness and unforced nature of their occurrence, as compared with the cramping and, perhaps, distorting artificiality of tests done to order. For like reason I would be the last to recommend the phenomena of the average spiritistic séance for serious scientific study, since anticipation and autosuggestion generally produce unsatisfactory conditions for accurate observation. But the core of evidence here, again, seems to most patient observers to be genuine enough.

As for the opinions of the outside scientific world, we should not let them worry us seriously, provided only that we are sure that we are practising good science and logic—which the S.P.R. has always been careful to do. The acceptance of new ideas and discoveries has always been a tardy affair so far as the orthodox die-hards of any school have been concerned. But it might be well for psychical researchers generally, and some in particular, to spend less time over the ever recurrent questions of chance-coincidence, antecedent improbability, fraud and collusion, and to devote more time to an unprejudiced and subtle analysis of the many spontaneous cases that are available. Many excellent and informative cases are at present dismissed with a wave of the hand as being inconclusive. But do such conclusions represent a profound and impartial analysis? Very seldom, one fears. And even though coincidence, hallucination, obsession, autosuggestion or telepathy, should enter into such cases, does that invalidate their claim to serious consideration? Surely not! Individually, almost all such cases have their merits either psychological, parapsychological or spiritistic; and collectively, when properly categorized, their evidential value is impressive. But other scientists will not, for the most part, be likely to pay much attention to parapsychologists so long as prominent investigators among the latter continue to spend much of their energy at attempting to invalidate even so well attested and, it seems, widespread a phenomenon as telepathy.

Last, to return to the question of laboratory experiments against analysis of more complex spontaneous cases. I maintain that it is an axiom of all biological investigation, as distinct from some forms of physical, chemical and mathematical enquiry, that (1) the whole is more important than, or at least differs from, its parts; and (2) that, so far as possible, no organism or organic process should be dissociated from its natural environment if its nature and behaviour are to be properly apprehended. To dissect is to destroy; so that dissection, though permissible, within limits, in purely anatomical, mechanistic and physio-chemical studies, is usually unsound in regard to vitalistic behaviour or psychological

processes. I am afraid that such a statement will not be welcome to Mr Soal as a mathematician, whose instinctive aim is, naturally, to reduce such phenomena to numbers or symbolic equations, any more than it is to some physiologists and experimental psychologists. But, after all, such things were not primarily invented to please statisticians; and arguments such as that so many rashers of bacon of different shapes and grades go to make up one pig have very little bearing upon the life and being, sentiments and emotions of a living porker. Nor can the most detailed examination of one tissue or organ give us any true conception of the whole organism: the well-recorded spontaneous case in *Psychical Research* being an analogous organic whole, as contrasted to the too delimited and artificially isolated laboratory experiment in telepathy or clairvoyance. And even in so far as the latter partially represent the natural phenomena, they do so no more completely than do the sparks from an electric induction coil, say, represent the complex reality of what we call a thunderstorm. So that, if a physicist desires to understand an electric storm he will not content himself simply with the observation of small sparks generated in the laboratory, though that may be a useful subsidiary experiment respecting the principles of electricity. And even the manner of production of the given event (*e.g.* an electric spark or a telepathic impulse) may be very different in the two instances; so that it is not safe to argue from one to the other.

Yours truly,

J. CECIL MABY.

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## REVIEWS

*Foreknowledge.* By H. F. SALTMARSH. Bell ("Psychical Experiences" Series). 3s. 6d. net.

It was to be expected that Mr Saltmarsh would bring to the writing of this book not only his usual clarity, but the skill that comes of special study. The value of his work on the subject of precognition is well known to members of the Society, who will appreciate his expert handling of the cases which are here collected, and the simple and economical discussion that he provides on points of theory.

Even within the limits of a small book, the review of evidence is impressive, and the examples that are quoted, from *S.P.R.* and other trustworthy records, need a multitude of stretched hypotheses if they are to be explained away. One case, as recorded, admits of an all too

normal explanation : the bishop's wife who dreamed of a pig in a particular place in the dining-room (*Proc. XI.* 487). After telling the dream to her children, and, in the bishop's absence, reading family prayers, she went into the dining-room and found the pig duly present. Could a sportive child have escaped family prayers and brought about the fulfilment? The hypothesis fits child-psychology better than pig-psychology—there are considerable chances against a pig's acquiescence in being hurriedly directed into a dining-room ; and its being in the right place in the room to suit the dream would be difficult to account for, unless this were chance, or unless the memory of the dream adjusted itself to suit this detail. But normal explanation does seem possible here, and could be turned to illogical account for the discrediting of other cases—illogical, because most of the cases admit of no normal explanation except deliberate and collusive untruthfulness on the part of responsible witnesses.

On the theoretical side, Mr Saltmarsh makes a witty and salutary remark on the actuality of Time : “ if time be not a reality . . . whatever it is, which we normally take for time, is so good an imitation that it does just as well for all practical purposes as real time, if there be such a thing as real time.” In fact, all argument about time tends to be circular, because the mind is chasing a mental concept which is, as it were, tied to its own tail. Mr Saltmarsh, like Professor Broad, does not care for J. W. Dunne's escape from the circle into the “ infinite regress ” of serialism, and he puts aside the Dunne theory on grounds which are more a statement of objection than of reason for objection ; but he makes the very pertinent remark that change, rather than time, is our real observational starting-point. Time is so familiar an idea that we think we know what we mean by it when we do not.

The same thing is true of memory—and precognition looks like “ remembering forwards ”, with the difference that the event seen ahead is subject to intervention in the mean time, as in the case in this book where a yachtsman dreams of his boat being swamped on a sandbank after the breaking of mooring ropes, and is able to avert the catastrophe by waking and going on deck just before the ropes part (*Proc. XIII.* 401). Cases of this kind dispose of the naive idea that precognition implies a fated future ; it does not involve fatalism, but what it does involve as to the nature of time and of human consciousness is a question as obscure as it is interesting. Mr Saltmarsh does much to lighten the obscurity, not by minimising our present ignorance but by making sure that while we are necessarily ignorant we are not also confused.

K. R.

*Trance. Wanderungen im Grenzgebiete des Seelenlebens.* Von HUGO KRAMER. Verlag: R. Lechner (Wilh. Müller). Wien I, 1936.

This book of 300 pages makes, I confess, a somewhat strange impression. The author, Herr Kramer, is, we are told on the title-page, President of an Association for the scientific (*naturwissenschaftliche*) investigation of the soul, and his book purports to give detailed accounts of twenty-two séances with Frau Kramer as medium. At the beginning of each séance Herr Kramer puts his wife into trance, and she then discourses at great length (also answering questions) on such subjects as the Past and the Future, Radiations, "Spheres", Dreams, the Consciousness (at four sittings), Nerves, the Nature of the Soul, Reincarnation, etc. The reports are not claimed to be verbatim (though notes appear to have been taken during the séances; see photograph on pp. 260-261), and the critic is therefore entitled to ask himself whether Herr Kramer's book does reproduce quite exactly everything that was said. Judging by a "Preliminary Remark" on p. 17, Herr Kramer would perhaps resent such enquiries: criticisms already expressed with regard to the records before the book was printed are in this *Vorbemerkung* summarily dismissed, and in a somewhat off-hand manner.

The lack of certainty as to the complete accuracy of the published records is the more to be regretted as some (by no means all) of the knowledge displayed by the medium on some of the points raised and discussed (on the structure of the brain for instance in the fifteenth séance and on the nerves in the fourteenth) seems at first sight remarkable, the more so as Frau Kramer was being interrogated by Dr R., a physician and a specialist.

On the other hand it is obvious that the possibility of acquiring some knowledge on these matters in a normal way before the sitting was by no means always excluded, seeing that the subject to be discussed next time was often decided upon at the end of a séance. It should be added that the confidence of the sitters (only their initials are given) in the medium appears to have been boundless.

It is much to be regretted from my standpoint that so much time was given to lengthy disquisitions almost *de omni re scibili et quibusdam aliis* and that so little effort was made to test Frau Kramer's supernormal powers (if any) in a more modest but also more convincing manner. Frau Kramer asserts that she is able when in trance to review in a moment the whole of the Universe (p. 245). If so, how easy it ought to be for her to give adequate proof of the concrete reality of her faculties in a humble but tangible way! It is true that, so she tells us, she feels irritated when questions are

put to her in order to test her (p. 26, cf. also pp. 65-67). Such being unfortunately the case, the sitters had to content themselves with very few timid endeavours which do not appear to me altogether satisfactory. At the tenth séance the medium proposed to name colours after merely touching various objects with her fingers. She tried twice and succeeded each time—but no mention appears of her eyes having been bandaged; they were closed as usual, and that was apparently thought sufficient! Dr R. was nevertheless enthusiastic about this “experiment” (p. 261).

In view of such an attitude on the part of Herr Kramer's circle, it is difficult to attach much significance even to such apparently supernormal incidents as may have been both authentic and conclusive. One such incident I find on p. 239, where Frau Kramer is stated to have reproduced the last words of a dying person (unknown to her). Its possible importance I do not wish to minimise, but I feel bound to say frankly that the general atmosphere of the séances, the enthusiasm of the sitters and the above-mentioned lack of certainty as to the absolute exactness of the records do not tend to enhance the evidential importance of this episode.

The last four séances dealt with Reincarnation and here we find the medium giving us particularly amazing accounts and proffering particularly stupendous claims, such as that she is able in the trance state to follow events in the past existence of another person's soul “for thousands of years back” (p. 286).

I regret to say that in my opinion such preposterous statements are rather derogatory to a medium's reputation. *Qui veut trop prouver ne prouve rien*. The faculties claimed by Herr Kramer's medium are by no means proved by what is related in the book, and what is worse, the very fact that they are claimed casts an unfavourable light on other “manifestations”—perhaps unjustly. But the fault lies not with the critic.

PEROVSKY-PETROVO-SOLOVOVO.

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### E. S. P. PICTURE TEST

An experiment in the extra-sensory perception of distant pictures will begin next month. Percipients will be asked to do a few rough drawings, in their own homes and at any convenient time, on each of ten successive nights, not missing any. Will anyone willing to participate kindly communicate with Mr W. Whately Carington, 5, Fitzwilliam Road, Cambridge?

# JOURNAL

OF THE

## Society for Psychical Research

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*NOTICE OF MEETING*

### A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

ON

WEDNESDAY, 26 April, 1939, at 5.30 p.m.

WHEN A PAPER ON

“INCIDENTS OF BYGONE DAYS”

WILL BE READ BY

COUNT PEROVSKY-PETROVO-SOLOVOVO

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*N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.*

## NEW MEMBERS

**Crofts, John W.**, 53 Caughall Road, Upton Heath, Chester.

**Montanaro, Gerald C. S., Lieut. R.E.**, Old Court Hotel, Bradford-on-Avon, Wilts.

*Student-Associate*

**Shapiro, Harold R.**, 4010 Avenue 1, Brooklyn, New York, U.S.A.

## MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

THE 372nd Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 29 March, 1939, at 4 p.m., LORD CHARLES HOPE in the Chair. There were also present: Sir Ernest Bennett, Mr Whately Carington, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., The Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E., Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt, R.N., and the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas; also Mr C. V. C. Herbert, Research Officer, Mr Kenneth Richmond, Editor of the *Journal*, and Miss E. M. Horsell, Assistant-Secretary.

The Minutes of the last two Meetings of the Council were read and signed as correct.

The Report of the Annual General Meeting was presented and taken as read.

Two new Members and one Student-Associate were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

The following co-optations were renewed for the year 1939-1940: Dr William Brown, Mr Oliver Gatty, Sir Robert Gower, M.P., Mr Gerald Heard, Professor Julian Huxley, the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, and Miss Nea Walker.

## PRIVATE MEETINGS

THE 162nd Private Meeting of the Society was held in the Society's Library on Thursday, 2 March, 1939, at 8.30 p.m., THE HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTELTON, G.B.E., in the Chair.

A paper entitled "Vampirism, Trance-dancing and Clairvoyance in the Balkans" was read by Mr Philip Thornton.

THE 163rd Private Meeting of the Society was held in the Society's Library on Wednesday, 29 March, 1939, at 5.30 p.m., THE HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTELTON, G.B.E., in the Chair.

A paper entitled "Experiments in Automatic Writing" was read by Miss Geraldine Cummins. A discussion followed in which Sir Lawrence Jones, Dr E. J. Dingwall, Mr C. V. C. Herbert, Mr and Mrs Kenneth Richmond, Lord Charles Hope and the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas took part. We hope to include the greater part of this paper in a forthcoming issue of the *Journal*.

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### CASE : A DREAM ANTICIPATING FUTURE EVENT

WE are indebted for the following well-documented case to an American contributor known to the Society, who has furnished complete attestation of all the statements printed below, but asks that names of persons and places shall not be made public.

The case appears to involve precognition or, at the least, anticipation of the future based upon knowledge acquired by telepathy. It may well be thought that the facts cannot be fully accounted for without recourse to one or both of these explanations. But before we reach such a conclusion, full account should be taken of certain known tendencies of the dream-mind in the direction of constructing situations that meet the hopes and wishes of the dreamer. The case is an interesting one for discussion from this point of view, and it should be added that the care and completeness with which the details have been recorded give every help in the reconstruction of a clear psychological picture.

The case will first be set out, below, as recorded by our contributor, and then briefly discussed so as to raise the question how far a psychological explanation may be adequate.

#### *Statement of Congressman A*

As a Representative in Congress I had had two secretaries in my employ for about five years. During the last week in March and the first week in April 1936, the selection of a successor to one of them who was contemplating resigning to accept another position was under consideration by my two secretaries and myself. It was of personal political importance to me that no one except ourselves should know that I had a successor to select. This was necessary in order to avoid a rush for the position, accentuated by the depression, which would make a desirable selection difficult. Accordingly the matter was kept in the utmost secrecy by the three of us, working at our offices in Washington, 150 miles away from my home town of X, where Mr K, the reporter of the incident following, also had his

home. I had been much away from home during the last 25 years and did not know Mr K, who is about half my age and who was raised in this town during my considerable absence. I had, however, known his father from casual meetings at the Post Office, where the father was employed.

During the first week in April, my secretaries and myself determined that the elder of my secretaries, Mr C, should go up into the District to find the right person as a new additional secretary. The only conditions imposed were that the selection should be a man and a stenographer and should preferably come from my home town, X. Mr C made the trip to X under instructions to keep the position to be filled perfectly secret until the selection was made, and advises me that he did so. Mr C will add to this preface a statement as to his own actions on reaching X. May I add my assurances that there can be no doubt that normal information had not reached Mr K that there would be a secretarial vacancy in my office at the time of his dream. I could not then have had him in mind, since I did not know even of his existence, a statement which I am sure is equally true of Mr C and of the resigning secretary. Mr K advises me that except as presented in the dream he had not been thinking of being a secretary in Washington.

Sometime after Mr K had reported for work Secretary C told me of Mr K's telling him of the dream he had on 1 April, and shortly thereafter Mr K at my request detailed the dream to me. I then asked him to write up a narrative of the dream and the circumstances, which he did within some weeks of the happening. May I say that Mr K, whom I now know very well, is no dreamer of dreams, is not a spiritualist, nor was he deeply interested at the time of his dream in psychic subjects. He is, however, a very thoughtful man, always cautious in any statement he may make.

Nov. 19, 1938.

#### *Statement by Mr K*

The following dream was experienced by me in the town of X, during the night of 1 April, 1936.

The dream-scene opens in an office in Y, a small town near X. I was seated at the left of Congressman A, who was seated at a desk in a relaxed position. My dream status was that of secretary to Congressman A, and we were talking. I was asking his advice as to the advisability of studying law. From his remarks, I seemed to gather the impression that he thought it was rather late in life for me to start. We continued to talk for some time and then left the office

together and walked toward X, our home city. Along the way Congressman A was pointing out places of interest and remarking how they had changed since he was a young man. I seemed to be rather inattentive, being still absorbed with the previous conversation. As we reached the bridge crossing over the river to our home town, the dream ended. The manner and characteristics displayed by Congressman A in the dream are almost identical with those I have come to learn since my association with him. I was not personally acquainted with him at the time of the dream. I had, however, met him some 14 years before and had seen him on a number of occasions since. No recollection is had of any other dreaming this night, either before or after the dream referred to.

The dream struck me as being particularly strange, and in the morning I related it to my brother, and several days later to a friend and his wife.

### *Background*

At the time of the dream I was not secretary to Mr A, nor had I ever had any thought of it. I was working in a business owned by Mr B, with whom I had been associated for 14 years and had acted as his secretary. These men had been friends for many years, but about the time I first became associated with Mr B, they became estranged as a result of a political difference and had never become reconciled.

Shortly after the beginning of my association with Mr B (14 years before the dream experience) he declared his candidacy for the United States Senate. His son advised me at the time that in the event of Mr B's election, I would go to Washington as his secretary. Mr B, however, withdrew his candidacy a few months later, and continued on in the business to which I have referred.

During the latter several years of my association with Mr B, he had an office in Y (the town figuring in the dream). This office was located on the opposite side of the street from the one indicated in the dream. However, the type of furniture and arrangement was entirely different from that seen in the dream.

### *Actual Happening*

About a week after the occurrence of the dream, on the night of 7 April, 1936, I received a telephone call from the friend to whom I had mentioned the dream. He stated that he had just been informed that a party had come from Washington for the purpose of interviewing prospects for a position in Washington, D.C., and he had been asked by his informant to suggest available prospects. With

the exception of the qualifications required and compensation, he had no other information concerning the position. For some months I had been considering a change of employment, because of the only partial activity of the business with which I was connected, so I advised my friend that I would think the proposition over and let him know within an hour, as he was to report back to his informant. During the conversation, the thought came to me that it might possibly be a secretarial position with Congressman A. I cannot say whether this thought was prompted by the dream or whether it was suggested from the qualifications required and the location of the position. I talked the matter over with my brother and again mentioned my thought as to the position. I called my friend and told him that I would be interested and would come to see him at his office the following day so that contact could be made with the person who was to conduct the interview.

On calling at the office of my friend the next day, he advised me that he had just learned that the party who was to interview me was Mr C, a secretary to Congressman A. The interview was had later the same day, and while no information was given by Mr C as to the exact position, I seemed to know that it was to be associated with Congressman A. Finally, Mr C stated that he would accept my application, and could tell me at that time that I would work with him, and that I was to report to Congressman A's office the following Sunday. I went to Washington and to the office of Congressman A and was then informed by Mr C that I was to be a secretary to Congressman A.

[Mr K's statement that he told the dream to three witnesses is corroborated by signed statements from the three people concerned, who attest the accuracy of Mr K's report in this respect. That is, Mr K's brother confirms that he was told of the dream the morning after it occurred, the other two witnesses that they were told of it "several days later". These two witnesses, a husband and wife, were told at the same time, and the husband mentions in his statement that this was before Mr K's employment by Congressman A.]

#### *Statement by Mr C*

For the past eight years I have been employed on the secretarial staff of Congressman A.

On 6 April, 1936, it became definitely known there would be a vacancy in the secretarial staff, due to the resignation of a member of the staff to accept an appointment elsewhere with the Government. This vacancy was known to but three persons, Congressman

A, myself and one other. A conference was held between us three on 6 April, 1936, and it was decided that I make a trip through the Congressional District to select a suitable person to fill the vacancy. Mr A suggested that I go first to X, his home town, and try there first, then if not successful to go into other counties of the District.

I left for X late in the afternoon of 6 April, arriving in X late in the evening. The following morning, 7 April, I contacted a certain judge and told him Mr A would have an appointment to fill in Washington, D.C., but did not tell him anything about where the position was located. I asked him if he could suggest a suitable person who would qualify as to the requirements I named. He said he would like time to look around and that I should see him the following morning. I saw the judge on Wednesday morning, 8 April, 1936, when he told me he knew of but one person and that he would like me to see this man. He told me his name was K and he arranged that I meet Mr K in the Post Office building in X. Mr K was not located in that office, so the judge called the deputy revenue collector and asked him to call Mr K to come to his office for the conference.

I met Mr K and talked with him privately, going over with him his qualifications. I asked Mr K to prepare a written statement of his background, experience and qualifications, and said that I would call to see him that afternoon. I gave no indication whatsoever as to where the possible vacancy existed ; however, when Mr K had furnished me his written statement, I told him to report to Mr A's office in Washington, D.C., suggesting that he come down on Sunday, 12 April, 1936, and then I told him the position was on the secretarial staff of Congressman A. Mr K entered the employ of Congressman A on 13 April, 1936, and has continued in his employ to this date.

Nov. 21, 1938.

Let us now consider the psychological situation out of which the dream may be held to have arisen. It is well defined in Mr K's notes following his account of the dream. He is secretary to Mr B, and is wishing for other employment because business is slow. It seems probable that his subliminal consciousness could entertain some such reflections as these :

“ I wish I had a more active job with Mr B. If only Mr B had persisted in his candidacy for the Senate he might have got in, and I should now be his secretary at Washington. Mr B's former friend, Congressman A, went through with *his* candidacy, and has left this town and gone to Washington. I wish I had been in Mr A's employ.”

This would have been very possible as a day-dream in Mr K's

mind, and if some such reverie had emerged in his waking thoughts the idea would have been the less likely to emerge in a night-dream. His evidence is that he had no waking thought of being secretary to Congressman A. It is, of course, pure conjecture that he *had*, subliminally, any such train of thought; but it is clear from the facts that this would be a natural and possible course for his subliminal thoughts and wishes to take.

This being so, it would be most natural that his dream should represent him as employed by Mr A instead of Mr B, in an office resembling one of Mr B's but with a difference (on the other side of the street, and with different furniture). The dream would then combine past and present, as dreams often do: the wish to *have been* associated with Mr A's career and the wish to *be* qualified for work with Mr A in the present. The dreamer's problem about "studying law" will bear this interpretation, since law is the business of a legislator, and the question arises in the dream whether it is now "rather late in life" for him to acquire the new qualification. This would be a natural touch of anxiety in the mind of a man who felt that he had been stagnating for some time in his present job.

The fact that the Mr A of the dream speaks of changes in the neighbourhood since he was a young man also points to the view that the dream is combining ideas of the past and of the present.

If some such psychological process as we have sketched could account for the formation of the dream, giving it the character of a wish-fulfilment rather than a precognition, we have to depend on chance-coincidence to explain how Mr K's dream-wish came to be in accordance with the facts—that a vacancy was about to occur on the staff of Congressman A, and that the steps to be taken in order to fill this vacancy would lead to inquiries in the town of X and to the selection of Mr K as a suitable man for the post. And a fairly improbable chance-coincidence has to be assumed, because the dream occurred only five days before Mr A's move to secure a new secretary, and six days before Mr K first heard of the opportunity; whereas there would appear to have been a long, though indefinite, period of time during which Mr K's wish for other employment might have found expression in a dream. Also, the fact that Mr K was sufficiently impressed by his dream to describe it to others on two occasions is evidence that he felt it to be significant.

The case is interesting as an example of the kind for which possible psychological explanations need to be taken into account; but it can be held that some element of precognition needs to be assumed to account fully for what occurred. Or, for those who prefer hypotheses of telepathy, it can be supposed that the fact of the coming

vacancy on Congressman A's staff, which, Mr C records, " became definitely known " on 6 April, five days after the dream, was sufficiently known to those concerned, at the time of the dream, for a freakish telepathic effect to have occurred. It will be remembered that at the beginning of the first statement printed above, from Congressman A, he notes that " during the last week in March " (*i.e.* before Mr K's dream) the idea of appointing a new secretary was already being considered.

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### CASE : A VERIDICAL IMPRESSION OF NON-EXISTENT WORDS IN A LETTER

The following case has been contributed by Sir Lawrence Jones, a friend of the percipient, Mrs Moor, wife of the Rev. C. Moor, D.D. Mrs Moor's account of her experience is printed below, followed by statements from the four persons mentioned in the account.

Early in January I was staying with my sister. The day before I left I had a letter from my daughter R in which I read, " Nanny is in bed with bronehitis." I read it out to my sister.

I wrote to my daughter V to tell her.

When I got home next day my first question was " How's Nanny?"

R. She's all right I suppose.

I. But you said she was in bed with bronchitis.

R. No. I never said such a thing.

Next morning I went to see how things were and found N just out of bed and very sadly indeed, having had bronchitis.

I. Miss R told me you had had bronchitis.

N. Miss R! but she didn't know ; I wouldn't tell her to trouble her.

Getting home I looked again at the letter. I knew exactly the place on the page where I'd seen " Nanny is in bed with bronehitis " ; it wasn't there or anywhere else in the letter, nor was there room in it for a single extra line. Nanny had been greatly longing to see me to pour all out but wouldn't write as I was on a holiday.

CONSTANCE M. MOOR,

8 March, 1939.

On 4 January, 1939, I received a letter from my mother saying : " Poor Nannie has got bronchitis."

VERONICA MOOR,

12 March, 1939.

12 March.

The first week in Jan. I had an attack of Bronchitis. I did not tell Miss Moor nor write to Mrs Moor though I was longing to see Her.

HANNAH COX.

When my Mother got home early in Jan. I was surprised by her first question "And how is Nanny?" still more so to be told I had written that Nanny was in bed with bronchitis, since I knew nothing about it. My mother was apparently prepared to go at once and see the invalid which I assured her was quite unnecessary. I told her that Nanny had sent me a line a day or so earlier saying that she would not be coming to us as usual on Sunday as she was going to a friend: therefore she could not be ill. So my Mother gave up going.

I was aware that she did not really believe I had not written about it, and next morning she went round early to find Nanny in bed with bronchitis and rampant to see her. She had been in bed some days.

ROSALIE MOOR,  
15 March, 1939.

27 March, 1939.

From Dowager Countess Ferrers.

My sister, Mrs Moor, was staying with me in January this year. On January 3 the day before she left me she said that she had had a letter from her daughter that morning saying that their old servant, Hannah Cox, was in bed with bronchitis.

M. JANE FERRERS.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

### SPONTANEOUS AND EXPERIMENTAL CASES

SIR,—After reading Mr Maby's views on the relative values of spontaneous and experimental cases I have little to add to the plea which I put forward in the January *Journal* for exact experiment in psychical research.

I can only regret that Mr Maby does not share my opinions. May I bring to his notice an admirable article by Professor Flügel which appeared in *John O' London's Weekly* for 24 February in which the author—himself an eminent psychologist—sums up the reasons for the scepticism with which orthodox science and psychology regard the so-called "proofs" of telepathy and clairvoyance? Professor Flügel shows very clearly that such scepticism is not due to mere

conservatism or antipathy to what is new and revolutionary: a deeper cause is to be sought in the baffling and elusive nature of the alleged phenomena themselves. One investigator finds abundant evidence for E.S.P. by allowing a mere handful of people to guess at the figures on cards while other experimenters, at least equally careful, examine larger numbers of subjects without finding any evidence at all. Or again a subject produces phenomenal results with certain investigators in America but this same subject when examined by ten persons in England displays no abnormal powers of any kind. I ask what reaction can the orthodox psychologist show to all this? At the worst he will be frankly sceptical and at the best non-committal. It would seem therefore that little advance will be made until we have discovered the definite conditions, psychological and physiological, which favour the emergence of E.S.P. And such conditions can only be found, if at all, by controlled experiments in the laboratory. We might go on observing and recording spontaneous cases of psychical phenomena for hundreds of years and at the end be not a whit nearer to any experimental control or any real knowledge of their nature. Whatever may be the ultimate verdict of posterity on the reality of Dr Rhine's claims I think he and his disciples are on the right track and nothing that Mr Maby has said or can say will alter my opinion on this fundamental issue.

There is one statement in Mr Maby's letter which I should like to question. On p. 40 at the end of the second paragraph he writes "But other scientists will not for the most part be likely to pay much attention to parapsychologists so long as prominent investigators among the latter continue to spend much of their energy at attempting to invalidate even so well attested and it seems widespread a phenomenon as telepathy".

Surely Mr Maby is not here suggesting that we should cease to investigate experimental telepathy by scientific methods for fear that our results should be negative and that negative results are prejudicial to psychical research? Such a suggestion would be unworthy of any scientific man though I can easily imagine that it would carry weight with the large and motley following whose whole interest in the subject is emotional and centred round the problem of their personal survival. Let me say at once that as a scientific man I have not the slightest sympathy with such sentiments. Science is interested in the truth however bleak that may be and not in wish-fulfilments. If modern psychologists thought that telepathy was as widespread and well-attested as Mr Maby imagines they would be studying it every day in their laboratories,

but obviously with few exceptions they are ignoring it altogether. If Mr Maby wishes to know the reasons for this neglect he cannot do better than consult Professor Flügel's article mentioned above.

I cannot suppose that Mr Maby seriously believes that persons like Professor Adams, Professor Thouless and myself are conducting negative investigations in an attempt to "invalidate" or disprove telepathy. I personally would travel a hundred miles to witness a conclusive case of experimental telepathy. But so long as my own results continue to be negative I shall go on trying to find every flaw I possibly can in the work of those who make positive claims. In fact the more intelligent criticism we have in this obscure field the better for all concerned.

If telepathy and clairvoyance cannot be produced under laboratory conditions and in the presence of competent unbiassed observers I predict that official science will continue to ignore them. This may be a matter of indifference to Mr Maby, but to many of us who are serious investigators it is not. For some of us are no longer content to watch psychical research go jogging along in the same old bad unscientific way, its devotees collecting obscure coincidences often without even troubling to discover how far such coincidences would apply to other sets of people and circumstances and deliberately ignoring the methods which the calculus of probabilities has put into our hands.

Yours faithfully,

S. G. SOAL.

(This discussion is now closed. The conclusion emerges that psychical research progresses upon two feet and that neither is in need of amputation. ED.)

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## REVIEWS

*Drei Vorträge über Philosophie und Parapsychologie.* By JOHANNES T. POORTMAN. Leiden, 1939.

This publication comprises three lectures. In the first of these, the author critically examines certain points in the philosophy of Kant and brings it into relation with other doctrines, in particular the "psychical monism" of Heymanns and Polak. The concepts of "a priori" and of the "epistemological subject" form the centre of the discussion. The terms "infrasubject" and "suprasubject" are introduced: the first of them is empirical and personal; the

second means something suprapersonal, it is a metaphysical hypothesis and equivalent to Kant's "Bewusstsein überhaupt". This lecture has no direct connexion with psychical research.

The second lecture is devoted to the relations between parapsychology and philosophy, philosophy being defined as the "independent systematisation (unabhängige Zusammenfassung) of all sciences". Philosophy should never be allowed to neglect facts: "unexplained facts are yet *facts*." Aesthetic or emotional considerations never justify a philosophical system though they may be of importance for a man's general regard for the universe, but "Weltanschauung" is not the same as scientific philosophy. The concepts of "a priori", "induction" and "deduction" are shortly discussed.

Parapsychology claims to be a science and must, therefore, rest upon scientific methods. It stands in a mutual relation to philosophy: it *receives* and it *gives*.

It *receives* from general philosophy its method, induction in particular. A theory must never be the starting-point, though it may take a concluding place. Neglect of this axiom was the mistake of the "enlightenment" (Aufklärung) of the eighteenth century, though this had its merits in abolishing many forms of superstition. On the other hand, it is never permissible to say a priori that anything in the sphere of the empirical world is "impossible". The term "occultism", it is remarked, ought to give place to the much better term "parapsychology".

In exchange, parapsychology has to *give* a good many things to general philosophy: it shows that materialism is a wrong theory and that "psychophysical parallelism" is at least a very improbable, if not even an impossible, hypothesis. The author deals briefly with the relation of parapsychology to vitalism, but, I think, no vitalist would agree with his conception of this biological doctrine. Scientific vitalists have never maintained that organic phenomena are inexplicable by natural causation, nor presupposed a "mystical influence": according to scientific vitalism organic phenomena are subject to *natural* law as much as are inorganic phenomena, though the *form* of this law is different in the two spheres of nature.

It is not permissible to build a "Weltanschauung" upon parapsychology, but hypotheses of all kinds are allowable if they are considered only as hypotheses. This is also the proper attitude for spiritualism.

The third lecture attempts to assemble points that can be related to parapsychology from the realm of general literature. There are a good many of them in the works of various authors. But, as works

of art are the product of creative phantasy, they do not in themselves tell us anything about the personal convictions of their authors. The literary artist lends his imagination equally to ideas drawn from mythology and mysticism. The only thing we can affirm is that these authors have had some acquaintance with the evidence for paranormal events.

HANS DRIESCH.

*Les Métapsychoses. La métapsychorragie, la télépathie, la hantise.*  
By Dr P. THOMAS BRET. 1<sup>er</sup> volume: Introduction, et La Métapsychorragie Fantasmale. (Paris: Librairie J. B. Baillière et fils.)

The chief value—to me at least—of this book of Dr Bret's (already the author of a *Précis de Métapsychique* in several volumes) is that it reminds us once more, and in a rather striking way, of the inexhaustible supply of episodes and incidents—mostly spontaneous—apparently implying a "supernormal" origin and explanation, which have been recorded by painstaking investigators in the course of, let us say, the last fifty or sixty years.

All the facts quoted by the author of *Phantasmal Metapsychorragie* have already (I believe) been published at one time or another. Nevertheless their reappearance in print is welcome at a time when the supply of new spontaneous observations and experiences appears to be on the decrease.

Dr Bret will, however, forgive my adding that not a few of the incidents which he recalls are evidentially on a low level, and that some are distinctly suspicious. I even observe the names of some witnesses whose evidence would not go far, I am afraid, to establish the reality of any phenomena. This does not detract from the value of many other cases, though some may think that it must qualify our opinion of the author as a critic.

The volume is of 312 pages and deals with apparitions in general, and apparitions of the so-called "double" in particular. The terminology used by the writer is bewildering. Why coin new, quasi-scientific terms from the Greek for things that can quite well be described in existing terms? The effect is particularly painful when they are applied to phenomena of very doubtful authenticity. An apport rechristened "epiphanism" may look impressive, but so far we have no case of an apport above suspicion. I must decline either to accept the author's terminology or to follow him into the labyrinth of divisions and subdivisions by which he laboriously classifies his phenomena. Suffice it to say that in this first volume he discusses apparitions as "phantasmal metapsychorragie", in a

second volume he will deal with "metacinetetic metapsychorragy", and more are to follow.

The author categorically rejects the hypothesis of *post mortem* agency; an apparition, as distinct from a purely subjective hallucination, arises, he says, from the "metapsychism" of the percipient or one of the percipients. In many cases, he maintains, the objective character of the phantasm cannot be doubted, and this applies not only to human apparitions but also to such cases as that of the Rev. W. Mountford (*Phantasms of the Living*, vol. ii, p. 97), where a whole carriage figured in the phantasmal scene; this carriage also was projected, Dr Bret tells us, by "ectoplasy" (p. 286). It seems easier to think that such cases are due to supernormal perception, arising we know not how, of a similar scene which occurred in the past and became "impressed" on—we know not what, nor how!

Animal phantasms, the author tells us (Dr Bret seems very sure of his "explanations" and is sometimes rather hard on those who "explain" supernormal occurrences differently), are produced either by a medium's "metapsychism" or by that of the animal represented (p. 307).

In connection with phantasms in general the case of Katie King is discussed, Dr Bret stating unambiguously that this "will remain a sadder and more shameful episode in the history of science than the condemnation of Galileo by the Inquisition; for we see in it all the official scientists (Crookes excepted) yielding to their 'misonist'<sup>1</sup> feelings". Dr Bret does not envisage the possibility of fraud either in this case or in Crookes's experiments with Mrs A. E. Fay (p. 296).

Enough has been said to enable the reader to form a judgment on this volume and on the attitude of its learned author. But let me emphasise again that in calling our attention to so many spontaneous incidents showing a *primâ facie* case for the operation of causes as yet unrecognised by science, many of them carefully sifted and verified, the author has deserved the gratitude of those who approach the subject in a scientific and dispassionate spirit.

PEROVSKY-PETROVO-SOLOVOVO.

<sup>1</sup> "Misonism": hatred of novelty.

## E.S.P. PICTURE TEST

As we announced briefly in the March issue of the *Journal*, an experiment is being organised to apply a systematic test to one of the possible sources of evidence for extra-sensory perception. Volunteers who are willing to act as percipients in this experiment will be asked to devote a little time on each of ten consecutive evenings, at any place convenient to themselves, and at any hour after 7 p.m., to the production of rough drawings representing any simple pictorial impressions that come into their minds. It is necessary for the completeness of the experiment that anyone who can undertake to do this should not miss any evening.

A number of volunteers in Cambridge will take part in these tests, and a number of Members and Associates of the S.P.R. have already arranged to take part. Any other Members and Associates who would like to participate are asked to communicate with Mr W. Whately Carington, 5, Fitzwilliam Road, Cambridge. Experiments are being arranged to begin on April 26 and a little later.

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THE *JOURNAL* IS PRINTED FOR PRIVATE  
CIRCULATION

The attention of Members and Associates is drawn to the private nature of the *Journal*, from which no quotations should be made without the previous consent of the Council. Ever since the first issue of the *Journal* in 1884, much of the material appearing in it has been contributed on the definite assurance that the *Journal* is, as stated on the cover, issued "For private circulation among Members and Associates only". The Council hope that all Members and Associates will continue to co-operate with them in maintaining this privacy.

# JOURNAL

OF THE

## Society for Psychical Research

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*NOTICE OF MEETING*

### A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

ON

*TUESDAY, 23rd May, 1939, at 5.30 p.m.*

WHEN A PAPER ENTITLED

“A Novel Proxy Case and its Implications”

BY

THE REV. C. DRAYTON THOMAS

WILL BE READ

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*N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.*

## PRIVATE MEETING

THE 164th Private Meeting of the Society was held in the Society's Library on Wednesday, 26 April 1939, at 5.30 p.m. Mr W. H. SALTER in the Chair.

A paper entitled "Incidents of Bygone Days" was read by Count Perovsky-Petrovo-Solovovo. A discussion followed in which Mr Barber, Mr Salter and Mr Trethewy took part.

## EXPERIMENTS IN AUTOMATIC WRITING

BY GERALDINE CUMMINS

[The personal experiences of automatists, and their outlook upon their own faculty and its product, possess an interest both general and psychological which is not always represented in the more formal accounts of phenomena as set out in the interests of research. We are the more glad to give space to the greater part of Miss Cummins's paper, read to a Private Meeting of the Society on 29 April last, which felicitously conveyed to her hearers the attitude of an automatist well known for the character and quality of her scripts.]

I AM an Irishwoman and, therefore, come of a nation of fanatical enthusiasts for creeds and parties, both religious and political. . . . My father, who was a physician, once attended an Irishman who suffered severely from rheumatism, but even more severely from the Irish failing I have mentioned. In his case it took a curious form. He called one of his rheumaticky legs his Catholic leg and the other his Protestant leg; and however cold the weather, insisted on keeping the Protestant leg outside the bed and completely uncovered to punish it for belonging to such a wicked faith. He was a southern Irishman. If he had been from the north of Ireland the poor Catholic leg would have been just as fanatically exposed to the winter cold. I have no doubt every race has its own failings. But this episode, which illustrated our national failing, fanaticism, so well, made a profound impression on me as a child. And in later years when my mediumship began to develop I determined neither to cherish a dogmatic scepticism nor a dogmatic spiritualism. I leave to others to decide whether I have produced phenomena that suggest the continuity of human personality or of memory in some form after death.

For the last fifteen years I have worked principally with Miss E. B. Gibbes and have lived in her house for the greater part of that time. She has been my principal sitter. We have worked along

two lines. I have produced four books of early Christian history through automatic writing, also two short books, *The Road to Immortality* and *Beyond Human Personality*. These last purport to be communicated by the late F. W. H. Myers. Secondly, we have made experiments in psychometry and I have received by automatic writing or on the ouija board a number of communications purporting to come from recently deceased persons which have contained some information unknown to me, and occasionally unknown to Miss Gibbes, which she has afterwards verified. I have also had other sitters for whom I have, in their opinion, obtained some evidential material.

Before discussing evidence of survival I should like to tell you of our one detective thriller, a case of psychometry we christened "The Burglar's Glove". A burglary had taken place at Miss Gibbes's house. Miss Gibbes writes: "When a member of the C.I.D. called to see me about the psychometry of the Burglar's Glove he said that he 'was amazed that a clairvoyante could obtain from any object, so accurate a description of an individual who was strongly suspected of housebreaking'."

Now, no medium should be her own reporter. With the best will in the world she may unconsciously gild the lily. So I will give Miss Gibbes's account of this case. She writes:

"During my absence for a few days one Christmas, my small house in Chelsea was ransacked from top to bottom. Almost everything of value except books, furniture and pictures, etc., was removed. The stuff was taken in my own suitcases and a car must have been employed, for my heavy office typewriter was among the many missing articles. In the prevailing chaos I discovered a stranger's leather gauntlet glove.

"At the time of the burglary Miss Cummins was in Ireland. When writing to her I mentioned what had occurred but refrained from stating that this article had been left behind. I had in mind the idea that an interesting experiment might be made in connection with it. She returned at the end of January. Before recommencing our work I suggested that we should have a sitting with the ouija board for the purpose of 'doing a little psychometry for a friend of mine'. Miss Cummins assented. She knew nothing of the object to be psychometrised as I had carefully concealed the glove. She told me later that she never for an instant associated the glove with the burglary, with cars or with myself in any way.

"I put the glove on the ouija board and shortly afterwards Miss Cummins's hand began to move and 'Astor', one of her controls, wrote his name. The following are the notes taken down by me at the time:

" *Astor comes.* (1) ' This glove seems to have belonged to some man who has been recently in contact with machines. I feel that a machine was throbbing under the hand that wore this glove when last it was upon it. This is the most recent feeling I get from it. The owner is a curious mixture. I feel that the man who wore it had a love of adventure and also was easily tired of the humdrum in life. I see this person in some rather dark place. It is like a shed or a place in which you keep cars. Yes, I see him round it, coming and going as if he had some plan in mind.

" (2) ' He is a disappointed person. He should have done very well, been most successful. Everything in the earlier part of his life promised worldly success—after hard work of course. But I think some unexpected catastrophe cut across his life. It did not seem a catastrophe at the time, but it led to his having to give up his work and changed his life completely for some time. He came out of all that a changed man. I see that it broke up his life. He was unable to pick up the old threads—circumstances had changed. His livelihood was taken by someone else. He could not get back to the old work, his health wasn't good. He had been through so much. All this hangs about this glove, and yet it seems as if it were a memory implanted on another memory, the one overcomes the other. I hope this glove has not been handled except by the owner.'

" (E. B. G. *No, not very much so far as I know. Can you get a description of the owner?*)

" ' Even if it has only been worn by one person I get a second party in it, somebody whose thoughts have been worked into the glove.'

" (3) [Astor went on :] ' I see a man who looks delicate and seems to suffer from nerves. I get a sense of mental distress at times, but there is nothing mentally wrong. I only got sensitiveness, that is the chief feeling—someone very highly strung.'

" (E. B. G. *Can you get a description of the dark place?*)

" (4) ' I only see him vaguely. He seems to be very worried and to be set on some plan that is wrong in some way. Yes, I don't like all that part. I get a feeling here of something unpleasant. What is it? This man is doing something I don't like at all. I see him now driving in the dark. There are two others with him. He is on some business with them. They talk in low voices. He is in this matter rather against his will I think. I see a pale face and a small moustache, medium coloured hair, a short nose, age I should think about thirty-five or so. I get a feeling of ill health and great tension.'

" (E. B. G. *What about the others with him?*)

" (5) ' Yes, two men I see I don't like. They are rough looking. He seems to be a gentleman. The men, however, have some control over him. They seem to have power over him.'

“(E. B. G. *Can you describe these men?*)

“(5A) ‘One wears a slouch hat, a dark brown overcoat, the other has a trench coat, a sort of burberry. They seem to be leading this man into some dangerous enterprise. He is in need of money, I see that, through this loss of work. Anyway they go out a lot at night, I feel them groping here and there. I see they carry lanterns and creep about. They are so jumpy and one of them curses under his breath. I see them now in a part of this big town. They are driving down a long street somewhere at the other side of the river. They have a lot of things in their car. I see them taking these out, one by one, and they go into a rather tall house which is much in need of repair.’

“(E. B. G. *Can you give any idea as to where this house is?*)

“(6) ‘To south east, I think, of where you are now. They seem to go out at night mostly, and they carry tools with them, but they aren’t workers. The gentleman of the party has rather pale blue eyes and a short weak chin, and he smokes a great deal to soothe his fears. The other two men are accustomed to this life, but he isn’t, and he hates it and can’t get away. I feel some trap here—the feeling of prison about it, unable to get out. I see this fear hanging around it, it never seems to leave this man—the fear of a trap. At one time he seems to have served in the army. I can’t get anything more at the moment. It is all mixed up with someone else’s memory, the two memories are confused. I wish I could disentangle them.’”

Miss Gibbes forwarded the notes of the sitting to the detective in charge. She goes on to say: “He telephoned to me saying that the record contained an exact description of a man he had strongly suspected of being implicated in my burglary. This individual had just been convicted of a series of crimes and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. A little later the detective returned me the type-script with his marginal notes.

“These run as follows:

“*As to Paragraph 1:* ‘B. A. was the owner of a motor car and garage.’

“*As to Paragraph 2 and 3:* ‘He is the son of a publican. Later married, but the wife broke away and carried on an immoral life. He was turned out of business by his father, owing to his marriage. Later turned thief. Well-spoken and of good appearance, also highly strung.’

“*As to Paragraph 4.* ‘Answers description of B. A.’

“*As to Paragraph 6.* ‘Again answers description of B. A., *i.e.*, that of the “gentleman”, and B. A. served in the Army.’

“In a subsequent interview, the detective informed me that the description in paragraph 4, was ‘a very accurate one of the man in question with the exception of the small moustache which it is

quite possible he had at the time'. These facial appendages, he explained, are often grown for a few weeks for the purpose of disguise.

"With regard to the information given through the ouija board, it must be remembered that Miss Cummins had no idea whatever that the glove was connected with the burglary. To her subconscious mind, however, the type of glove might suggest cars and garages, but the sensation of 'throbbing' need not necessarily have been the most recent feeling connected with it.

"*Par. 2.* This seems to be a brief and accurate history of the emotional side of the man's life. As the son of a publican his future would promise 'worldly success'. The fact that his wife had left him and had carried on an immoral life would certainly have been 'an unexpected catastrophe cutting across his life'. To the owner of the glove, his marriage naturally was 'not a catastrophe at the time'. But as he was turned out of his father's business, it certainly 'led to his having to give up his work' and would 'change his life completely . . . breaking it up'. The detective states that 'later he turned thief'. Information through the ouija board gives it as 'circumstances had changed . . . he could not get back to the old work'.

"*Pars. 4 and 6* apparently give an accurate description of the appearance of a man subsequently arrested and could be put together as follows :

"The gentleman of the party has rather pale blue eyes and a short weak chin. A pale face and a small moustache. Medium coloured hair, a short nose, age about 35.

"In addition to the above description (which the detective said was remarkably accurate) the man's emotional life was correctly described by the psychometrist. Yet it is hardly likely that the glove was in the burglar's possession at the time of his break with his people. Moreover, into the details is woven the possible adventure of the night in question and of another similar incident."

I mentioned previously that I had produced through automatic writing, books that give a detailed history of Early Christian times.

The manuscripts of these Cleophas Scripts were submitted to Dr Oesterly and, as Dr Lamond has stated in his introduction to the Second Edition, to "recognised scholars representing the Church and the Universities". These authorities write in their Foreword that these Cleophas Scripts "contain much, which, on consideration of the life and mentality of the intermediary, Miss Cummins, appear quite inexplicable on the supposition of human authorship". These scholars give instances of obscure historical facts that appear in the text, which I could not have known, to support this assertion.

There is not time to discuss in detail the evidence presented in these scripts. But it may be that this faculty for picking up historical facts is in line with experiments in psychometry of objects and might be placed under the heading of psychometry. In other words that I may have drawn on a memory which is somehow preserved. But there are many people, including Miss Gibbes, who affirm that there must be some discarnate mind to present these facts intelligently and in correct order in this long history of Apostolic times. I am in a trance or half-sleep when these scripts are written. I have very little sense of the words set down when I come out of the trance. But I often have vivid visual memories of the people and scenes described, and I have experienced when in trance fanatical anger, sorrow, exaltation and despair according to the emotions expressed in the writing. I may of course be the plaything of my subconscious mind. But what is this subconscious mind? A very contrary one in my case. For I should infinitely prefer to write rapidly and effortlessly—as in the case of this automatic writing—about modern times.

Since the publication of these Cleophas Scripts some evidential facts of interest have been brought to our notice. The Rev. J. M. Black, of Edinburgh, stated in an article published in *Light* that in *The Great Days of Ephesus*, the third volume of the Cleophas Scripts, there is a satisfactory solution offered to the problem of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel, a problem that has been debated by theologians for the last hundred years.

Dr Robert Eisler, who is a leading Continental scholar and was Professor of Historical Research at Vienna University, recovered passages from an ancient Russian document, the suppressed Slavonic Josephus. These passages, he asserted, were excised from Josephus and were, he maintained, historically correct. He published them in his book, *The Messiah Jesus*. Some years before its publication *Paul in Athens*, the second volume of the Cleophas Scripts, was published. In several particulars, notably an insurrection at Jerusalem just before the Crucifixion, statements in *Paul in Athens* were corroborated in Eisler's version of these suppressed passages. An article by Miss Gibbes giving details of this evidence will shortly be published in the *American Journal for Psychological Research*, so I shall not go into them now. Before his death that eminent scholar Mr G. R. S. Mead was very helpful in regard to this case. I am sorry to say that Dr Eisler is now in an internment camp.

But I feel I had better pass on to cases that may furnish evidence of personal survival. Several years ago I gave sittings to a lady I will call Mrs Cooper. I knew nothing of her past history. I

obtained for her some evidence of identity which purported to be given by a captain J. M. who had been killed in the South African War. But as the evidence given by this communicator was known to Mrs Cooper, though unknown to me, she concluded that I might have received it telepathically from her mind. So she asked the alleged communicator to give some obscure evidence she would have to trace for herself. Amongst several things he subsequently wrote which were unknown to her, but afterwards verified, was a story which, thanks to Miss Newton's efforts, was eventually corroborated. It ran as follows. Captain J. M. communicated that the second battalion of his regiment had met the first battalion at a certain military station in India before the South African War. It is, I am told, very unusual for two battalions to meet in this fashion. So Mrs Cooper was doubtful of this statement. The automatic writing went on to say that a couple of officers, whose names were given, had gone on the spree. They had, in the course of it, broken into the garden of a high caste Hindu. There had been a very serious row as the Hindu had believed they were trying to break into the women's quarter in his house. It was with difficulty the matter was hushed up. Now, I have never met anyone remotely connected with this regiment, and I have passed most of my life in Ireland. The regiment was Scottish. I was a very small child at the time this alleged episode took place. But Mrs Cooper, through your Society, got into touch with a member of this regiment who was able to verify the fact and that it was hushed up. So there would seem to be no conceivable way in which it could have reached my ears. The details of this case were published in the S.P.R. *Journal* for May 1929. It is to be noted that allusions were made to obscure happenings that took place thirty years before. The name of the military station and the names given of officers were correct. The communicator stated he had been told of this episode by an officer also dead, and that he had not been with his regiment at the time of its occurrence. This last fact was also correct. As Mrs Cooper has written to me, "the evidence about X. really does practically eliminate the idea of telepathy. At least, it would have to be between your mind and that of a very old soldier who remembered this affair, and the names and everything. And even in this unlikely case there would have to be something to start the telepathy, put you *en rapport*. Still it is the other things, not hard facts, which I have got through you which have convinced me." In other words, Mrs Cooper held that the personality, the phrases used, the outlook were those of the man she had known over thirty years ago. Convincing proof in the form of personality, outlook

and style, is, in my opinion, the crucial test and the most interesting form of evidence.

With regard to the evidence of style, I mentioned a book that purported to be communicated to me by the late F. W. H. Myers called *The Road to Immortality*. Apart from a few cross references between myself and Mrs Osborne Leonard the only kind of evidence offered by this book is one of style and ideas. Now it is said that a man only becomes a character when he loses his character. I lost mine irretrievably through this book. My undoing happened in this way.

Some years ago I was invited to lecture in a certain provincial town. In due course a card announcing the meeting, which was posted to 300 people, was sent to me. On it was written "Speaker, Miss G. Cummins, Writer of 'The Road to Immortality', 15 years experience. . . ." When I arrived at the hall for that meeting I found it packed to the doors. Never before or since have I been such a popular draw. I had at last gained a character by losing it.

Many people will probably feel that the material in this book is merely a fantasy woven by my subconsciousness, just as by the elimination of one letter from a card a remarkable fantasy was woven about my past life. On the other hand two old friends of Mr Myers, Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Lawrence Jones, have stated that they consider the contents of this book to be characteristic of the style and ideas of Mr Myers. I feel that only Mr Myers's friends and contemporaries are in a position to give an opinion on this issue. I was a very small child living in Ireland when F. W. H. Myers died. All I dare venture to state is that my conscious mind could not have originated these writings. But I do not hesitate to suggest that evidence of identity given through style and ideas must always be highly controversial; and for this reason. If it is assumed that there is a genuine communicator he appears to use the brain and the verbal memory of the automatist. So such writing must be regarded as a collaboration and due allowance made for what is even on the spiritistic hypothesis the product of two personalities, not one.

Some years ago I gave a sitting to two old people who were most anxious to obtain a communication from their relations. Much to my disappointment and theirs a strange communicator insisted on writing during the first quarter of an hour. He gave his name as Henry Bois, Highfield Road, Preston. It meant nothing to the two old people, to myself or to Miss Gibbes, who was present. Miss Gibbes writes :

"The statement was made that this entity had just died and that he knew his wife was grieving. There was an insistent request

that she should be traced and be assured of the continued existence of her husband. I followed up these remarks and eventually corresponded with the widow at the address given in the automatic script. There was some difficulty in my getting in touch with her owing to the fact that in the writing the name was spelt Bois and the actual name was Boyce. It has the same sound and was possibly communicated phonetically. Or Miss Cummins's subconscient mind betrayed her as she knew a man of the name of Henry Bois, who, at the time, lived in the East, but had no connection with the communicator. The widow of Henry Boyce subsequently corroborated eight of the statements made by this communicator as being correct, including a description of her husband's personal appearance and the condition of his health for some time prior to his death.

"The following are the facts acknowledged by his widow. (1) Her husband had recently died (5 days after his death his name was written by Miss C.). (2) He was in the fifties. (His age, the widow stated, was 55.) (3) He was of medium height (correct). (4) He was dark (correct). (5) He had retired from business, that is, he had not been fit for it for some time. (Partially correct; the widow wrote: 'He was ailing for 2 years, but kept going to business. He was not fit to go, but would not give in.') (6) He was not ill for very long. ('He died 3 days after the doctor was called in.') (7) The widow would not believe in the survival of her husband when informed of his message (correct). (8) That he had a wife also proved correct."

Miss Gibbes enquired at the offices of certain newspapers and could find no announcement of his death. In order to obtain the necessary information Miss Gibbes wrote a series of questions to the widow. Possibly hoping that a legacy might be forthcoming the widow answered the questions readily.

Here we have a case which Miss Gibbes believes can only be explained by the spiritistic hypothesis. It is a case which has always puzzled me. But it is possible that my mind linked up with the mind of a woman unknown to me and that I received telepathically from her this correct information about her husband. On the other hand, it is hard to explain why my mind should work entirely contrary to my very keen desire to obtain a message that would comfort the two old people who were sitting with me. But this can possibly be explained by the fact that I am an Irishwoman and come of a contrary race. So my rebellious subconscient out of sheer contrariness rejected my conscient wish to please the old people. But the "Henry Bois" communication was expressed in an emotional manner and in pathetic terms. There seemed to be a

passionate desire behind it to convince the widow that Henry Boyce was alive in another world, and there was also the fear expressed that she could not believe in her husband's continued existence. My subconscious mind, however, may have a turn for drama and possibly built up an emotional fantasy round the correct evidence given in the writing and telepathically received by me.

The difficulty of giving addresses correctly is frequently met with and is illustrated by a case Sir William Barrett related in his book *On the Threshold of the Unseen*. It was one in which I participated at the ouija board in conjunction with Mrs. Dowden, and obtained a message which we believed for a short time directly emanated from the sitters' subconscious minds because a wrong address was given and because the communication purported to come from a distant relative of the sitter. In an article in the *Sunday Graphic* Sir Oliver Lodge referred to it as "a remarkable case which seemed to prove survival." Sir W. Barrett describes it as follows :

"Miss C., the sitter, had a cousin, an officer with our army in France, who was killed in a battle a month previous to the sitting ; this she knew. One day, after the name of her cousin had unexpectedly been spelt out on the ouija board and her name given in answer to her query, 'Do you know who I am?' the following message came : 'Tell mother to give my pearl tie-pin to the girl I was going to marry ; I think she ought to have it.' When asked what was the name and address of the lady both were given ; the name spelt out included Christian name and surname, the latter being an unusual one and unknown to both the sitters. The address given in London was either fictitious or taken down incorrectly, as a letter sent there was returned and the whole message thought to be fictitious.

"Six months later, however, it was discovered that the officer had been engaged, shortly before he left for the front, to the very lady whose name was given ; he had, however, told no one. Neither his cousin nor any of his own family were aware of the fact and had never seen the lady nor heard her name until the War Office sent over the deceased officer's effects. Then they found that he had put this lady's name in his will, and what is equally remarkable, a pearl tie-pin was found in his effects." Sir William Barrett goes on to say, "Here there could be no explanation of the facts by subliminal memory, or telepathy or collusion, and the evidence points unmistakably to a telepathic message from the deceased officer."

I want to emphasise one particular point in this case. When we learnt through the return of the letter that a wrong address had been given we did not follow up the matter further, believing the com-

munication in question to be subconscious invention. It was only through a chance conversation that we learnt that the message was correct in its main particulars. At the time it was received I was a complete sceptic as to phenomena and this was the first case within my own personal experience which encouraged me to pursue psychic enquiry further.

Now I should like to make a few remarks about the investigator in his approach to the medium: the methods of some very intelligent sitters I have met show such strange ignorance and confusion of mind.

About fourteen years ago a friend of mine asked me to give a sitting with the ouija board to a certain authority on economics and his wife. I will call them Mr and Mrs Thompson. I went with my friend Captain Spence to their house. Astor, my control, opened the sitting by describing an old man who was recognised by Mr Thompson as his father. The nickname and surname of the alleged communicator were given and he took control, addressing his son. Immediately Mr Thompson told his wife not to utter a word because he said it might set up a telepathic link between them and me and render evidence valueless. Furthermore his wife and he removed their chairs to the other end of a room longer and larger than the S.P.R. library. There they remained wrapped in a rigid silence, and they resembled a pair of deaf mutes when the communicator asked if his son was there. On receiving no response he became discouraged and soon faded away, giving place to a communicator for Captain Spence, who had remained close by and reciprocated the greeting of the entity who came for him. Naturally, therefore, this communicator held the floor, or I should say the ouija board, for the rest of the sitting. Afterwards Mr and Mrs Thompson expressed disappointment at getting nothing. I completely failed to make them understand that telepathy was not eliminated by the length of the room and by complete silence. As every member of the S.P.R. probably knows, the intelligent sitter should not remain completely passive but should at least make some remark to encourage an alleged communicator. He can do this without giving anything away. Even if he is a complete sceptic it is necessary for him if he wishes to obtain evidence to assume that someone is there speaking to him when a name he recognises is given. Sometimes, of course, a sitter may be too forthcoming. I remember a lady, who as soon as her mother's name was given on the ouija board broke into voluble abuse of the alleged communicator for having disinherited her. In vain the mother tried to get a word in edgeways in reply. It was quite impossible. For the rest of the

sitting the sitter continued to lecture and hurl invective at the unseen mother. In parting this lady seemed intensely happy and relieved in mind, thanking me profusely for what she called a very evidential sitting.

Another type of sitter is the individual who possesses the blue-book mind, who has a passion for obscure facts. One of these, whom I will call Mr White, pressed me to give him a sitting. He had been to every leading medium, and had according to his own account received little or nothing from them. Soon after the opening of the sitting a distant cousin spelt out his name on the board and correctly narrated the circumstances of his death in a naval battle. Mr White then addressed his cousin, asking him if he remembered the name of a tree on an island in a lake they had fished together fifteen years previously, and also could he remember the colour of the wallpaper of the library in the home in which he had spent his childhood. The communicator failed to answer these two questions satisfactorily, but mentioning his sister's name sent an affectionate message to her. Whereat Mr White solemnly replied: "Because you have not told me the colour of the wall paper in the library of your first home I fear I cannot convey your message to your sister. Sufficient proof of your identity has not been furnished, as you will certainly recognise, by your failure to answer my two questions." All the same it will be noted that Mr White apparently assumed that the communicator was there. But in spite of having attended hundreds of sittings this Mr White, who was a man of no mean intelligence, had not learnt that correct answers to direct questions concerning trivial memories of fifteen or twenty-five years ago are seldom answered satisfactorily. In this respect the memories of living people are equally faulty. For instance, I was, recently, suddenly asked if I could remember the year in which I played hockey for Ireland against England. But to my shame I utterly failed to recall a year which was, to one of my inadequate athletic powers, distinctly memorable. I don't know it even now. And I have a horrible feeling that if I die without finding it out I shall be denounced and dismissed as a deceiving shade by intelligent sitters.

It is reported that when Edison was pre-occupied with some absorbing experiment he occasionally forgot his own name. I have not myself so far reached that blissful state of forgetfulness. In this sphere, perhaps, it is the privilege of genius only. But I quite expect to forget it when I go to the next world. However, I would suggest that students of psychic science should study the memories of the living when they are endeavouring to test the memories of alleged communicators.

Incidentally I may mention that Mr White was extremely anxious to get those trivial memories communicated. So he was quite emotionally tense when asking for them. He had already clearly made up his mind that they would not be given and had recounted to me his failures with other sensitives. Now this was an entirely wrong attitude to adopt. It undoubtedly tends to inhibit the giving of the desired evidence by making the medium anticipate her own possible failure.

Recently a certain Italian whom Miss Gibbes and I have never met sent Miss Gibbes the handwriting of his dead wife and asked her to have proxy sittings with me. Subsequently Signor V. wrote to Miss Gibbes telling her that before his wife's death he had arranged with her a statement that she was to try and get through to him. For eighteen years he had gone to mediums and failed to obtain it. At the first sitting my hand wrote his wife's Christian name. It was not known to me or to Miss Gibbes. After an interval of time we held two more sittings at which messages from the husband were read to the communicator. They gave nothing away but assumed that his wife was there listening. She wrote affectionate letters in reply. In one of these, quite casually, the desired pre-arranged statement, or rather its idea, was given correctly. Now I believe that if Signor V. had taken the sittings with me he would never have obtained that piece of evidence. He would have been too anxious and emotional about it. I attribute his failure with other mediums, who are far more successful than I am in giving evidence, to the fact that he was the sitter and was too emotionally anxious. I believe that the best evidence as regards facts is most often given spontaneously through a medium. A chance remark of a sitter may elicit it, or a question that is not of the blue-book character. When in search of personal evidence from a deceased friend or relative the sitter's psychological attitude is all-important, in my experience. A little histrionic ability may be extremely valuable. However much the sitter may doubt, once a correct name or description is given he should assume for the time being that he is actually talking to the individual in question. Again, the sitter should recall to his mind conditions in this earthly life of ours. I for instance am rather a timid person. When I meet an individual who treats me with suspicion or catechises me sternly I am either reduced to a frozen silence or stutter out banalities. This failing would be a hundred times intensified if I had to manipulate as well some complicated receiving instrument like that of another human brain. The medium has the responsibility of transmission. But with regard to mental mediumship at any rate

the sitter must play his part in making the necessary link. This fact is rather well expressed in a sentence conveyed through automatic writing some years ago. "The medium is like a pipe or tube. We blow the message through. If there is no suction at the other end it will stick halfway and no evidence will be given."

Psychical Research is undoubtedly a branch of experimental psychology of increasing importance. In the Cleophas Scripts, *Paul in Athens*, *The Great Days of Ephesus*, and a forthcoming volume, *When Nero Was Dictator*, psychologists will probably find traces of an industrious subconscious mind, but these Cleophas Scripts contain a residuum of facts which University scholars maintain could not have been known to me. These experts have also pointed out that the Cleophas Scripts have an atmosphere that is of the period; that in manner they strongly resemble the Clementine Recognitions, Apocryphal writings which I had not read or even heard of when the scripts were written.

Lastly, the Burglar's Glove, the Cooper Case, the Pearl Tie-Pin Case, the Boyce Case and others I have no time to mention, present a number of verified facts which were entirely unknown to me and the sitter. Miss Gibbes believes she can show evidence that in automatic writing I have reproduced about thirty different personalities and written in their varied styles. The psychologist can maintain, probably rightly, that I have thirty different secondary personalities. But what about the evidential facts conveyed through me and verified in connection with deceased persons?

I am prepared to admit that my subconscious mind is that almost extinct phenomenon, an industrious maid of all work. But I should like psychologists to explain by what process I pilfer from here and there a certain amount of accurate information with which I build up these subconscious fantasies. If they would only explain the process to me, and how to control and direct it, I would turn it to good purpose. I would tap the minds of thinkers and authors I admire, and settle down to writing books and plays, and renounce Psychical Research for ever.

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## REVIEW

*The Theory and Practice of Yoga.* By SARDAR SULAKHAN SINGH.  
(From Sulakhan Singh, P.O. Sulakhan Abad, Gujranwala, India. 4s. post free.)

It is said, by those who should know, that many of the faculties and phenomena with which psychical research is concerned become increasingly evident as a by-product of the yoga discipline, and

there is some interest in the subject, and inquiry about it, among members of the Society. These may like to know of a small handbook which sets out the original yogic "aphorisms" of Patanjali, with a commentary that seems to be as direct and simple as could be made for Western readers. This is not to say that the book is a vade mecum for the Western tourist in the world of Eastern ideas. But those who have wished that they could have a few hours or days of intercourse with an Indian who could explain what the yoga system signifies in his own mind, may find a book of this kind the nearest substitute for such an exposition.

The book has been printed in Central Europe for upwards of two years and has been brought to our notice on its centre of distribution being transferred to India. It may be already known to readers who take a special interest in its subject.

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THE *JOURNAL* IS PRINTED FOR PRIVATE  
CIRCULATION

The attention of Members and Associates is drawn to the private nature of the *Journal*, from which no quotations should be made without the previous consent of the Council. Ever since the first issue of the *Journal* in 1884, much of the material appearing in it has been contributed on the definite assurance that the *Journal* is, as stated on the cover, issued "For private circulation among Members and Associates only". The Council hope that all Members and Associates will continue to co-operate with them in maintaining this privacy.

# JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

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*NOTICE OF MEETING*

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

ON

WEDNESDAY, 28 June 1939, at 5.30 p.m.

WHEN A PAPER ENTITLED

“A Recent Experiment with Two Automatists”

BY

MR W. H. SALTER

WILL BE READ

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*N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.*

## NEW MEMBERS

(Elected on 26 April 1939)

**Librarian**, Duke University, College Station, Durham, N.C., U.S.A.

**Redmayne, Geoffrey**, The Myrtles, Abbot's Langley, Herts.

(Elected on 23 May 1939)

**Cuthbert, Chester D.**, 302 Harbison Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

**Hort, Miss Greta**, University Women's College, Melbourne, N. 3, Australia.

## MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

THE 373rd Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 26 April 1939, at 4 p.m., THE HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTELTON, G.B.E., in the Chair. There were also present: Mr W. H. Salter; also Mr Kenneth Richmond, Editor of the *Journal*, Mr C. V. C. Herbert, Research Officer, and Miss E. M. Horsell, Assistant-Secretary.

Although there was not a quorum, the members present decided to transact the business before them, subject to confirmation at the next Meeting of the Council.

Two new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

THE 374th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Tuesday, 23 May 1939, at 4 p.m., THE PRESIDENT in the Chair. There were also present: Professor E. R. Dodds, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Mr W. H. Salter, Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt, R.N., the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas and Miss Nea Walker; also Mr Kenneth Richmond, Editor of the *Journal*, Mr C. V. C. Herbert, Research Officer, and Miss E. M. Horsell, Assistant-Secretary.

The proceedings at the last Meeting of the Council were duly confirmed. The Minutes were then read and signed as correct.

Two new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

## PRIVATE MEETING

THE 165th Private Meeting of the Society was held in the Society's Library on Tuesday, 23 May 1939, at 5.30 p.m., THE PRESIDENT in the Chair.

A paper entitled "A Novel Proxy Case and Its Implications" was read by the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas. A discussion followed in which Mr B. Abdy Collins, Professor E. R. Dodds, Mrs Enthoven, Mr Gregory, Mr C. V. C. Herbert, Mr Hettinger, Mr Kenneth Richmond, Mr Soal, Mr Strawson and Mr Tyrrell took part. It is hoped that the paper will appear shortly in *Proceedings*.

## INCIDENTS OF BYGONE DAYS

BY COUNT PEROVSKY-PETROVO-SOLOVOVO

ON 26 April I had the privilege of reading before the S.P.R. a paper I had entitled "Incidents of Bygone days", in which I had included various episodes, chiefly isolated, which had remained unmentioned in two previous papers read by me in 1937 and 1938 and dealing with the Russian physical medium S. F. Sambor and "Two series of experiments in automatic writing" respectively.

The following is a brief summary of the episodes narrated by me :

1. Incidents connected with the visit of Mrs A. E. Fay (Crookes' celebrated medium)<sup>1</sup> to Russia in 1888-89. General impression very unfavourable.

2. Séances with various English mediums in London in 1892. Two sittings with Husk were transparently fraudulent. F. W. H. Myers related to me a striking incident connected with Williams : at a dark séance held, I think, in the seventies, a fully materialised hand seized by Myers melted away in his grasp. At a private séance with Mme Greck, a trance medium, an interesting episode connected with my late mother occurred, the medium who knew nothing about me stating that the lady who had given me a certain ring "had loved you for twenty years, and you have been mourning her for two years". My mother had died in 1890, when I was twenty years and a few months old.

3. Production of artificial spirit raps (due to action of the toes) by myself. See *Journal*, S.P.R., July 1893. Aksakoff stated to me that my raps were exactly similar in sound to those of Mrs Kate Fox-Jencken.

<sup>1</sup>Or rather the medium who took part in one of Crookes' most celebrated (electric) tests.

4. Séances with Eusapia Paladino in Milan (1892) in St. Petersburg, in the palace of the Grand Duke Nicholas, the future generalissimo of the Russian armies (1898), and at Naples. During the latter series it happened that a "third" arm was seen, whilst one of E. P.'s hands was held upon the table and visible and the other though invisible (on the table but under end of curtain) was felt by the controller (my wife) to be in contact with her hand. From which may be drawn the tentative conclusion that some mediums are apparently able at times to free a hand by some kind of mental suggestion.

5. Poltergeist "phenomena" witnessed by me at Reval (now Tallinn, Estonia) in 1903, inconclusive either way.

6. Séances with the late Polish physical medium, Jan Guzik, in St. Petersburg. The medium was and is looked upon by me as a fraud—and not even an interesting one.

7. Séances with Eva Carrière (Marthe Béraud) in Paris in 1914. "Phenomena" inconclusive, Mme Bisson, the medium's "guide, philosopher and friend" proving extremely "touchy" when doubts were expressed even in a very mild way. Another instance, I think, when investigation is complicated by the presence of a person whom it is very difficult not to regard as the medium's *alter ego*.

8. Prediction made in August 1917, in Oslo, as to the war ending on Sunday, 10 November (no year given). As a matter of fact it ended on Monday, 11 November. I may be said, with perhaps a little straining, to have heard of the prediction before its fulfilment.

In Part II of my paper I related various spontaneous cases known to me and hitherto unpublished in this country, viz. :

(a) *Post mortem* phantasm of M. B. appearing to his brother to ask him to undertake a very long, tedious and possibly dangerous railway journey (in S. Russia), in order to tell his widow to go abroad and not stay in Russia. Mme B. was at the time in a state of great perplexity on this subject.

(b) Apparition apparently coinciding with death (suicide) unknown to percipient who both saw and heard the phantasm, the latter asking, in a concise formula, for prayers.

(c) A case of levitation of a fakir ("to twice the height of a five storied building") witnessed in May 1914 in India by a certain Shipovskiy (see *Zeitschrift für Kritischen Okkultismus*, 1926, p. 196). I knew the late Shipovskiy well in Berlin, in the early twenties, and am absolutely convinced of his good faith. I feel bound, however, to add that during the war he experienced a severe shell-shock which for a time affected his cerebral faculties, though when I knew him he appeared to be perfectly normal.

(d) The last case is here quoted rather to exemplify one of the chief obstacles which confront a student when he attempts to collect spontaneous cases of supernormal occurrences. In 1906, in St. Petersburg, a Russian naval officer told me he had once attended in India on board his ship a fakir's performance at which an attempt was made to photograph it, the sensitised plate registering nothing. But when I asked him for a written first-hand account, Captain B.-K. refused, though I offered to call on him (he lived some fifteen miles from St. Petersburg) and bring and use my own typewriter, so as to spare him every trouble.

Surely such a specimen of discourtesy and misdirected obstinacy is worth recording.

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#### CASE: THE DETECTION OF A THEFT THROUGH INFORMATION GIVEN BY A MEDIUM

THE following is a translation of a case sent to the Research Officer by Dr A. Tanagras, of the Greek Society of Psychological Research:

Madame Logothetopoulou, a lady of German birth, wife of the Professor of Gynaecology at the University of Athens, was intending to go to an evening party, and in the morning had taken her jewels in her handbag: a pearl necklace, a ring, etc. These she had placed in her husband's private cupboard at the "Aeginition" hospital of the University, meaning to wear them in the evening.

The jewels disappeared, and the police arrested a maid, whose finger-prints were found inside the handbag.

She was held in custody for ten days unavailingly. She admitted that she had opened the handbag to admire the jewels, but persistently refused to admit having stolen them.

Mme Logothetopoulou then applied to one of the best mediums of the Athenian S.P.R., a member of her telepathic group.<sup>1</sup> Mme Helene Zakynthinou, who, under hypnosis, stated emphatically that the maid was innocent, and designated the hospital masseur as the thief.

She described how he had entered the professor's room, opened the cupboard, stolen the jewels and given them into the care of his wife.

Mme Zakynthinou insisted that the stolen jewels were in a certain piece of furniture which she described, in the masseur's house.

<sup>1</sup> A group formed for experiments in telepathy such as have been conducted of late, between Athens and London, with a similar group formed by the S.P.R.

The police then detained the masseur's wife, who confessed the theft and returned the stolen jewels. The thief had committed the act *with gloves on*, so as not to leave fingerprints, as he himself eventually confessed.

Following this, Mme Logothetopoulou sent the following letter to Mme Zakyntinou :

*University Hospital "Aeginition",*  
*Director, Prof. C. Logothetopoulos.*

Madame Zakyntinou,—I have much pleasure in letting you know that, thanks to your help, I have been able to recover my stolen jewels. The thief has been arrested.

(Signed) E. LOGOTHETOPOULOU.

(The copy of this letter is signed by its writer and countersigned by Dr Tanagras as witness of the original, and Dr Tanagras's report is countersigned by both the ladies whose names are mentioned.)

The Research Officer wrote to Dr Tanagras pointing out that it was not definitely stated, in the above report, that the jewels had actually been found in a piece of furniture such as the medium had described; and that without this evidence of paranormal perception the medium's impression could be attributed to her being aware of suspicions against the masseur's character. (A man who wears gloves to commit a theft is not unlikely to have a bad record.)

Dr Tanagras replied, giving a fuller account of the events following the medium's statement :

"After Mme Zakyntinou's declaration that the masseur had given the stolen jewels to his wife, who was keeping them in her chest-of-drawers, a police officer visited this woman's house.

"He told her that her husband had been detained by the police, that he had confessed the theft, and that there was no sense now in denying it. He therefore advised her not to make her position worse, but to give up the jewels.

"The woman then, trembling, opened the chest of drawers and restored the jewels, which were in fact in this piece of furniture,<sup>1</sup> as the medium had insisted. After the discovery of the jewels the masseur was detained, and confessed the theft.

"Your remark that if the jewels had not been found just in the piece of furniture which had been indicated, we could not have ex-

<sup>1</sup> Dr Tanagras appends the footnote: It is to be noted that one always finds, in all the houses of the Greek people, a piece of furniture with several drawers, of the height of 1½ metres, which they call a "commo".

cluded telepathic transmission to the medium<sup>1</sup> of suspicions eventually entertained by Mme Logothetopoulou, is very true.

“My personal opinion is that it was a case of distant telepathy between the medium and the masseur or his wife, who knew the details of the theft and also the hiding-place of the jewels.

“When the medium finds herself synchronised (attuned) with the guilty persons, we often observe really convincing successes in cases such as this. Lack of attunement is the cause of frequent failures.”

This case is open to a normal explanation, of somewhat indefinite probability, if there is any chance at all of the medium having heard the hospital masseur mentioned as a likely suspect. We gather from the record that there was a period of ten days during which the theft could have been a subject of discussion. We should then need to assume that the medium made a chance guess (if she had no further information) at the complicity of the masseur's wife and at the place where the jewels would be hidden. The choice of a drawer in a piece of furniture of a type regularly to be found, as Dr Tanagras says, in Greek houses, seems fairly obvious; though in the case of a hiding-place it is not greatly to be expected that an obvious guess will be successful.

If the episode cannot be described as strongly evidential, it is of interest as an example of the application of mediumistic methods to detection, such as might be suggested by the case of the burglar's glove which was described by Miss Gerakline Cummins in the paper printed in the last issue of the *Journal*. But it has to be remembered that neither the truth of information received, apparently by paranormal means, nor its outcome in successful police action, proves that the process of obtaining the information was of a paranormal character.

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## CASE: THE QUESTION OF MOTIVE IN AN APPARENTLY PRECOGNITIVE DREAM

BY ZÖE RICHMOND

[Attention has been increasingly drawn of late to the study of the probable motives for impressions which seem to be both paranormal and purposeless. The following contribution to this study has been

<sup>1</sup> Dr Tanagras's implication that any knowledge of the person to be suspected would have had to reach the medium *by telepathy*, suggests that he is assured that suspicions could not have reached her normally—a point of some importance.—ED.

made by Mrs Kenneth Richmond, authoress of *Evidence of Purpose* in the "Psychical Experiences" series.]

On 27 September 1933 I listened with great interest to Mrs Lyttelton's Presidential Address, in which she dwelt specially on precognition and asked members to put on record any precognitive dreams that they might have. That night I had the only precognitive dream that has registered itself in my conscious memory.

In this dream I saw four charabancs, all alike, filled with foreign students visiting London. These students were all wearing black astrakhan caps.

The dream struck me as so curious and senseless that I mentioned it to my husband on waking.

On the same morning I took an unusual route to my office in Holborn in order to change some foreign money for a child who was staying with us. I had intended for some days to change this money, and this was the first occasion on which I had spare time to go round to a bureau de change.

As I was about to enter the bureau, four charabancs passed, filled with people all wearing black berets. Large labels on the windscreens announced that the party belonged to a foreign student organisation.

The sight of them gave me a distinctly uncomfortable sensation, a sense of strangeness at the close resemblance of the scene to the one of which I had dreamt.

The dream showed no labels on the windscreens, but the information conveyed by these labels appears to have been represented by the dream-impression that the occupants of the charabancs were foreign students. The only complete discrepancy was the appearance of black astrakhan caps in the dream and black berets in the reality. I found at the time some more or less relevant association in my own mind (which I have now forgotten) to account for its introducing the idea of astrakhan. It is also possible that the dream-mind, trying to emphasise the impression "foreign", introduced astrakhan caps as conveying a more foreign impression than plain berets. I know of other instances in which an apparently paranormal impression has departed from accuracy on some special point, which has seemed to show a misguided effort somewhere in the percipient's mind to improve upon an evidential feature.

I have generally found that any psychical experiences that I have had were in response to some need that could be traced, either my own or another's. In this case, it seems that the need was that impressed upon my mind by Mrs Lyttelton in her Presidential Address, for more recorded cases of precognitive dreaming. As I

have noted, the dream appeared at first sight to be particularly senseless, and was put on record for that reason.

[Mr Kenneth Richmond made the following brief note in writing : "Sept. 28, 33, 9 a.m. Z. told me dream of 4 charabancs full of foreign students in black astrakhan caps." Evidentially, it is to be regretted that the actual occurrence was not corroborated at the time by discovering who organised the students' tour and obtaining an independent description of the party. ED.]

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## NOTES ON PERIODICALS

### REVUE MÉTAPHYSIQUE.

(November-December, 1938).

*Eugene Osty* (1874-1838). By Dr J. Ch. Roux.

A brief account of the life and work of the late Dr Osty, Director of the Institute of Metapsychics in Paris. Having been attracted to the study of metapsychics by his chance observation of character-reading by a hand-reader, he devoted himself more and more to the subject as years went by and finally, in 1925, when, after the death of Dr Geley, he was appointed to the directorship of the Institute, he gave up the practice of medicine to devote himself to the new science. A useful bibliography of Dr Osty's works follows the article, and bears witness to the intensive and expansive character of his activities.

*Great Visions of the Cross, of Armies and of Fights in the Air* (continued in two following numbers). By C. de Vesme.

An account of reported visions in the air, from the Cross of Constantine to a vision seen in England during the last war.

NOTE : The author has not come into contact with the remarkable vision of St Andrew Bobola (this vision was, however, of soldiers fighting on the earth, not in the air). A poor priest in eastern Poland, during the XIX century, had a vision in which this saint showed him from his window men fighting on the plain, and said : " When this battle takes place Poland will be free." I heard of this vision in Poland before the Great War. The story appears to be well authenticated.

*Dr Rhine's Methods and their Results.* By M. R. Warcollier.

An account of the recent phases of the Rhine-Soal controversy. The question of favourable and unfavourable " atmospheres " is particularly discussed.

*Observation of a Case of "Radiesthesia".* By Dr Pascal.

Dr Pascal concludes that the discovery supposed to have been made by radiesthesia could have been made by ordinary deduction.

*Correspondence.*

1. A case of spontaneous premonition 28 years before an important event in the writer's life.

2. A case of haunting reported at first-hand. The haunting attached itself to the person of the sister of the presumed "haunter".

3. A soldier during the Great War had a vision of his friend and comrade at the time of the latter's death in battle. The visual impression changed from a face to a death's head.

(January-February, 1939.)

An obituary notice appears of Dr J. Maxwell, one of the founders of the Institut Métapsychique. He interested himself particularly in magic, divination and the tarot.

*The Charles Richet Metapsychic Society.*

The Society, successor to an informal monthly gathering, a savant's dinner-party, originated by Prof Richet 25 years ago, was founded in June 1937, under the Presidency of Dr Roux, who explains how a more formal organisation will be in a position to keep record of noteworthy material. The Society appears to be connected with the Institut Métapsychique, and its constitution and rules are now made public.

*Supernormal Knowledge : Madame Detey.* By Marcel Osty.

Extracts from the reports of Dr Eugène Osty on sittings with Madame Detey. Instances of thought-transference, clairvoyance and precognition are described.

*The Functioning of the Human Brain during Metapsychic Phenomena.*

By Dr L. J. Franke and L. J. Koopman.

Experiments with psychic subjects by the method of Professor Hans Berger of Jena (who discovered, in 1924, a method of measuring and registering the bio-electric currents produced by the human cortex). A number of graphs are given.

*Correspondence.*

A case of detection of crime by clairvoyance is given in a letter to M. Marcel Osty.

(March-April, 1939.)

*Society of the Friends of the International Metapsychical Society.*

Report of a speech by Dr F. Moutier, containing tributes to the

memory of Dr Osty, M. de Vesme, M. Mongel and Dr Maxwell. Dr Moutier concludes with "thanks to our faithful collaborators, Mlle Jeanne Laplace, Mme Detey and M. Pascal Forthuny".

*Julien Mongel.* By R. Warcollier.

An obituary notice of one of the special "friends" of the Institut Métapsychique. His interest in the subject dated from the Great War.

*Researches into Certain Mediumistic Faculties.* By A. Sainte-Laguë.

The author proposes a mechanical device for testing such phenomena as levitation, transportation of objects from a distance, the production of sounds, etc.

*Reichenbach's Experiments in the Light of our Present Knowledge.*  
By R. Warcollier.

Experiments by Reichenbach (1788-1869) with sensitives, dealing with the perception of minerals and magnets. Experiments by Lord Rayleigh and Sir W. Barrett are compared with them.

*The Prophecy of the Monk of Padua is Apochryphal.* By Dr Pascal.

This prophecy is held by Dr Pascal to be a forgery. He goes on to discredit all "general" prophecies, but admits the probability of rare individual cases of prophecy, though he thinks them incompatible with the existence of free will.

*Determinism, Free-will and Premonition.* By J. de Cressac

M. de Cressac, on the other hand, maintains the absolute compatibility of free-will and premonition. He compares life to an education, in which the co-operation of the pupil is essential.

*Some Cases of Premonition.*

A "mixed bag" of cases of premonition, some of which might be assigned to chance, others to telepathy. Of others the explanation is difficult or impossible except by assuming supernormal sources of information other than telepathy.

TIJDSCHRIFT VOOR PARAPSYCHOLOGIE, (March 1939).

*Spiritistic Phenomena or Dramatised Clairvoyance?* By Dr Hlte.  
E. Heimans.

Dr Heimans discusses the various hypotheses which may be substituted for the spiritistic hypothesis, in the case of a trustworthy medium.

*Raja Yoga, Parapsychology and Psychoanalysis.* By Dr W. H. C.  
Tenhaeff.

Dr Tenhaeff discusses the points of contact between psycho-

analysis and Yoga, dealing at length in this connection with the teachings of Pantanjali. He deals with the attitude of man in regard to death, quoting the views of poets and philosophers (including Pascal and F. W. H. Myers), and finds points of contact between Myers' views (based on psychical research) and those of the Brahman. He further compares the views of the German mystics (Meister Eckhardt, etc.) with the Yoga doctrine, and finally notes the points of contact between Yoga and certain modern systems of psychological treatment.

*Some Remarks on Dr Dietz's "Parapsychological No-man's-land".*

By Dr K. H. E. Jong.

Dr Jong joins issue with Dr Dietz concerning his view that when Mrs Piper produced Hawaiian words at a sitting, these words were undoubtedly derived from the consciousness of Mr Briggs who was present at the sitting. Dr Jong thinks there are in this case considerable difficulties in the way of accepting a telepathic explanation of the facts. Neither is he inclined to think that "something" in Mrs Piper "tapped" the content of Mr Briggs' consciousness. Though he thinks there is much to be said for a spiritistic explanation, he is not ready to accept this wholeheartedly either. He also criticises Dr Dietz's attitude towards the case of Laura Edmonds (1854) who spoke Modern Greek correctly in trance, without knowing it in ordinary life. The article concludes with a criticism of Dr Dietz's views concerning "human radiation".

*Notes and Information (Dr Tenhaeff).*

1. A case in which the spirit of an acquaintance of Mr S. H. G. purported to manifest through a "psychopist". Particulars were given of the acquaintance's death which were contrary to the information in possession of Mr S. H. G., but which some months afterwards he found to be true.

2. A case in which a dying nun in the East Indies was heard by her father to call him as she was dying (he knew nothing of her illness). Simultaneously her brother dreamed of her. A letter from her Mother Superior is given as evidence that she called her father and spoke of her brother while unconscious just before her death.

3. Dr. H. M. Haye makes some remarks on the difficulty of confirming "supernormal" cures, owing to the fact that in certain diseases there are intervals when the patient seems to be well. He gives a curious case of a man with renal calculus who believed the affected kidney to have been removed by operation and apparently recovered.

H. E. K.

# JOURNAL

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

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*NOTICE OF MEETING*

A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

ON

WEDNESDAY, 27 September, 1939, at 5.30 p.m.

WHEN A PAPER

“Some Experiments on the Paranormal Cognition  
of Pictures”

WILL BE READ BY

MR W. WHATELY CARINGTON

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*N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.*

The Rooms of the Society will be closed after Monday, 31 July, until Tuesday, 12 September. Correspondence will be forwarded to the Staff during this time. The next number of the "Journal" will be issued in October.

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MEMBERS are asked to return, renew or exchange Library Books before 31 July. Each member may borrow as many as six volumes for the vacation before the Rooms close.

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#### MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

THE 375th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 28 June 1939, at 3.45 p.m., ADMIRAL THE HON. A. C. STRUTT, R.N., in the Chair, followed by THE HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTTELTON, G.B.E. There were also present: Miss Jephson, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Mr W. H. Salter and the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas; also Mr Kenneth Richmond, Editor of the *Journal*, Mr C. V. C. Herbert, Research Officer, and Miss E. M. Horsell, Assistant-Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

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#### PRIVATE MEETING

THE 166th Private Meeting of the Society was held in the Society's Library on Wednesday, 28 June 1939, at 5.30 p.m., THE HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTTELTON, G.B.E., in the Chair.

A paper entitled "A Recent Experiment with Two Automatists" was read by Mr W. H. Salter. A discussion followed in which Mr Barber, Mr Gregory, Mrs Goldney, Mr Herbert, Mr Hettinger, Mr Kenneth Richmond, the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas and Mrs Stuart Wilson took part.

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CASE : A COMMUNICATOR INTRODUCED  
IN AUTOMATIC SCRIPT

The following Case has been communicated to the Society, after detailed investigation, by Mr G. N. M. Tyrrell. It is the wish of those who have furnished the material that all names occurring in the record should be suppressed ; pseudonyms have therefore been substituted here. The actual names are known to the Society, excepting the name of the automatist, who is vouched for by Sir Lawrence Jones on a personal acquaintanceship of long standing. Only a typed copy of her original script could be furnished, but reason is shown for the acceptance of this document as authentic.

On verification of the script, a name given by the automatist was found to differ from the name as verified in spelling, but not in pronunciation. This difference has been represented here (by a slightly greater difference) in the choice of a pseudonym with alternative spellings.

The report sent to Mr Tyrrell by Mrs Simpson (as she will here be called) reads as follows, with certain advisable omissions which do not affect the evidence.

“ As far back as 1911 I discovered rather to my dismay that one of my daughters had the gift of automatic writing. As it developed a girl friend became interested, and from time to time curious and generally evidential messages were written down by these young hands. Many of these are too personal to be published. The communications generally purported to come from friends or relations who gave their names or initials ; some of them had long ‘ passed over ’, but during the War, as we sat quietly waiting with pencil in hand, many names of those who fell ‘ came through ’, some known to us, and many unknown but afterwards verified. In some cases we were able to pass on messages to parents and others, with great comfort to them.

“ I pass now to the recording of what has been so far one of the most interesting and arresting ‘ conversations ’ that I have known. As usual I sat by quietly with my knitting, my friend with pencil and paper, on a quiet evening in December, 1916. As usual the first initials were those of my friend’s brother D., killed early in the War.” [The record states that an attempt had first been made at spelling with a wineglass and letters, but “ the letters were pushed off ”. What follows is the copy of the script obtained by automatic writing.]

*D. communicating.* That old game! I used to like it but not from here thank you! I want to introduce a man I have met here. He is not very happy because after doing some fine things in his life he did a mean thing at the very end, he makes himself miserable now among many who after a very ordinary life came up to scratch at the last. He is very interested in this, he is here waiting

*Another writing.* Fear led me to do a very evil thing I cannot forgive myself it is not what the world thought I have missed my chance

(What is your name?) Whiteman I was here many years ago

(At Balliol?) No at X . . . College<sup>1</sup>

(When did you die?) I died about — so long ago I think about 50 years

(Did we pass your grave this afternoon in Holywell?) I have no grave

(Did you die in battle then?) No had I died fighting I should be happier now

(Have you been unhappy for fifty years?) No but since I have seen so many splendid deaths I remember

(What is your name?) Whiteman John Whiteman

(What did you do?) It did not succeed but I would have saved myself at the expense of another Intentions are everything we neither of us escaped (Escaped what?) Death

(How did you meet D?) In the field of battle I saw him die, and since I have seen him help men to die (We tried to comfort him) Yes that is what he tells me, to come and help, not to be stopped by things that were passed 50 years ago, but I stand by full of regret I taught others myself I could not teach

(Again we tried to cheer him) That is what he says

(What was your work here?) I taught the Word

(A clergyman?) Yes

(Where was your work?) The name has gone it was very far away

(Were you married?) Alas!

(Can we do anything for you?) I have only just begun to realise what I did help me by prayer it is everything

(Tell us where you died) (written very faintly) L o n d o n

“ We were completely puzzled by this ” [Mrs Simpson continues] “ as he had written that he had ‘ no grave ’. The word ‘ London ’ conveyed no idea to either of us. My husband, who always took a great interest in these happenings, consulted the Bursar of X . . . , but could not find the name of J. Whiteman in the Register of

<sup>1</sup> The name of the college, given in the script, is omitted here.

Honours men at that College. Afterwards, however, the name was found in the Register of Passmen, with the following particulars<sup>1</sup> :

“ John, . . . son of . . . Wightman ; born . . . 1829. Matriculated at X . . . College . . . 1847, aged 17 . . . In Orders. Went out to Australia. Was lost in the ‘ London ’ in the Bay of Biscay, January 11, 1866.

“ Contemporary records of the wreck, looked up later, only give the name of J. Wightman. Of the two recipients of this record ” [*i.e.* of the script] “ the actual writer had never heard of the wreck, and the word ‘ London ’ conveyed nothing to myself (the only witness of the writing). When the details were obtained from X . . . College I then, *for the first time*, recalled the bare fact of the wreck of the ‘ London ’, which happened when I was 11 years old! I cannot therefore be said to ‘ remember ’ it.

“ It is not easy for an individual witness to attest his or her own veracity, especially when so many fraudulent stories are given to the public. But I think any fair-minded critic will note that the really convincing circumstance is that until the visit to X . . . College and the subsequent confirmation of the story given by J. W. himself to the automatist—*until then*, the word ‘ London ’ conveyed no idea at all to the two recipients of the message.

“ The Rector of X . . . College, at my request, very kindly looked up the Register again, and himself certifies the entry as given here.

“ The remarkable gift of automatic writing possessed by this writer and her friends seems now to be in abeyance—the power went as mysteriously as it came—having perhaps served its purpose during a time of sorrow and perplexity. It is noteworthy that in every case the ‘ communications ’ write, as does J. W., ‘ help me by prayer, *prayer* is everything.’ ”

Sir Lawrence Jones writes as follows :

July 2, 1939.

39 Harrington Gardens, S.W. 7.

I have known the writer of the script referred to in this case for some thirty years. She is thoroughly reliable and credible and I have no doubt that the copy of the script here quoted is exact.

LAWRENCE J. JONES.

To the question “ were you married? ” the script replies only with the word “ Alas! ” The fact appears in a published work of reference that the Rev. ‘ John Wightman ’, identifiable as the person mentioned in the records of X . . . College, died unmarried in 1866.

Accepting the complete bona fides of the automatist, we have to

<sup>1</sup> These particulars are quoted here with identifying details omitted, and with the substitution of a pseudonym as stated above.

consider how improbable it may be that she could have read or heard tell of the death of John Wightman and the facts about him conveyed in the script, and subsequently forgotten that she had had this information. The chief reason for considering this to be improbable is the fact that John Wightman went down with the *London* some quarter of a century before the automatist was born.

Mr Tyrrell adds the following details and commentary derived from old files of *The Times*. The story gives some idea of the likelihood of the action for which the communicator blames himself, in the script.

### *Wreck of the S.S. London*

From accounts in *The Times* of the 17th, 18th, and 19th January, 1866.

The S.S. *London* was a first class passenger ship of the day, outward bound for Melbourne with 270 passengers.

She left the Thames on 1 January 1866 and ran into bad weather at once. Called at Plymouth (where one passenger landed on account of the gale). Encountered worse weather in the Bay of Biscay; lost part of masts and gear; tried to steam into the gale until the engine-room hatch was stove in and engine-room flooded. All boats except the port pinnace and two small ones were smashed. The captain decided to run back to Plymouth and got round safely using sail only. But the ship took in water aft and became waterlogged. No one thought boats could live in the sea and as the decks were continually awash, there was no possibility of making rafts. The captain assembled the passengers in the saloon and told them there was no hope for them. This was a good many hours before the ship sank, so that the occasion was exactly that in which some sort of desperate action might be done such as "John Whiteman" regrets. Just before the ship sank, the port pinnae got away with 19, who, after being nearly swamped, were rescued by an Italian steamer and taken into Falmouth. These survivors gave long and detailed stories of the disaster.

Just before the *London* sank, a rush was seen to be made for the two remaining boats, but it was ineffectual.

The Rev. Dr Woolley, Bishop of Sydney and the "Rev. Mr Draper" are mentioned as being among the first-class passengers; the latter especially is spoken of as giving religious consolation to the passengers.

In the issue of January 18th, "John Whiteman" (spelt as in the script) is given in the second-class passenger list. He is not called "Rev.", but the list is given without titles (Mr or Mrs).

In the issue of January 19th, "Mr J. Whiteman" is given in the second-class passenger list, again without the "Rev." But compare the "Rev. Mr Draper" in the issue of the 18th. The impression given is that there was some carelessness over the names of the second-class passengers.

29 June 1939.

G. N. M. TYRRELL.

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### THE CASE OF THE STOLEN JEWELS: A FURTHER NOTE

In this Case, printed in the last issue of the *Journal* ("The Detection of a Theft through Information given by a Medium"), it was pointed out that the evidence for paranormal knowledge on the medium's part depends a good deal on the improbability—implied rather than definitely stated in the report—that suspicions of the actual thief could have reached the medium by normal means. We remarked that "This case is open to normal explanation, of somewhat indefinite probability, if there is any chance at all of the medium having heard the hospital masseur mentioned as a likely suspect." (*Journal*, June 1939, p. 83).

Dr Tanagras has kindly put the following information at our disposal, which defines the state of the evidence on this point as clearly as is humanly possible. We translate his words and those of the accompanying attestations.

"When Mme Helene Zakynthinou told me of her success I at once put questions to her similar to yours. That is to say: (1) Whether she was acquainted with the household of Prof. Logothetopoulos, (2) whether she had heard them speak of the theft, (3) whether she knew anyone belonging to the hospital at which the theft was committed, and (4) if by chance she had visited the hospital for any kind of treatment.

"She replied categorically: (1) She knew no one of the professor's household, with which she had no acquaintance, (2) she knew no one belonging to the hospital and had never set foot there, (3) before the experiment she had no suspicion even of the existence of the masseur Papadopoulos, and (4) she had heard nothing said up to the moment of the experiment.

"Knowing the loyalty and honesty of this medium, whom I have trained myself and who has belonged to the Greek S.P.R. since 1933, I have no cause to doubt her affirmations, which her husband also declares to be entirely true. You will find enclosed an attestation signed by them both.

20 June 1939.

"A. TANAGRAS."

"I the undersigned declare that I do not know anyone of the household of Prof. Logothetopoulos, whose wife I saw for the first time when she came to inquire about her stolen jewels.

"Also, I declare that I know no one at the Hospital, and have never been there.

"The first I heard of the theft was on the occasion of the visit of the Professor's wife.

"HELENE ZAKYNTHINOÛ."

"I declare that my wife's depositions are exactly true, for we never had any conversation about the theft before the visit of Mme Logothetopoulou. I can also give the assurance that she knows no one of the Professor's household or of the Hospital personnel.

"A. ZAKYNTHINOS."

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## REVIEWS

*Evidence of Identity.* BY KENNETH RICHMOND. Bell, "Psychical Experiences" series. 3s. 6d. net.

Mr Richmond begins by discussing what we mean by "identity" as applied to human beings, and the way in which we identify individuals in ordinary everyday life. He points out that "we take a person's identity for granted from a first general impression, without bothering about details, if we have known the person beforehand; or we simply accept someone's statement, 'That is John Smith'; and we go on taking his identity for granted unless something makes us realise we are mistaken". We accordingly start with something of a handicap in judging the identity of "communicators" from the kind of evidence likely to be available. This he divides into two main classes, primary, as identifying "the communicator as a consistent and characteristic personality", and secondary, as identifying him by the things with which he can be associated; he points out that much evidence shows a combination of the features of both classes. After discussing briefly various special forms of evidence, such as posthumous sealed letters, and proxy sittings, he adds, "It is best to recognise that we have no absolute test of human identity whatever", but that elaborate cross-correspondences are "the nearest thing to proof that I know".

In the following five chapters examples are given of different forms of evidence. These include quotations from proxy sittings, the 'Oscar Wilde' scripts, some of the results obtained by a group of amateur investigators in New York and published by the A.S.P.R. under the name of *Le Livre des Revenants*, a case reported by Mr Soal

from his sittings with Mrs Blanche Cooper, and the "Lethe" case, in which communications were received from Mrs Piper showing classical knowledge far beyond her normal powers, but highly characteristic of F. W. H. Myers, from whom the communications claimed to come. The selection is therefore well diversified. Each example puts the problem of identity in a different light.

In a brief concluding chapter Mr Richmond emphasises "that psychical research has to do with personal experience carried into an impersonal region", and that "Science separates out and leaves aside the personal and private elements in an experience without denying anything of their reality for the individuals concerned, simply because its business is with public reality. The question is how much of an experience can be set out so as to make it common property". The criticism is sometimes levelled against the positive evidence provided by psychical research that, while it looks impressive at a first glance, its cogency diminishes on close scrutiny; and there are indeed many cases, badly observed and badly recorded, which fully deserve criticism of this kind. But the critic often forgets that there is also a great mass of evidence, which, sometimes because of the incalculable, but valid, personal and private elements involved, and sometimes because of its complexity, is in reality much more impressive than it can be made to appear to the ordinary reader.

W. H. S.

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*Behold, this Dreamer!* By WALTER DE LA MARE. Faber. 21s. net.

There are many ways of looking at the dream-life of man; in psychical research we are chiefly concerned with the dream as one of the ways by which subliminal thought and imagery may reveal a content beyond normal perception. We are also concerned to some extent with the psychological study of dreaming. Mr de la Mare is concerned, in this fine anthology, with the dream in literature; and, in his long and profoundly interesting introduction, with the whole mystery of the dream and of the subliminal world from which it emerges. This is something more than a poet's essay on dreaming: it is the work of a subtle thinker, equipped as the philosopher and the psychologist seldom are with a craftsman's skill in the expression of exact shades of meaning; and it offers to the pedestrian student of dream-life a much wider outlook on the rich mental context of dream and fantasy than is usually within his range of vision.

But there is the poet's outlook, too, conveyed in this sensitive and lucid prose: the appreciation of a living event which allows its living significance to resonate in the mind, and the rare ability to

display a living process without man-handling it, or pulling it to bits. Mr de la Mare remarks in one place that "many lively and lovely 'phenomena' (a frog or a humming-bird, for example) are unimproved by dissection; and even a chemical compound is not merely the sum of its parts". In psychical research, and in all the scientific procedures by which we subject mental phenomena to cold analysis, we are more or less dimly aware that we destroy some living significance with every neat stroke of the scalpel; we are getting down to the facts, but the facts are only the dead anatomy of the event. The strict anatomy of events is none the less important; after all, we have to decide first and foremost whether their structure is real or not. But it is a good thing also to get away from the dissecting-table and to regard living phenomena in terms of their life and movement; to borrow a poet's vision, if we have the luck to find it available, and to dispel the intellectual illusion that a poet's view is all moonshine. The poet, with his perfected verbal craftsmanship, is the exact scientist of facts beyond intellectual statement; and such a book as this can help to restore the balance of scientific perception.

Mr de la Mare quotes a pretty example of psychological jargon about dreams, and describes himself as "palely wandering in the mists of this precise statement"; and he takes us out of the fog of abstract verbiage into regions of idea and expression where he is capable of precise statement and the psychological technician is not. Admittedly, I am applying the word "precise" here in its linguistic rather than its scientific sense; but it is a benefit for scientific thinking to have the immense subliminal field of undefinable, but potent, "atmosphere" explored by a highly accurate expert in atmosphere, who watches his use of words with that artistic rigour which is as stern as the scientific, and often much more efficient as statement. Others have paid tribute to the grace and distinction of Mr de la Mare's writing; we can welcome the certainty and penetration with which he illuminates the more shadowy outlines of the stuff that we, and dreams, are made of.

K. R.

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*Ikons and Oxen.* By PHILIP THORNTON. Collins. 12s. 6d. net.

Mr Philip Thornton, who recently gave a lecture in the Society's rooms on "Vampirism and Fire Walking in the Balkans", illustrated by his film, has presented his new book, called by the strange title *Ikons and Oxen*, to the Library.

Everyone who is interested in the survival of primitive beliefs and ritual will appreciate this book, which contains first-hand descriptions of curious and valuable folk lore, folk dancing, and strange

customs such as walking through fire. The author saw at Vulgari women carrying sacred ikons through a bonfire built up in the village square, the heat being so intense that it singed the clothes of anyone walking too near the edge. Yet Mr Thornton saw two women first stand on the grey heated ash and then

“three times round the fire they danced without so much as a blister on their naked feet, not a thread singed in their trailing black dresses . . .”

He was allowed to examine the women less than a minute after their emergence from the fire. The account of this extraordinary ritual is most vivid, and the ceremony seems to have been carefully observed and the facts tested. There are many other interesting episodes in the book, such as the funeral of a vampire victim and the curious trances of the women of Duboka, all interspersed with lively descriptions of encounters with curious people, and battles with over-curious insects.

There are hopes that Mr Thornton, when he returns, may follow up the lecture he gave to the S.P.R., and that his films may be shown with better success than on that occasion. Meanwhile, the book is not only really entertaining, but Mr Thornton's theories about the origin of these survivals from a primitive age, and their possible connection with modern times, are of considerable interest to students of psychical research.

E. L.

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*Experiments in Psychics.* By F. W. WARRICK. Rider & Co. 30s. net.

Mr Warrick deserves every commendation for the meticulous care with which he has recorded his experiments in the most comprehensive book that has been published on the question of spirit photography. Apart from maintaining the supernormal nature of these phenomena, the author does not suggest any reasons for their occurrence. He rightly remarks that trickery is ten thousand times more likely than a supernormal explanation. His honesty in recording gives many indications of such trickery; yet he concludes that it is “unthinkable”.

In experiments with Mrs Deane, most of the freak markings obtained on photographic plates were such as could be produced by the surreptitious introduction of chemicals. On at least one occasion Mr Warrick discovered crystals on a cloth on Mrs Deane's lap and on the surface of a sensitive plate, which on analysis were found to be ordinary amidol. Photographs were obtained showing what purported to be ectoplasm emanating from the mouth and

nostrils of the medium. The author remarks that this "ectoplasm" has every appearance of cotton wool; and after a later séance he actually found a lump of cotton wool in the medium's hair. Evidence was sought for supernormal radiation from the hands and feet of the medium on to various types of papers but, here again, most of the effects obtained were such as could be secured by the use of photographic chemicals. An examination of the floor of the dark room after one such experiment resulted in the discovery of a large pool of stale amidol solution on each side of the position occupied by Mrs Deane's chair. In the experiments conducted with Mr Hope, through the help of a third party, Mr Warrick obtained on his "untouched" plates many traces of dirty finger markings and film abrasions, suggesting the use of a small instrument for the production of extras. It is amazing that the author appears to be in no way upset by all this evidence of human intervention. The chemicals and cotton wool, it is suggested, are "apports".

The details given certainly suggest that in the vast majority of these experiments deception would be childishly easy. Mrs Deane, who was an acute old lady, was never searched or examined, and Mr Warrick was in most instances the only observer. Complicated experiments took place in a room feebly illuminated by ruby lights. It would be quite impossible for any single-handed experimenter to attend to all the details and at the same time to keep the medium under constant observation. It is claimed as a remarkable thing that on no single one of 300 photographic plates, carefully packed and sealed beforehand, did any faces appear as "extras"; it would have been more worthy of remark if they *had* appeared under the given conditions. A careful perusal of *Experiments in Psychics* has given added strength to my conviction that all these effects were produced by very ordinary means, nor can I discover a single clear-cut case suggesting a supernormal explanation.

FRED BARLOW.

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*Death Is Not The End.* By B. ABDY COLLINS. Bell. 3s. 6d. net.

This book, by a recently joined Member of the Society, puts the case for Spiritualism with considerable ability. Evidence is marshalled rather than examined, and serves to support such positive statements as that of a sub-heading: "Spirits speak, write, and are photographed." It would hardly be relevant to criticise the standards of evidence in a book which is not a critical survey so much as a presentation of grounds for belief, acceptable to a given body of opinion.

# JOURNAL

OF THE

## Society for Psychical Research

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### THE WORK OF THE SOCIETY IN WAR TIME

It is proposed to carry on as much research as circumstances will permit, and to issue the *Proceedings* and *Journal* much as usual.

Owing to the difficulties of travel, the regular programme of monthly meetings of the Society is suspended for the present. It is hoped later to arrange occasional meetings.

Members wishing to consult any of the Officers, should do so by letter addressed to 31 Tavistock Square, and, if an interview is desired, should ask for an appointment.

The Library will remain open. Members wishing to obtain books can do so in person from Monday to Friday between 10 a.m. and 3.30 p.m., and at other times by post.

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### NEW MEMBERS

**Bishop, Miss G. M.**, M.A., Domek, Badlake Hill, Dawlish.

**Kiernander, Mrs**, Templars, Bishops Grove, London, N. 2.

**Librarian, The New York Academy of Medicine**, 2 East 103rd Street,  
New York City, U.S.A.

## MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

THE 376th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Thursday, 5 October 1939, at 2.30 p.m., the HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTTELTON, G.B.E., in the Chair. There were also present: Mr Whately Carington, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter and Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt, R.N.; also Mr Kenneth Richmond, Editor of the *Journal*, Mr C. V. C. Herbert, Research Officer, and Miss E. M. Horsell, Assistant-Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Three new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

Miss Newton was co-opted a Member of Council.

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A CORRECTION

## A PROXY EXPERIMENT OF SIGNIFICANT SUCCESS

The Rev. C. Drayton Thomas writes:—

May I ask members to delete the last paragraph on p. 270 of my article in the S.P.R. *Proceedings* for July 1939, which states that Mr Macaulay was introduced *without any inquiry or remark by me*. When writing that article I overlooked the fact that, during my sister's personal control four weeks earlier, I had asked her to inform Mr Macaulay that "his daughter wished to know if he had anything to say about her recent visit to Ireland and also that Professor Lewis would appreciate a message from his first wife". Although I know of no evidence to suggest that Fedá is aware of matters spoken about while my father or sister control the medium, it is obvious that she *might* ascertain such information, whether by conversation with them or from the medium's mind. Hence nothing can be based on the manner in which Mr Macaulay was introduced on 22 January 1937, after seventeen weeks' silence.

## A NEW TYPE OF PROXY CASE

EVIDENTIAL MESSAGES GIVEN BEFORE IT IS KNOWN WHO  
WILL APPLY FOR THEM

BY C. DRAYTON THOMAS

I. *Aitken.*

At a Leonard sitting on 28 October 1938, my regular communicators inquired if I had recently received a letter from a middle aged man about his son. As I had not received any such letter they proceeded to give some particulars and I promised to keep the matter in mind and await results.

In less than two weeks a letter arrived which seemed to meet the case. In correspondence with its writer the following facts emerged ; they are here placed for comparison under items given at the sitting.

1. *I am to expect a letter from a father about his son.* Such a letter reached me and it was dated *eleven days after* this sitting. The writer, Mr Lionel G. Aitken, is a member of the S.P.R. He tells me that he first thought of writing after hearing me speak at a Queen's Hall meeting on 9 October, which was three weeks before this sitting. One sentence of that letter reads, "Not very long ago I lost a son, a splendid young man, full of the joy of life and success." After reference to certain London mediums it continues, "I think on the whole that we have been most fortunate in the evidential nature of the messages received." Finally my advice was asked about other mediums, but no word to suggest that I might possibly obtain a message for him through Mrs Leonard.

On my inquiring when Mr Aitken had first thought of writing he replied, "I don't think I had thought of mentioning my case to you and asking for advice until I actually wrote the letter. I merely intended to thank you for your address. It appears that you had news of something I was going to write days before I wrote it or had consciously thought of it."

2. *The father is middle aged.* This is correct.

3. *An accident case.* This also is correct.

4. *Connected with a motor car.* Mr Aitken writes, "Not a motor car accident exactly."

5. *The young man was killed outright or very nearly so.* He was killed outright.

6. *Morton or a like-sounding name ; this father once lived near where you lived.* In correspondence about this statement I learnt that Mr Aitken had resided at the village of Norton and that his son was born there and had been familiar with all the neighbourhood.

Norton is but one and a half miles from Baldock where I had lived with my parents in 1876-8. Is it too much to suppose that Feda's "Morton" was misheard by her for Norton?

7. *Another name like Char— is given.* This was unsatisfactory, just possibly an attempt for Charles, the Christian name of Mr Aitken's friend killed at Gallipoli.

The above derives special significance from the facts :

- (a) I had not heard of this family.
- (b) There had been no intercourse between them and Mrs Leonard.
- (c) The son had previously proved himself an able communicator.
- (d) At four later Leonard sittings he gave additional evidences of his identity, one of these being a group of connected facts unknown to his father but common knowledge to the deceased and his surviving brother.

Whence came the information that Mr Aitken and I had lived in the same locality? On my writing to ask for a list of his places of residence he named several and added that Hertfordshire seemed the most likely to be the one intended. On our discovering that Baldock and Norton (both in Hertfordshire) met the case, I pointed out that my former residence at Baldock was mentioned in two of my books and inquired what had led him to suppose that Hertfordshire was meant. He wrote in reply, "I had read your book *Life Beyond Death with Evidence*, and therefore was unconsciously aware before the first message came through that we both had lived at or near Baldock. But my conscious reason for saying in my second letter that I suspected the place would be in Hertfordshire was that my son's first and depest memories were of that locality and as I was sure that he was behind the messages I naturally thought of places connected with him".

It will be admitted that in this case the link between me and the (expected) applicant was exceedingly tenuous, if indeed it can be said to have even existed.

The crucial dates are: 9 October, Mr Aitken hears me speak at a public service. 28 October, the message given at my sitting. 8 November, Mr Aitken writes his letter.

Those who incline to the universal telepathy hypothesis will suggest that the messages originated with Mr Aitken. But this would imply that the medium tapped Mr Aitken's memory before either she or I were aware of his existence and, more incredible still, that she divined a purpose of which he remained entirely unaware until he was in the act of writing to thank me for remarks he heard me make in public.

II. *Netherton.*

At a Leonard sitting on 17 March 1939, I received a group of messages with this introduction :

FEDA : Will you keep a look out for a letter asking you about a lady, no one we have had, a new one. I think that someone has written or is writing to ask if you can help about her. The one she's expecting to write to you is a man, and she at once gives me rather a connection, as if they had some rather close connection with churches in general in some way.

C. D. T. : Does the lady say that she knows me?

FEDA : Yes, she does.

Evidential references now followed and the communication ended thus :

C. D. T. : Won't it be a pity, Fedra, if after taking all this trouble I don't get any inquiry!

FEDA : I think you will and soon. I have got quite a lot and I don't think I can get any more ; it's enough for you to be able to place her. Your sister says, "Of course it is nice to have as much as you can before you know who it is." The lady seems satisfied and says, "I'll see what I can do."

Ten days later I received a letter, dated 25 March, from Mr C. G. Netherton of Bournemouth. It stated that he had just read one of my books and asked if I were son of the Rev. Drayton Thomas whose Church at Ramsgate he used to attend. He also mentioned that his wife died two years back.

In my reply, enclosing a full record of this sitting, I asked at what date he had decided to write to me. He replied that it was a day or so before he actually wrote the letter, but that the idea of doing so had been in his mind since seeing a letter of mine in the *Methodist Recorder* of 2 March on the reality and religious value of communication with the departed.

When later I met Mr Netherton and asked if he had expected to receive a message from his wife as a result of writing to me, his reply was that he had no such expectation ; on second thoughts he admitted that perhaps some such idea was at back of his mind. I ascertained that Mr Netherton had not known or corresponded with Mrs Leonard.

On checking the evidential items of this first sitting we found that 23 out of 31 were correct, a 70 per cent. success. Further evidence given at subsequent sittings added to the certainty of the communicator's identity. Mr Netherton informs me that his wife was a firm

believer in the possibility of communication with departed friends. Was she, during the interval between my sitting and his letter, impressing him to write? It is clear that, had he not written, all the messages given on 17 March would have been waste of time.

The crucial dates are: My letter to the Press on 2 March. The sitting of 17 March. Mr Netherton's first letter to me on 25 March.

Was there any link between the Nethertons and me? If it existed the hint lay in two remarks at the beginning of the sitting, (a) "Some rather close connection with Churches." (b) "The lady knew me." Now I find that Mr Netherton is a Methodist Lay Preacher and that during the period 1901-3 he and his wife attended my father's Church at Ramsgate. On my visits home in those years the Nethertons would have seen me and known that I was the minister's son. I have no recollection of them.

Can it be supposed that this constituted a mental link between Mr Netherton and me? He only guessed my relationship with the minister of the Ramsgate Church in 1901-3 and wrote for information on that point. True he had read something from my pen, but if that constitutes an available link for transmitting the reader's memories to Mrs Leonard or to me, then I ought to be having thousands of cases like the above.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

### THE POSITION OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

#### *To the Editor of THE JOURNAL*

SIR,—The publication of the series of small books under the heading *Psychical Experiences* and some of the reviews of these books in the public press afford a good opportunity of observing how psychical research, as a whole, is regarded by critics who approach it from opposite angles, from the angle of organised science, and from that of organised spiritualism.

In the issue of *Nature* for the 11 February 1939 there is a full page review of the four first volumes of the series (Mrs Richmond's "Evidence of Purpose", Mr Saltmarsh's "Foreknowledge", Mr Cuddon's "Hypnosis" and my own "Ghosts and Apparitions") and also of Mr Tyrrell's book, "Science and Psychical Phenomena". In several respects the review is a favourable one, and it may be hoped that many scientists at present uninterested in the subject may be encouraged by it to give it their attention. Mr Tyrrell's book is well described as "one of the best surveys so far published", "a persuasive and thought-provoking volume", and of the other

volumes it is said that "the student who wishes to become acquainted with the best cases the Society has to offer cannot do better than read these books, and then, if he wishes, he can go back to the original sources for additional information".

These commendatory remarks, which are welcome in a paper of *Nature's* standing among scientists, are however followed by a somewhat double-edged paragraph which begins as follows: "It can scarcely be denied that, viewed as attempts to claim scientific recognition, these volumes are of great interest. To one wholly untrained in psychical research and with no knowledge of what lies behind much of the impressive façade, the effect must be considerable. Only careful analysis and years of experience will weaken that effect, for it is but here and there that the authors under review cite cases as good, which are so clearly full of flaws that suspicion of their critical faculties is aroused." The implications of these sentences are that the phenomena discussed in these books have "an impressive façade" but no sound foundations, and that the reviewer, who does not give his name or initials, is in a position, from his own superior knowledge of psychical research, to expose the hollowness of the façade. It is to be noted that he is not content with speaking of the solidity of the structure as doubtful: he assumes that "careful analysis and years of experience *will* weaken" the impression created by a first reading of the book. His condescending remark that "it is but here and there that the authors under review cite cases as good, which are so clearly full of flaws that suspicion of their critical faculties is aroused" can carry no weight without specific mention of the cases open to this criticism; such a sentence is in fact merely bad reviewing.

The criticism about "the impressive façade" conveys a partial truth, and deserves further consideration. It would be generally agreed among our members, and not least among the authors of the books under review, that many much advertised psychic phenomena will not stand close scrutiny. Had the reviewer confined his criticism to these, no objection could have been taken. But the types of phenomena, to which this criticism can fairly be applied, are hardly mentioned in these books. There is therefore a risk lest the guileless scientist, who is conscious of his own ignorance of psychical research, may be misled by a reviewer, who professes to know all about it, into supposing that the phenomena on which Mr Tyrrell and the authors of Messrs Bell's series dwell are equally shoddy, although it is the general opinion of intelligent persons who have studied the matter that they rest for the most part on sound foundations.

It would also have been well if the reader of *Nature* had been warned that some of the phenomena treated in these books are the subject of highly specialised investigation, so that unless the unnamed reviewer belongs (as I am certain he does not) to the very small number of specialists, his claim to set the authors of these books right has about as much justification as would attach to a claim on my part to instruct Professor Julian Huxley in the rearing of Giant Pandas in captivity.

To turn now to the criticisms from the angle of spiritualism, the books of Messrs Bell's series have been reviewed by *Light* as they appeared, and in addition to the reviews several issues of that paper have contained articles and correspondence on them.

It is a misfortune for all concerned that the reviewer seems sometimes to have been so much irritated by the books as to be unable to deal with them with ordinary accuracy. I may perhaps be allowed to mention that my own book on "Ghosts and Apparitions" was attributed to Mr Saltmarsh, which was of course a great compliment to myself; later on Mr Saltmarsh very properly received from the reviewer an apology for this horrible imputation. In another instance, Mr Richmond's discussion of the "Lethc Case" in his "Evidence of Identity", the reviewer seems to have supposed that Mr Piddington, whom Mr Richmond quotes, accepted telepathy between the living as a sufficient explanation of the incident, whereas it is perfectly clear from Mr Richmond's discussion of the case that Mr Piddington, after full discussion of that explanation, definitely rejected it.

The inaccuracies of a single reviewer would not, however, be worth attention in our *Journal*, if it were not for the fact that it is obvious that the reviewer, and many of the readers of *Light* with him, are under a very curious misapprehension as to the attitude of our Society to telepathy and, in particular, as to the bearing of telepathy on the problem of survival and communication.

The nature of the misapprehension may be conveniently illustrated by a few short quotations from *Light*. The review of Mr Richmond's "Evidence of Identity" in the issue of the 15 June was headed "The Problem of Identity: Telepathy as a 'City of Refuge' for timid Psychological Researchers", and contains the following passage:

"This matter of telepathy, for instance? Has the Society any corporate conviction about it? Is it or is it not?"

One knows many members of the Society who regard telepathy with undisguised contempt, and they certainly appear

to consider themselves to be in accord with the majority of members.

To that, of course, one could offer no objection ; indeed, one is very glad to be rid of telepathy being treated as a city of refuge in psychic matters.

But, in that case, telepathy must not be used, as Mr Richmond uses it, as such a city when the Researcher is hard pressed by a Spiritualist pursuer."

In the issue of the 22 June there is a reply from Mr Richmond containing the following passage :

"Concerning telepathy, he [the reviewer] asks : 'Has the Society (the S.P.R.) any corporate conviction about it?' Without claiming to speak for the Society, let me point to p. 106 in my book, where I have remarked of Psychological Research in general : 'It can hardly be said too often that scientific method is not devised to provide or to support convictions. It is devised to examine evidence. . . . It has to leave out no explanation which is possible'."

To which the reviewer replied in the same issue :

"In spite of Mr Richmond's letter, I would still ask : 'Has the Society (the S.P.R.) any corporate conviction about telepathy'?"

Mr Richmond's material is mostly selected from its *Proceedings*, and since, in them, telepathy is frequently proposed as an explanation, surely one is entitled to enquire if the Society believes in its own answers, especially since so many of its members obviously do not?"

To members of our Society, accustomed as we are to breathing an atmosphere of free discussion and friendly difference of opinion, it may seem extraordinary that any reviewer who has reviewed several books published by members of the Society, and therefore probably read at least considerable portions of them, should be unaware that expression of corporate opinion is the very last thing which our Society desires or ought to desire. I do not know whether the astronomers, or the biologists, or the physicists have ever expressed corporate opinions on the theories of Copernicus, Darwin or Einstein, but it is clear that any Society enquiring into a subject with as short a history as organised psychical research has, would lose all title to the term *research* if it expressed a corporate opinion on any of the questions it investigates, or required from its members the acceptance of any particular opinion regarding them. Obviously, however, many spiritualists suppose that the amount of attention

that our Society has always devoted to the question of telepathy is indicative of a desire on the part of the leading members of the Society to put it up as a plausible defence against belief in spiritualism.

As a plain matter of history this is of course absurd. Among the pioneers of the Society none did more to press the case for telepathy than Sir William Barrett and F. W. H. Myers, both convinced believers in survival and communication. Again, Mrs Sidgwick's life-long study of telepathy and belief in it, did not prevent her making on the occasion of the Society's Jubilee her memorable declaration: "that, upon the evidence before her, she herself is a firm believer both in survival and in the reality of communication between the living and the dead." The same opinion has been held and expressed by many other members of the Society.

It will probably seem to most of our members, as it certainly seemed to Myers and Mrs Sidgwick, impossible to examine the problem of survival and communication to any purpose without a previous examination, as full as conditions will permit, of the question of telepathy. It should be remembered that Myers's well-known definition of telepathy, "the communication of impressions of any kind from one mind to another, independently of the recognised channels of sense", is framed in such a way as to include communication from a discarnate mind to the mind of a living person. Unfortunately, for the sake of brevity the word "telepathy" is sometimes used by writers to mean "telepathy between the living", and this misuse of the word has given rise to a false opposition between telepathy and survival.

It seems to me extremely difficult to examine the whole range of the mental phenomena of psychological research (including veridical dreams and hallucinations, death apparitions, experimental telepathy, automatic writing, trance mediumship) without reaching the conclusion that the study of any one type of phenomenon within this group is of the greatest assistance in studying all the other types, and moreover that there is some similarity, if not complete unity, of mental process involved in them all. The habit of regarding these phenomena as to this extent at least forming a natural group, though a commonplace in our Society, seems to be all too rare outside our own membership.

Opinions within the Society have always widely differed, as in the present state of our knowledge it is right that they should, as to the explanation of these phenomena. A small section declines to see in them the operation of any but normal and recognised causes, and rejects both the telepathic and survivalistic hypotheses.

Another section follows Podmore in accepting telepathy and rejecting survival; this section is probably a good deal larger than the first and can support its position by arguments which no believer in survival can afford to despise or neglect. The main argument of this section might perhaps be summarized as follows: (1) There is a great deal more evidence for telepathy than for survival. (2) The "antecedent improbability" of telepathy is nothing like as great as the "antecedent improbability" of survival. (3) Where the evidence can equally well be interpreted either on the hypothesis of telepathy from the living or of communication from a discarnate mind, preference should be given to the former.

These three propositions would, I suppose, be accepted by most of the members of the Society who accept survival, a section which has certainly not been without influence. It is in the application of these propositions that the survivalists would part company with the followers of Podmore. Until the possibility of telepathy between the living has been examined in detail, in each particular instance, as *e.g.* Mr Piddington discussed it in the "Lethe Case", arguments of a survivalistic tendency fail to carry conviction.

By "possibility" I do not mean what is possible on some fantastic exaggeration of the scope of telepathy between the living, but what may reasonably be inferred as possible from the relevant evidence, spontaneous and experimental.

Different types of evidence appeal with different degrees of cogency to different minds, and it would be unreasonable to claim that the method by which in our *Proceedings* and *Journal* the problem of survival has usually been approached is the only possible one. If, however, I may be allowed to express my own personal opinion for what it is worth, it is that if one were to eliminate all the work done by members of the Society, and by others who have worked on similar lines, in conducting prolonged investigations both of spontaneous and of experimental telepathy, and in examining all ostensible communications from the dead with a view to ascertaining how far they could reasonably be explained by telepathy between the living, the argument for communication from the dead, if not completely destroyed, would be most gravely impaired. From whatever angle therefore the problems of psychical research are regarded it would appear that more attention, rather than less, should be paid to telepathy, and that more investigation of it, both quantitative and qualitative, is required.

Yours, etc.,

W. H. SALTER.

“EXPERIMENTS IN PSYCHICS”

SIR,—Mr Fred Barlow's article on my book *Experiments in Psychics* in the *S.P.R. Journal* of July last, pp. 99-100, can hardly be called a review; Mr Barlow's article is that of an opposing counsel. His adverse attitude towards Mr Hope and Mrs Deane is clearly shown in the *S.P.R. Proceedings* of March 1933.

A book by a member of the S.P.R. of many years' standing, of 400 pages double crown 8vo with 650 illustrations, reporting many years of systematic investigation, surely deserves a review of such a character that his fellow-members might learn the main contents of it and be influenced thereby to examine it and when the opportunity arises repeat his experiments.

The most important result of my investigation (chap. vii of the book), namely, the discovery that the medium for psychic photography, Mrs Deane, was also a medium for Direct Writing, is not mentioned at all by Mr Barlow.

In my humble opinion the methods of experimentation and the really amazing results obtained, recorded in that chapter, are of the utmost importance to students of psychic science, and it is discouraging that the attention of his fellow-members should not be called to them. The author cannot be accused of expecting any monetary reward for such work.

I fear that many readers of Mr Barlow's article may not appreciate my impartiality and may regard me as one with a “desire to believe” and hence may consider my book not worth reading. Among remarks which have that tendency is the statement that I wrote I considered trickery “unthinkable”; should Mr Barlow have omitted the words I wrote connected with the word unthinkable, viz.: “trickery over a period of twenty-seven years without detection in the very act”? Even Mr Harry Price said as much. In my book I devoted a page or two to the subject of trickery by mediums for physical effects.

Again Mr Barlow writes: “It is amazing that the author appears to be in no way ‘upset’ by all this evidence of human intervention.” I may indeed have been upset but my reading had taught me that most, if not all, mediums for physical phenomena use mundane means if not prevented from so doing.

He criticized my “claiming” it as a “remarkable” thing that on none of 300 plates did any face appear as Extra. In the sense in which I used the word, it is “a remarkable thing”, that is to say, “worthy of remark”, a word used to call the reader's attention to such unusual absence of faces with Mrs Deane.

As regards my mentioning the possibility of apportage being a factor in inexplicable happenings : even the great Schrenck-Notzing deigned to suggest that. What other theory can one put forward for marks appearing on an inside page of a packet of clean sheets of paper and this more than once?

Of course I do not agree with the sweeping conclusion Mr Barlow draws from my many experiments nor that in the vast majority of them deception would be "childishly" easy. He says "complicated" experiments took place. Not many of my experiments were "complicated". Were there no others? Is it a complicated experiment to have the medium hold a block or pile of plain paper between her hands and suggest that a word or letter "thought of by me" should appear on an inside page?

I am afraid that Mr Barlow tended to overlook the "pros" while concentrating on the "cons".

Yours faithfully, F. W. WARRICK.

Mr Barlow writes : I should be sorry if my brief remarks led anyone to consider Mr Warrick's book not worth reading, as the patient research work he has carried out over a long period of time is invaluable. The exigences of space, unfortunately, render it impossible to enter into detailed support of my views, nor do I flatter myself that my personal opinions will coincide with those of the majority of people who I trust will read this book and form their own conclusions.

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## REVIEWS

*Apparitions and Haunted Houses : A Survey of Evidence.* By SIR ERNEST BENNETT. Faber. 12s. 6d. net.

This volume, handsomely produced, bearing the recommendation of the Book Society and, for imprimatur, a thoughtful Foreword by the Dean of St. Paul's, should do a good deal for the spread of a better public understanding of the real nature of the evidence for apparitions and hauntings. It justifies its sub-title, "A Survey of Evidence", not by any considered commentary on the evidential force of the cases presented—the reputation of the S.P.R. is the support of many narratives, extracted from our publications, and others rest upon the good standing and presumable accuracy of their narrators—but by displaying the range of cases that exist and are worthy of respect. The chief discrimination between them, on

evidential grounds, is the proper preference shown for phenomena observed by more than one witness.

Sir Ernest Bennett's broadcast on the subject, in the B.B.C. series, "Enquiry into the Unknown", is reproduced, and a number of the new cases which he quotes are sifted from the experiences sent to him by listeners.

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*Cloud Chamber Investigation into Post-Mortem Ions.* (Bulletin III, The Dr. William Bernard Johnston Foundation for Biophysical Research, Reno, Nevada.) By R. A. WATERS, Sc.D., and WILLIAM B. JOHNSTON, M.D.

The authors have set themselves the task of trying to detect by experiment some entity separating itself from an organism, such as a mouse, at the time of death. They describe experiments made in a Wilson cloud chamber to look for the formation, subsequent to death, in the surrounding space, of nuclei capable of acting as centres of condensation for water drops. They do find evidence of such nuclei, but since nuclei are known to be formed in various ordinary chemical actions where life is not concerned, it would seem, as the authors indicate, that there is a good deal to be done before such phenomena can be shown to have any special psychical or even biological significance. R.

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*Laboratory Investigations into Psychic Phenomena.* By HERWARD CARRINGTON. Rider & Co. 12s. 6d. net.

This is a compilation which must have necessitated a considerable expenditure of time and money, the former testified to by the copious and careful references, lists (including one giving the names of 103 investigators into the subject), indices, appendices, etc.; the latter by 34 excellent photographs obtained by the author while working under the auspices of the American Psychical Institute, as Director.

In the introduction the desirability of studying "strange manifestations" by laboratory methods is stressed, and these, as is customary, are divided into "the physical" and "the mental"; both are supposed to depend upon a definite *meehanism*, and to occur in accordance with definite *laws* within their own sphere.

The introduction is followed by a history, which occupies more than one third of the entire volume; in this are summarised briefly investigations of (a) alleged physical mediums and (b) alleged strange manifestations not requiring the presence of a medium. The remainder of the book is a description of endeavours on the part of the author to obtain (b), for the most part without success. At the

same time it gives a sad account of well meant, but inexpert, investigations of others who have tested such devices as "The Cylinders of Malta", "The Dynamistograph", "Dr. Russ's Eye Machine", "Rutot's Triangles" and the effect of "Will Power" on galvanometer readings.

It would seem that the main object of Mr Carrington's book is to point out that adequate tests are necessary before one can place reliance on the face value of psychic claims. While long descriptions of abortive experiments make but sorry reading, the author's precepts, on numerous occasions, bring joy and laughter. Let me share with you one of his gems of pure thought (p. 184, under "Conclusions"): "Any device which can, and will, under normal working conditions, give both positive and negative results, during the same observation, is unreliable and unfit for the study of supernormal phenomena."

In his investigations the author has made considerable use of simple electrical apparatus; but he is, apparently, unfamiliar with the elementary theory of electro-magnetic induction, which he seems to have mixed up with electro-static induction. On page 209 he says "It is a well-known fact that certain materials, when in close proximity to an electrical field, will become electrified by induction. This is the principle of the ordinary transformer with which X-ray workers are so familiar". He then goes on to describe an induction coil, but he leaves out the really important point, the dependence of the current in the secondary coil on the *rate of change* of the primary current.

The author's conclusions would indeed appear to accord with common experience if put in the following words, *viz.*, "strange manifestations" do not take place in laboratory experiments, unless some very strange person is present. But why write a book about it?

C. C. L. G.

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*Psychic Science and Survival.* By HERWARD CARRINGTON. Two Worlds Publishing Co. Ltd. 2s. 6d. net.

This little volume of 90 pages is described as "An Essay in Psychical Research". It appears to be a clear and honest account of the author's views on the subject, in the expression of which he shows real knowledge of its literature, and presents it in a condensed, though somewhat journalistic style. Pages 27 to 32 are autobiographical; on page 31 he says "As a result of my investigations, however, I have become quite convinced that psychical phenomena are for the most part *real*—that is, they are genuinely supernormal

in character—and that there is a superphysical world of some sort in which we are all immersed, and of which we constitute a part”. Apart from what is auto-biographical, this book does not contain anything new.

C. C. L. G.

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*When Nero was Dictator.* By GERALDINE CUMMINS. Frederick Muller Ltd., London, 1939. 10s. 6d. net.

Our members, and more especially those who on more than one occasion have had the advantage of hearing Miss Cummins lecture to the Society, will welcome the appearance of another volume in which her scripts relating to the Apostolic Age are collected. The title of the book sufficiently indicates the period covered.

The book is in four Parts, of which the first is entitled, “ St Paul’s Travels in Spain ” and the second “ St Peter and St Paul in Rome ” and the third “ St Peter and the Great Fire of Rome ”. The last called “ St Paul at the Journey’s End ” describes his trial and execution and the death of Nero. It will be seen that there is no lack of material of great dramatic interest. To what extent the book reveals evidence of knowledge transcending Miss Cummins’s normal knowledge is one that only a scholar who had specialised in the history of the Early Church could be expected to answer. The ordinary layman cannot usefully pronounce an opinion as to how far the events described in this book (leaving out of account those which are narrated in the New Testament), are in accordance with the results of historical research, and, to the extent to which they are in accordance, how far the facts are likely to have been accessible to Miss Cummins. However difficult an answer to this question may be, from several different angles the book cannot fail to be of interest to our members and the public.

W. H. S.

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### E.S.P. PICTURE TEST

Mr Whately Carington urgently needs more percipients for his experiments on Extra-Sensory Perception, of which another will start in the middle of November. Only about five minutes’ work a night, at any convenient time, is required. About a dozen members volunteered for the last experiment, as compared with about 70 from the Dutch S.P.R.

Will those willing to help please communicate direct with Mr Carington at 5 Fitzwilliam Road, Cambridge.

JOURNAL  
OF THE  
Society for Psychical Research

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*NOTICE OF MEETING*

The Sixth  
Frederic W. H. Myers Memorial Lecture

ENTITLED

“Psychical Research and Theology”

WILL BE DELIVERED BY

THE VERY REV W. R. MATTHEWS

K.C.V.O., D.D.

(Dean of St. Paul's)

AT

MANSON HOUSE

(26 PORTLAND PLACE, W. 1)

ON

*WEDNESDAY, 17 January, 1940, at 3 p.m.*

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N.B.—Admission will be by Ticket only. Additional tickets can be had on application to the Secretary, S.P.R., 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1. There is ample air-raid shelter in the large underground vaults behind the platform of the hall at Manson House.

## NEW MEMBER

(Elected on 28th November, 1939)

**VIVANTE, Professor Leone**, Cherry Cottage, Abinger Common, Surrey.

## OBITUARY

## FATHER THURSTON'S WORK IN PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

FATHER THURSTON joined the Society for Psychical Research in 1918, and within a short time became a very active, valued and popular member. Although, as a Jesuit Father, he could not attend séances, and could only avail himself of the less direct method of approach to psychic phenomena through reports furnished by others, his careful reading of the literature of the subject, his scholarly knowledge of apparently kindred phenomena in earlier times, and his keen critical gifts combined to place him in the front rank of contemporary students of psychical research. He had, indeed, what is one of the chief requisites of a psychical researcher, a keen eye for the evidentially strong or weak points in a narrative of unusual occurrences, and brought his great historical knowledge of, *e.g.*, medieval instances of stigmatisation and levitation to bear on the analysis of modern evidence for similar phenomena. Although in the public mind psychical research is confused with spiritualism, or at any rate is supposed to cover much the same ground, it is to a large extent concerned with problems of psychology which have, for good reasons or bad, been neglected by academic psychologists. In the experiments which the Society conducted into this province of its subject, Father Thurston took an active part.

He twice read papers to the Society, once in 1921, on *The Phenomena of Stigmatisation* (published in *S.P.R. Proceedings*, vol. XXXII) and the other, in 1932, on *Some Neglected Types of Evidence in Psychical Research*, in which he maintained that some of the criticisms directed against the phenomena of D. D. Home were unfounded. He contributed several letters and articles to the Society's *Journal*, and was a frequent attendant at its meetings. Father Thurston also contributed numerous articles on Spiritualism and Psychical Research to *The Month*: a series of these were published in book-form in 1933 under the title, *The Church and Spiritualism*.

The Society for Psychical Research comprehends many shades of opinion from outright Spiritualism to complete disbelief in the supernatural in any shape or form. Not many, perhaps, of his fellow members shared Father Thurston's own standpoint, but there is none, however wide the difference in opinion, who will not deplore the loss of so courteous and learned a colleague.

## DAVID GOW

BY THE REV. C. DRAYTON THOMAS

It was in 1917 that I made the acquaintance of Mr Gow. I was wishing to add knowledge of contemporary Spiritualism to what I had learnt of Psychological Research in a seventeen years' membership of the S.P.R. David Gow soon proved himself a helpful friend. The fact that he was conversant with S.P.R. methods and literature gave me the more confidence in his judgment on matters of which I then had little personal knowledge. He was as patient with mental hesitations as he was tactful with the over credulous, yet withal humorous, whimsical and very human. Small and frail in body, he was strongly alert in mind. To philosophical insight and artistic taste he added extensive acquaintance with the history of psychical investigation and a shrewd estimate of evidence. He was eminently successful in keeping the paper *Light* on a high grade of efficiency during his long years of editorship. His wisdom was shown by what he wrote, the class of contribution he accepted, and also by what he excluded from the paper. With a fine sense of discrimination he realised just what readers needed to know and how they should be shepherded past distracting side-issues which lead nowhere. A long and intimate association with Fleet Street had qualified him for effectively supervising all work connected with the weekly issue of his paper. Taking nothing for granted and refusing to spare himself he perused each column before it went to press. Long years of close application, despite increasing physical weakness, overtaxed his strength and finally forced him to a comparatively premature retirement. To so alert a mind this was a severe trial, but he met it with philosophic resignation. Those who had the privilege of conversations in his office will recall with pleasure how readily he would illumine from his store of experience and literary knowledge a wide range of topics. Humour and the lighter touch alternated with deep thought and discerning judgment. He was as kindly and tactful with colleagues as with the stream of inquirers invading his office.

It was largely due to David Gow's foresight and efforts that the London Spiritualist Association was able to obtain the freehold premises in Queensberry Place which it now enjoys.

"No work begun on earth shall end with death"; one pictures the enthusiasm with which D.G. (as his friends affectionately called him) is now learning to share the varied activities of the Great Beyond where sterling qualities matured on earth find wider scope.

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## A NEW TYPE OF PROXY CASE

## DETAILS CONCERNING THE "AITKEN" EPISODE

IN our last issue (October 1939, p. 103), Mr Drayton Thomas described two cases in which the arrival of letters was predicted, and facts were given, at Leonard sittings, concerning communicators and their relatives of whom at the time Mr Thomas knew nothing. Subsequently, Mr Thomas received letters from two relatives of deceased persons, and facts emerged which appeared to show considerable relevance to details given at the sittings.

It is clear that this evidence is important, whether it is interpreted as evidence of communication or of the possibilities of unconscious telepathy between the living. Critical readers will have wished to know, among other things, what is the nature and strength of the evidence of identity which came to light when the communications were investigated by Mr Thomas. With regard to the first of the two communicators, Mr Thomas wrote (*Journal*, Oct. 1939, p. 104) :

"At four later Leonard sittings he gave additional evidences of his identity, one of these being a group of connected facts unknown to his father but common knowledge to the deceased and his surviving brother."

This, it will be seen, is of the nature of a proxy case within a proxy case, if facts unknown to the father (he having proved to be Mr Thomas's predicted correspondent) were produced at Leonard sittings after the predicted letter from the father had reached Mr Thomas.

The father in question—Mr L. G. Aitken, who is a Member of the S.P.R.—wrote spontaneously to the *Journal*, to corroborate Mr Thomas's account, as follows :

"As one of the principals in the Leonard-Aitken proxy case reported by Mr Drayton Thomas in the *Journal* for October, may I corroborate and amplify it somewhat. On October 9th, 1938, I heard Mr Drayton Thomas give an address at the Queen's Hall, which so pleased me that I formed the intention of writing to congratulate him ; but being a born procrastinator it was not till the 8th of Nov. that I actually wrote—mentioning at the end of the letter my own case and asking for advice. To my surprise in Mr Drayton Thomas's reply was enclosed a copy of part of the script of a sitting he had had with Mrs Leonard on Oct. 28th, 1938, in which he was told to expect a letter from a man—a middle-aged man—who had lost a son—in an accident, probably a motor-car—that the son had been killed outright—the name Morton or a like sounding one was

given and the statement that this man had lived near where Mr Drayton Thomas lived. The facts were—I am a middle-aged man—I had lost a son in an Air Force accident in Dec. 1937—he was killed outright—and I had lived in the village of Norton in Hertfordshire from about 1910-22, very near which Mr Drayton Thomas had lived from 1876-8.

“ I had never met or written to Mr Drayton Thomas at the time of this sitting, nor had I ever had any contact of any kind with Mrs Leonard. They were both quite unaware of my existence, but I was aware of theirs.

“ On the hypothesis of telepathy from the living, I must be supposed to have sent a thought message to Mr Drayton Thomas—probably after hearing him speak on the 9th—when my intention was strongest; a message containing some facts about myself. This message, presumably, ‘ stuck ’ to Mr Drayton Thomas, and on the 28th Oct was picked out and decoded by Mrs Leonard in trance. Now Mr Thomas by his public addresses and books must stimulate many hundreds of people to send thought messages to him, and, presumably, these also stick but remain unknown to Mr Drayton Thomas. Who selected this particular message for decoding and why?

“ Later on, Mr Drayton Thomas sent me further extracts from records of Leonard sittings containing amongst much evidential matter, a group of facts which I could make little of; but which my son, on seeing, recognised at once as a message concerning a common friend of his and my dead son’s who had been killed some months later, and of whose existence I had never heard.

“ Here there seemed to be a further intention to give a message for someone of whose existence Mr Drayton Thomas and Mrs Leonard were unaware.

“ In this latter case—my son tells me he had deliberately asked his dead brother to try and get a message concerning this friend through some medium to me; that he felt sure at the time that his brother had got the message, and that he was not very surprised to see it come through almost exactly as he had expected, including a very near shot at the name, in the Leonard script.

“ I think there is here evidence of a successful experiment to force a further stretching of the universal telepathic hypothesis to the extent that its already astonishing elasticity becomes an ‘ antecedent improbability ’.

L. G. AITKEN.”

Being invited to send evidential details of the episode here

described, Mr Aitken furnished the following facts and corroboration :

“ In Mr Drayton Thomas’s sitting of Jan. 20th, 1939, Feda says : ‘ There was somebody else he was very interested in, that perhaps you don’t know . . . a name that starts with the letter B, and I think there is an R in it . . . it’s not a long name—very much linked with him . . . it might be a Mr. BRICK. . . . I feel this is something you could use for building, and is a name much connected with this boy and his interests.’ ”

“ In Mr Drayton Thomas’s sitting of Feb. 3rd, 1939, Feda says : ‘ A name starting with BR—rather an important name with him . . . somebody he was linked up with shortly before his passing . . . there is a link between this BR . . . and this boy’s passing. I also want to know if there is anything to do with him like a little ship . . . or a little model of a ship—something he had on earth and was very fond of. He is showing me something like a toy ship—a fancy ship, not a plain one—‘laborate, rather ‘laborate—with a good deal of detail shown in it—it seemed to be connected with his earth life—but some time before he passed over, rather early in his earth life, but I think it is something that his people have still got. . . .’ ”

“ A name beginning with BR—like the name which Feda says ‘ might be Mr BRICK ’—had been mentioned by other mediums, but we had been unable to place it, nor was the reference to a ‘ model ship ’ understood ; but my son, on seeing the Leonard script, recognised its meaning.

“ He and his deceased brother had been friends at an R.A.F. Station with a young officer called BRIDGEN—whom we had not heard of—and who had been killed about a year after my son.

“ This young man, before joining the R.A.F., had worked for a firm which made *scale models of ships* for shipping companies, and he had shown my son a photograph of one of these models which he had made himself and which he said his people still had at home. My son had felt sure that this matter of the model ship would be given as a sign if they were unable to get the name through correctly.”

These data were accompanied by the following letter :

“ *The Editor,*  
*Journal of the Society for*  
*Psychical Research.*

“ Dear Sir,

I have read my father’s account of the ‘ Leonard-Aitken ’ proxy sittings, and I testify to its correctness.

“ I was the only living member of the family who knew of

'Bridgen', and I had never had any communication with Mr Drayton Thomas or Mrs Leonard.

"My 'thought-message' was not directed to Mr Drayton Thomas or to Mrs Leonard—but to my 'dead' brother—and to me, the reply was unmistakable.

Yours sincerely,

LIONEL AITKEN,  
Flying-Officer, R.A.F.

Nov. 14th, 1939.

### CASE : MISSING PAPERS LOCATED BY AN APPARENTLY PARANORMAL PROCESS

BY W. H. SALTER

THE following incident, though trivial, may be of interest, because the explanation seems to be either clairvoyance, or telepathy from a mind which had no conscious knowledge of the information supposedly conveyed to the mind of the percipient.

My record of the incident which occurred at our house, The Crown House, Newport, Essex, runs thus :

"24 Oct. '38.

To-day in connection with her forthcoming paper on Telepathy and Clairvoyance, H. [my wife] started looking up the contemporary notes (1931) of some experiments in telepathy she and I had with [friends with whom we had been staying]. They had on our return from [our friends] been put in a bureau in the drawing room in a pigeon hole where current business letters are kept.

H. had later, at some date she cannot recollect, removed them to what she thought was a better place. But she had completely forgotten where this was, and spent a long time turning out drawers, cupboards and files where she keeps S.P.R. papers, all in the Study, looking for them in vain.

I said, "Haven't you put them in the Bible box?" This is an old oak carved box standing on a stool in the drawing room. Its contents were mostly, as I knew, old games and odds and ends for amusing the children, and what made me suggest this place I cannot think. It, and the original pigeon hole, were the only places I suggested. At long last at about 9.30 p.m., having been looking for them, with a short break for a meal,

since about 7, she went to the Bible box, and there under a lot of other junk, they were.

She was all along quite certain she had not intentionally put them there, and in this she was right. She had on removing them from the pigeon hole, put them in a drawer of her writing-table in the Study, in which she later put some gramophone records. These she moved to the Bible box and the envelope with the experiments got slipped between the records and moved with them."

This record was initialled by my wife and myself the same evening at 10 p.m. It was sent the following day to Mr Piddington, who returned it with a note, signed by him, "Read by me on 26 Oct 1938".

A few words are necessary to make the position clearer. I had never seen the envelope since it had been placed in the pigeon hole of the bureau on our return from our friends' house in 1931. It is not our custom to keep papers there permanently, but as I thought it just possible that the envelope might have been left there by inadvertence, I asked my wife if she had looked there: she had looked, and found it was not there. We have a good number of files, drawers, etc., in which we keep the large mass of S.P.R. papers we have accumulated, but apart from the pigeon hole, the only place I suggested was the Bible box, which we do not use to keep any kind of papers in. I had not had occasion to look in the Bible box for some time; not, to the best of my recollection, since the gramophone records had been put there, but of this I am not sure. It was doubtless because she knew that it was unlikely that any papers would be in the Bible box that my wife at first declined to follow my suggestion by looking there.

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### A SUGGESTED ENQUIRY INTO PREDICTIONS CONCERNING THE PRESENT WAR

AFTER the end of a war it is not uncommon for a number of stories to be current of prophecies made before or during the war, in which the course of events as they in fact occurred is claimed to have been predicted, sometimes in considerable detail. But the student who looks for evidence that the prophecies were made in the form and at the time alleged may often find himself baffled by the absence of trustworthy records: for example, it has been stated that as early as 1908 Lord Roberts predicted that England and France would be

allies in war, that they would come near defeat, but would be led to victory by Foch; it is, however, seriously doubted whether Lord Roberts made any such prediction, at any rate, at that time (see the *Daily Telegraph* for 14th November 1939).<sup>1</sup> The student may also have reason to suspect that, if events had taken a different turn, predictions of quite a different tenor would have achieved publicity.

Whatever else the present war produces, it will certainly bring its own crop of predictions—some are already current—and it seems desirable to collect these before, rather than after, the event. By keeping a record of the misses as well as the hits, while it is still uncertain into what group any prediction may fall, it will be easier to judge whether or not the hits were lucky flukes.

But another object of perhaps greater importance may be attained. A collection of the kind suggested may throw light upon the origin and growth of rumours, a matter bearing closely on the question of evidential value in many cases of spontaneous phenomena. During the last war the Society conducted an enquiry into the rumoured appearance of Angels at Mons, which was highly instructive: see *S.P.R. Journal*, vol. XVII, p. 106.

If any of our Members hear of predictions as to the course of events in the present war, will they be so good as to send particulars to the Hon. Secretary? Information so given will be treated confidentially. The particulars should state:

- (1) Who is supposed to have made the prediction,
- (2) Whether the correspondent heard it at first, second or *n*th hand: for the purpose of *this* enquiry second-hand or more remote accounts are of equal value with first-hand ones, *if sufficiently detailed*.
- (3) What the exact terms of the prediction were, and
- (4) Whether any part of the prediction has already been fulfilled, with details enabling this point to be checked.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

*To the Editor of THE JOURNAL*

SIR,—I have been reading Mr Harry Price's chatty *Fifty Years of Psychological Research* with much admiration for his undiminished gusto. Naturally minute accuracy is not to be looked for in an

<sup>1</sup>From later correspondence in the same newspaper it seems to be established that Lord Roberts made a prediction to this general effect, though not in so definite a form.

*oeuvre de vulgarisation*, peculiarly qualified though Mr Price unquestionably is for the compilation of such a work. Still, there is one little error I should like to put right. In p. 60 of his book Mr Price, writing of Rudi Schneider, says, "Following my adverse report . . . the S.P.R. decided to test him". In fact, Mr Price's adverse report played as little part in encouraging the Council to investigate Rudi Schneider as his previously favourable reports had discouraged them from so doing. It has always been a rule of the Society to investigate mediums only where there exists a *prima facie* case for the genuineness of their phenomena. Dr Osty's report provided such a case and no other factor played any part in the Council's decision to investigate the alleged powers of Rudi Schneider.

Yours, etc., THEODORE BESTERMAN.

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#### REVIEWS

*The Psychic Stream, or The Source and Growth of the Christian Faith.*  
 BY ARTHUR FINDLAY. Psychic Press, London, 1939; pp.  
 xvii+1192. 12s. 6d. net.

The reviewer confronted with the latest of Mr Findlay's books on Spiritualism and Religion may at first feel daunted for two reasons, the bulk of the book, and the qualifications which the publishers, in a slip sent with the review copy, demand of the reviewer. On the first point he will soon be reassured, because it will at once become clear to him that Mr Findlay has succeeded in covering a very wide field in an interesting way. As to the qualifications, he is required not to be "a priest or minister of any Christian sect" (the present reviewer has no qualms about passing this test), "but instead . . . one who is philosophically minded and not antagonistic to Spiritualism". "Philosophically minded" does not, I was relieved to discover, appear to imply any intimate acquaintance with metaphysics, but a detached attitude to religious doctrine; so the only difficulty that I felt faced with came from the words "not antagonistic to Spiritualism". It would seem that to the author Spiritualism means something more than belief in the survival of bodily death and communication with those who have departed this life; that it includes belief in the "etheric body", which is somehow or other connected with the ectoplasm of the séance-room. Spiritualists who make this very dubious phenomenon the foundation of their creed seem to me to be adding quite needlessly to the difficulties of their case.

It is hard to summarise an argument developed in a volume of 1200 pages, but the following abstract may serve: all gods were originally human beings, who after their death appeared in the etheric body: belief in them as gods grew up when the believers were cannibals, and thought that the gods could be placated by being given human beings to eat: from time to time human victims appeared in the etheric body after having been sacrificed, thereby giving rise to the belief that the gods had rejected them as sacrifice, and that they no longer required human sacrifice: the victims thus became "Saviour-gods", rescuing mankind from the horrors of the religion which they more or less superseded: among the "Saviour-gods" worshipped in Eastern Europe and the Near East Mr Findlay mentions Bel, Osiris, Dionysus, Mithras, Krishna.

Now it is to be noted that so far Mr Findlay is dealing with periods long antecedent to the beginnings of history. We have no knowledge what men thought in Egypt or Greece at a time when cannibalism was still prevalent in those countries. Occasional human sacrifice did indeed linger to a surprisingly late time even in highly civilised countries, but we have no accurate knowledge of any period when it was so habitual there as to determine the cause of religious opinion. There is therefore no direct evidence for a theory which Mr Findlay presents as if it were a matter of undisputed fact; one can only argue back from the evidence furnished by later and better known periods. From such evidence it would appear that apparitions of the dead did indeed contribute to the conception of semi-divine beings, such as the heroes in the classical Greek use of the word. But the claim of Euhemerus to have discovered in his travels a monument proving that all the gods were originally human beings, was not taken seriously in his own time, and is generally, I think, discredited. If gods, whether Saviour-gods or not, have all developed out of human beings, it is remarkable that they should as a whole show so little trace of previous humanity.

The second stage of Mr Findlay's argument is that mankind has always been in touch with the etheric world through specially endowed individuals, whom we now call mediums: that, as the genuine medium could not always make contact with the etheric world when he or his consulters wished, there arose a class of men claiming to make contact, when they wished, and for that purpose simulating genuine mediumistic powers: that this class became priests, and out of jealousy persecuted the mediums, the persecution having been particularly severe among the ancient Jews, but not unknown at the present day: wherever he could, the priest put the medium to death. Another class of pseudo-mediums comprised

the magicians, and their obnoxious activities provided the priests with a convenient excuse for putting mediums to death on the charge of witchcraft.

To the Mosaic Law it is clear that mediums and magicians were equally obnoxious. In the most explicit passage (Deut. xviii, 10, 11) prohibitions are directed to some activities which are definitely magical, and to others which are as definitely mediumistic ("necromancy" *e.g.*); but other parts of the same two verses might be taken as applying equally to magicians and mediums. The one permissible outlet for psychical powers would therefore be prophecy, and that only under the limitations imposed in the latter part of the same chapter.

It is however rather difficult to suppose as Mr Findlay does, that the Hebrew prophets, while claiming to speak the words of God, were in fact the mouthpieces of "etheric beings" who had once lived and died on earth, and that this could happen for several centuries, without their innocent mistake being grasped by themselves or detected by others. Why should it be assumed that, if a person can be influenced by external psychic agency, the agency must needs be that of some particular dead man or woman?

But if we go outside Hebrew practice, there does not seem to be in the ancient world much evidence for the systematic persecution and extermination of mediums by priests. Only in a monotheistic society would it be possible to draw a clean line between priests and approved prophets on the one hand, and mediums and magicians on the other: in other conditions there must have been a considerable merging of one group into another, as indeed, in the case of Greece, Mr Findlay recognises. But he leaves one with the impression that the killing of mediums by priests was general and is well-established, and his argument would have been a good deal stronger if he had supported it by quoting instances. The only example that occurs to me of a medium being put to death is Orpheus, and he was killed, not by priests, but, to follow Mr Findlay's practice of translating old words into the phraseology of modern Spiritualism, by a female Study Circle attached to a rival medium.

In his explanation of the origin and growth of the Christian religion Mr Findlay combines the two lines of argument already described regarding the origin of pagan Saviour-gods and the killing of mediums by priests. This is the main part of his book, and it contains much that is quite outside the scope of our Society. It may not, however, be out of place to say that the comments of a man of great practical experience who, without being a specialist in history or theology, has read widely on this important subject and given much

thought to it, deserve careful consideration even if, and when, they do not command assent.

The relations and connections between the various religions prevalent in the Graeco-Roman world shortly before and after the beginning of the Christian era is of immense interest. By stressing some parts of the evidence it is possible to support the thesis that Christianity was fundamentally opposed to any and every variety of contemporary Paganism : by stressing other parts one can make out a case for the view that the significant elements in Christianity already pre-existed in rival religions. To form a just estimate is a delicate task in which sweeping generalisations—and of these Mr Findlay seems to me too prolific—are of little service. If the study is to be of value, and not merely, to use the phrase of an eminent scholar, “the production of Christian rabbits from Pagan hats”, it must be conducted under stricter rules than Mr Findlay employs. Take, for example, the following passage (pp. 443, 444) :

“Let us now in imagination go back to these pre-Christian days in Greece and Rome. Let us imagine that we are in Athens on a Sunday morning, the first day of the week which the people termed The Lord’s Day.”

Here follow six pages describing an impressive liturgy, and then we come on this footnote (p. 450) :

“The original Greek of the quotations from the tombstones, and the committal remarks of the priest, will be found in *Anthropological Religion* by Max Müller. The Greek text of the chant, hymn and prayer was discovered by Reitzenstein in a papyrus of the third century A.D., and this will be found in the *Mystery Religions and Christianity*, by Dr Angus. The sermon is made up from sayings of Xenophon, Plato, Socrates and Cicero, and the Benediction is a prayer used by the Roman philosopher, Simplicius.”

As one of the tombstones quoted goes back to the fifth century B.C. and Simplicius lived well on in the sixth century A.D., Mr Findlay has allowed himself rather too much temporal *Lebensraum*.

After thus explaining the sources of Christianity, Mr Findlay describes its development, emphasising the evidence that what would now be called “psychic phenomena” played a much larger part in its early history than in latter times.

Mr Findlay’s point of view is in certain respects ultra-rationalistic, in others very much the reverse. At many points therefore his approach to familiar problems is fresh and helps to retain the reader’s interest throughout the volume.

W. H. S.

*Experiments in Telepathy.* BY RENÉ WARCOLLIER. George Allen & Unwin. 7s. 6d. net.

The "How" of psychical research is becoming an increasingly insistent problem. Time was when the investigator contentedly occupied himself with the "That", thinking that evidence to show that supernormal things occur could be collected in independence of the question of *how* they are possible. But it is turning out to be more and more the case that people demand some explanatory principle before they will listen to concrete evidence. The "How" is antecedent to the "That"; or, at any rate, must run parallel with it.

M. Wareollier's work is particularly welcome because it sets forth both aspects of the subject side by side. In this volume, abbreviated by Dr Gardner Murphy from *La Télépathie* and from articles by M. Wareollier in *La Revue Métapsychique*, theoretical deductions as to the mode of working of telepathy are drawn from the author's own experiments. Since the cases quoted are given for illustrative rather than for evidential purposes, it would be unfair to stress the criticism that they are given with insufficient fullness to enable their value to be assessed as a whole. The degree to which they have been selected is not always evident; neither has statistical control been applied to the question of chance-coincidence. On this point, Dr Gardner Murphy says that, although the author desired it, he "found that the human situation of working in a group with ten or fifteen interested persons has made a 'free' method of choosing material more workable".

The author's main aim has been to obtain light on the telepathic process by varying the conditions of experiment. He has even preferred to work with subjects who are "only slightly telepathic" rather than with first-class sensitives, because he maintains that partial failures are more informative than complete successes.

Experiments with agents and percipients, used singly and in groups, were tried in all combinations. Men were tried against women; and sleep, or sleep-like states against waking. The conclusion that the author draws is that "batteries" of agents are ineffective, but a group of percipients is better than a single one. A sleep-condition is better than waking for agents and percipients alike; and men make the better agents, while women make the better percipients. He lays stress on mental "contagion", or cross-telepathy, which takes place between percipients who are trying to receive the same idea. The pre-establishment of "accord" was practised, percipients sitting in silence and darkness, and attempting to create in themselves a "void of thought".

One interesting result was the constant tendency for the *form* of the message to be received rather than the *idea*; and frequently this form was fragmentary, like a young child's drawing, in which a head may be drawn on one part of the paper and the eye on another. Clearly traceable, also, is the effect of association of ideas in the emergence of the telepathic message. Awake or asleep, the author says, we are always dreaming, and in the "unconscious", through which the message has to find its way, scattered dream-symbols are picked up and used in the mechanism of emergence; and that is why the results are so fragmentary. Sometimes association leads towards the goal, as in a case in which the word "teeth" (*dents*) was selected for transmission. The percipient wrote *D*: then *Oeil*; *ails d'un papillon, qui sont dentelées*; *une dentelle*; *dent*. But sometimes it overshoots the mark and leads away from it, as in the case of a percipient who got correctly the object sent, a rayed star on a black disc, but went on to add: "The blot is growing luminous, and shines like a lighthouse", which he proceeded to draw.

The author appears to vacillate strangely on the question of whether telepathy can be physically explained. We read: "The wave-hypothesis is not impossible"; and, again: "the emission of waves would explain perfectly the agent's role in simple cases;" and, yet again: "physical analogies are no more than conventional pictures." Indeed, a curious indefiniteness in the mode of presenting views and arguments is characteristic of the book as a whole. A strange theory, too, that the agent, by looking at an object, can fix upon it a "psychic charge", is maintained by the author with a considerable amount of enthusiasm; but it is never subjected to critical examination.

Many of the experiments cited were carried out over considerable distances; and one series took place between Paris and New York. These long-distance trials gave about the same order of success as the others.

In spite of the admirable design underlying the author's work, it cannot be pretended that the present book is entirely satisfying. Doubt will probably remain in the reader's mind as to whether certain of the conclusions reached are based on a sufficiency of experiment; while many of the points raised are treated with a lack of critical thoroughness.

A glossary of terms is appended. There is no index.

G. N. M. T.

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*Fifty Years of Psychical Research: a critical survey.* BY HARRY PRICE. Longmans. 10s. 6d. net.

Every student of psychical research has long felt the need of two works to assist him in his labours. He wants first of all an up-to-date edition of the *Combined Index* to the *Journal* and *Proceedings* of the S.P.R. ; and secondly he needs a continuation of Podmore's *History of Modern Spiritualism*, which was published in 1902. In other words what is required is a critical survey of the history of psychical research and spiritualism during the last forty years.

In his preface to the present volume Mr Price suggests that he has now fulfilled this task, but it would seem from the contents of the book now under review that few will be found to agree with him. With a number of deletions and additions the work might perhaps be used as a handbook or an abstract of the kind of history which could be considered as a worthy continuation to Podmore's classic effort. But, as it is, it is difficult at first to see for what class of reader the present work is intended. It appears to be made up of scattered articles, papers and notes, with little attempt to co-ordinate the mass of material or evaluate the historical sequence of development. One whole chapter is devoted to an account of an alleged materialisation, said to have been witnessed by the author, for which not one shred of corroborative evidence is offered. On the other hand some three pages are given to the phenomena associated with the mediumship of Mrs Leonard ; less than four lines to Mrs Chenoweth ; whilst I have found no allusion amongst the accounts of physical phenomena to the Castlewitch sittings, or amongst the mental phenomena to the Hacking case, the Chaffin Will case or the Thompson-Gifford case. Space which could have been found for these is taken up by an account of a 25 franc "medium" said to have been seen by the author over a shop in Ostend ; by a description of a MS alleged to have been composed by Joanna Southcott ; and by nineteen pages devoted to the text of a proposed Bill to regulate Psychic Practitioners.

Apart from these deficiencies the book contains a general summary of many of the principal cases of interest during the last fifty years ; and, although we may still be permitted to hope that a successor to Podmore may one day be forthcoming, in the meantime we can glance over the pages of Mr Price's book, which, with its excellent index, will provide us with a convenient guide to that mass of fraud, delusion, and maybe truth which emerges from the patient work of so many enthusiasts during fifty years of psychical research.

E. J. D.

# JOURNAL

OF THE

## Society for Psychical Research

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### *NOTICE OF MEETING*

## The Annual General Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

*On WEDNESDAY, 28th February, 1940, at 3 p.m.*

*To transact the business set out on the formal notice dated  
the 19th January, 1940, and already circulated.*

FOLLOWED BY A PAPER ON

“AN EXPERIMENT IN LONG-DISTANCE TELE-  
PATHY BETWEEN LONDON AND ATHENS”

BY

MR C. V. C. HERBERT

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*N.B.—Members alone have the right to take part in the business of  
the Annual General Meeting, but Associates may be present both  
during the transaction of business and when Mr Herbert is giving his  
paper. Tea will be served afterwards, to which Members and  
Associates are invited.*

## GENERAL MEETING

THE 187th General Meeting of the Council was held at Gordon House, Gordon Square, London, W.C. 1, on Tuesday, 28 November 1939, at 2.30 p.m., when Professor Henry Habberley Price of New College, Oxford, gave his Presidential Address. The Address is published in Part 160 of *Proceedings*.

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## OBITUARY

WE deeply regret to record the death at her home in Cambridge on the 13th January of Miss Alice Johnson, an Honorary Member, and formerly the Secretary of the Society. It is intended to print later on a record of some of her eminent services to the Society and to Psychological Research.

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## ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR 1939

THE outbreak of War has naturally caused the Council to consider with anxious attention the future policy of the Society. If the experience of the years following on 1914 is a guide, it is very probable that there will be a greatly increased public interest in the subjects which our Society investigates. It is from every point of view important that this interest should be directed into channels of sane and sober investigation, and that individuals whose emotions have been aroused by the events of the war should be able to avail themselves of the knowledge and experience which the Society has gathered over so many years, and to obtain advice based on that knowledge and experience. These objects are most likely to be attained if the Society carries on its activities, both in research, publication, and the holding of meetings, as fully as war conditions will permit.

While difficulties of travel will make it impossible to arrange meetings as frequently as in peace time, the Council hope to be able to arrange several meetings, including those open to the public by invitation. The *Journal* will probably be issued every alternate month, and Parts of *Proceedings* will be published whenever matter suitable for publication is available. So far as can be foreseen, the Society's research work will be continued on much the same lines and scale as in recent years. Much will, of course, depend on the general financial position. Provided the Society receives such support from Members as the Council may reasonably expect, they are confident that no substantial curtailment of the Society's

activities will be necessary for the present. The Council would none the less welcome the additional income consequent upon an increase of membership, and also donations from existing Members, as for several years past the Society's income has not been sufficient for its needs.

(1) *Research Department.* The investigation of the platform clairvoyante, Mrs Helen Hughes, mentioned in the report for 1938, was continued, and is described in a paper in Part 158 of *Proceedings*. Owing to the generosity of a Member of the Society, who paid for the making of the process blocks, some of the photographs, to which reference was made in the report for 1938, have been reproduced in Part 158 of *Proceedings*, together with a short note on the technique employed.

The series of tests of long distance telepathy between London and Athens, which was arranged in collaboration with Dr Tanagras, was continued throughout the spring and early summer. The tests were interrupted at the end of June, by which time the weather in Greece was too hot for the Athens group to meet at an early enough hour to ensure a sufficient attendance of the London group; and it was hoped that the work might be continued after the reopening of the Society's rooms in September. Owing to the war, this has not been found to be practicable. The results of the tests are by no means devoid of interest, and appear to show some signs of a paranormal effect. The statistical analysis which is necessary to estimate the probability of this effect being due to chance is being carried out, and it was hoped that it would be ready in time for inclusion in this report; but owing to an accident to one of the judges who had kindly consented to score the data, the calculations will not be completed until the new year.

A few tests were made with the guessing of the images on the special Zener cards to which reference was made in the report for 1938, but no subject was found who could score a higher proportion of successes than chance could account for. When normal conditions are restored, it is hoped to examine a large number of subjects. This work became increasingly difficult throughout the year owing to the limited amount of time which both subjects and assistants were able to contribute. The Council would desire to record their indebtedness to all who took part.

A series of informal sittings with an amateur clairvoyante, the wife of a Member of the Society, was held at the rooms. Though nothing very striking emerged, the records are of interest in throwing some light on the processes involved in the conventional medium-

istic sitting. The thanks of the Society are due both to the lady herself and to those Members who acted as sitters in the experiment.

Owing to the great difficulties attendant on all work which involves a number of people being assembled together at a particular time, concentration is being made on tests with individual subjects, and especially on tests in which the subject can function in his own home. Such work has the additional advantage that the precautions necessary to ensure that there shall be no normal leakage are very much simplified. A programme of experiments in the paranormal cognition of drawings and diagrams has been drawn up, and a number of tests have already been made with two subjects, with both of whom striking results have been obtained. Special attention has been paid to the possible functions of the agent in tests of this type. All experiments are designed so that statistical methods of evaluation can be applied, without in any way reducing the value of the data for the purposes of examination from the more usual qualitative standpoint.

The design of a conveniently portable apparatus for the testing of faculties of paranormal guessing has been carefully studied by Mr. G. Redmayne, who has now constructed an electrically operated machine which automatically selects for guessing one of five alternative figures or images, receives the subject's guess, and records his success or failure. The testing of precognitive faculty is possible, as by means of a simple adjustment the machine can be made to postpone its selection until *after* the subject has made his guess. Some trouble was experienced at first in designing a selector which would produce alternatives which were truly independent of each other, and at the same time would satisfy the needs of extreme portability; but this difficulty has now been overcome. It is hoped that Mr Redmayne will shortly publish a description of his apparatus.

A number of spontaneous cases of seemingly paranormal content have been brought to the notice of the Society, and have been carefully investigated. A few have been of sufficient evidential value for printing in the *Journal*. The records of the remainder have been filed, and may be examined on application to the Research Officer.

(2) *Other Research Work.* A series of large-scale experiments on the Paranormal Cognition of Drawings has been initiated at Cambridge by Mr Whately Carington with the assistance of Professor C. D. Broad, Dr Thouless and Mr Oliver Gatty.

In four experiments, simple drawings, the subjects for which were determined by a random method, were exposed from 7.0 p.m. to

9.30 a.m. on each of ten successive nights, in the experimenter's study. Percipients were asked to draw their impressions of these, at any time within these limits and wherever they happened to be. In a fifth experiment the experimenter and percipients were in different rooms, strictly controlled laboratory conditions being maintained; in this case, ten trials were made in about an hour. Altogether about 250 percipients took part in the experiments, some resident in Cambridge, others in London, other parts of England, Edinburgh, Holland and U.S.A. They produced about 2,200 drawings, which were scored against the 50 randomised originals by an independent scorer who did not know which originals had been used in the different experiments. When the "hits" recorded were assembled by experiments, it was found that percipients tended to score on the originals of the experiment in which they were concerned significantly more often than the chance expectation.

Further experiments are in progress, and it is hoped that a full report will be published in *Proceedings* in due course.

(3) *Presidency*. Professor Henry Habberley Price, Wykeham Professor of Logic in the University of Oxford, consented to accept the Council's nomination as President for the year. His Presidential Address, entitled "Haunting and the 'Psychic Ether' Hypothesis: with Some Preliminary Reflections on the Present Condition and Possible Future of Psychical Research", was delivered at a General Meeting on 28th November and appeared shortly afterwards in Part 160 of *Proceedings*.

(4) *Myers Memorial Lectureship*. The Council appointed the Very Rev W. R. Matthews, Dean of St. Paul's, to deliver the Myers Memorial Lecture, due to be given in 1939. In consequence of the outbreak of War, the date was postponed till January 1940.

(5) *Changes on the Council*. Dr William Brown, whose engagements had of recent years prevented him from attending Council Meetings, resigned from the Council of the Society during the year.

In October the Council co-opted Miss Newton as a member of Council.

(6) Owing to the pressure of his professional work Mr Spinney has felt compelled, to the Council's great regret, to resign the post of Hon. Librarian to the Society. The Council wish to place on record their appreciation of the distinguished services he has rendered them, and as a token of this they have elected him an Hon. Associate of the Society.



## RESEARCH FUND.

<i>To Balance, 31st December 1938:</i>	
On Deposit Account -	£234 0 0
On Current Account -	47 14 8
In Secretary's hands -	3 12 6
	285 7 2
Less Due to General Fund -	89 4 6
	£196 2 8
<i>„ Interest on Deposit Account -</i>	1 11 2
	£197 13 10
<i>By General Expenses of Research -</i>	
<i>„ Experimental Sitings with Mediums -</i>	-
<i>„ Grant for Psychological Study of Mrs Leonard's Trance Phenomena -</i>	-
<i>„ Balance, 31st December 1939:</i>	-
On Deposit Account -	£200 0 0
On Current Account -	19 19 9
In Secretary's hands -	0 4 9
	220 4 6
<i>Less Due to General Fund -</i>	89 4 6
	131 0 0
	£197 13 10

## FREDERIC W. H. MYERS MEMORIAL FUND.

<i>To Balance, 31st December 1938:</i>	
On Current Account -	£147 16 4
Interest on Investments -	30 14 6
Interest on Deposit Account -	0 13 5
Income Tax Repayment (Year to 5th April 1939) -	12 4 10
„ Sales of Copies of Lectures per Society for Psychical Research -	1 9 6
	£192 18 7
<i>By Balance, 31st December 1939:</i>	
On Current Account -	-
On Deposit Account -	-
	£192 18 7

## ENDOWMENT FUND FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

<p>To <i>Balance, 31st December 1938:</i></p> <p>On Current Account - - - - - £213 17 4</p> <p>Interest on Investments - - - - - 419 11 3</p> <p>Income Tax Repayment (Year to 5th April 1939) - - - - - 148 17 5</p>	<p>By <i>Research Officer's Salary</i></p> <p>Grant to General Fund towards Expenses of the Cambridge Experiments - - - - - 150 0 0</p> <p>Legal Charges in connection with the appointment of a new Trustee - - - - - 26 5 1</p> <p>Purchase of £220 3½% War Stock 1952 - - - - - 208 2 6</p> <p>Balance, 31st December 1939: - - - - -</p> <p>On Current Account - - - - - 197 18 5</p>
£782 6 0	£782 6 0

### MEMORANDUM OF ASSETS.

GENERAL FUND.	ENDOWMENT FUND.
£58 11 2 2½% Annuities.	£1,460 0 0 4% Consolidated Stock.
£1139 4 5 2½% Consolidated Stock.	£2,300 0 0 3% Funding Stock 1939/69.
£219 8 7 3½% Conversion Stock 1961.	£800 0 0 3½% War Stock 1952.
£86 11 11 4% Consolidated Stock.	£908 0 11 India 3½% Stock 1931 or after.
£309 9 9 3½% War Stock 1952.	£550 0 0 India 4½% Stock 1958/68.
£800 0 0 York Corporation 3% Redeemable Stock 1955/65.	£1,797 0 0 London and North Eastern Railway Company 4% Debenture Stock.
£250 0 0 Commonwealth of Australia 3% Stock 1955/58	£1,955 0 0 Great Western Railway Company 5% Rent Charge Stock.
£1,200 0 0 Nigeria Government 3% Inscribed Stock 1955.	£800 0 0 Great Western Railway Company 5% Guaranteed Stock.
£1,161 0 0 London Midland and Scottish Railway Company 4% Debenture Stock.	£2,258 0 0 London Midland and Scottish Railway Company 4% Preference Stock.
£562 0 0 London Midland and Scottish Railway Company 4% Preference Stock.	£514 0 0 London Passenger Transport Board 4½% "T.F.A." Stock.
£1,540 0 0 East Indian Railway Irredeemable Debenture Stock.	£260 0 0 East Indian Railway 3½% Debenture Stock.
£520 0 0 East Indian Railway Deferred Annuity Class "D".	£1,260 0 0 East Indian Railway 4½% Irredeemable Debenture Stock.
300 Shares South Staffordshire Tramways (Lessee) Co. (in voluntary liquidation) Deferred Shares of 5s. each fully paid.	£700 0 0 Great Indian Peninsular Railway 4% Debenture Stock.
£423 0 0 5½% Second Mortgage on Mardy Estate.	
FREDERIC W. H. MYERS MEMORIAL FUND.	
£750 0 0 5% Conversion Stock 1944/64.	
£250 0 0 3½% Conversion Stock 1961.	

We have examined the above Accounts and compared them with the Society's Cash Books, Receipt Books and Vouchers, and certify that they are in accordance therewith. We have also verified the investments of the General, Endowment and Myers Memorial Funds as set forth in the above Statements.

9 Idol Lane, Eastcheap, E.C.3, 22nd January, 1940

MIALL, SAVAGE, AVERY & Co., Chartered Accountants.

(7) *Publication of Books Relating to the Society's Work.* The series of books by Messrs Bell & Sons, under the general heading of "Psychical Experiences", referred to in the report of the Council for 1938, has been continued by the publication of *Evidence of Identity*, by Mr Kenneth Richmond. The Council are gratified to hear from various quarters that this series has helped to stimulate interest in psychical research of the kind promoted by our Society. A like result may be expected from the publication by Messrs Faber & Faber of Sir Ernest Bennett's *Apparitions and Haunted Houses*.

(8) *Hon. Associates.* In addition to Mr Spinney, the Council have elected as an Hon. Associate Dr Eva Morton, who has been a Member of the Society since 1933, since when she has in various ways shown an active interest in the Society's work.

(9) *Library.* During the year 53 Members borrowed books, and 84 books were borrowed by the National Central Library for students. Members also availed themselves of the privilege of borrowing books from other Libraries through the Society and the National Central Library.

(10) *Obituary.* Among the losses by death during 1939 must be mentioned Professor Sigmund Freud, one of the Society's most distinguished Corresponding Members for many years, and at the date of his death an Hon. Member of the Society; Mr David Gow, an Hon. Associate, and the Rev. Herbert Thurston, S.J., whose articles on psychical research and spiritualism are very well known. An obituary notice of Professor Freud appeared in Part 160 of *Proceedings*, and of Mr Gow and Father Thurston in the *Journal* for December 1939.

(11) *Membership of the Society.* During the year 17 new Members and 2 Student Associates were elected. The total loss in Members from deaths, resignations and other causes was 53 Members and Associates, leaving a net decrease of 34 Members and Associates. The total membership of the Society now stands at 654.

Following the precedent set by the Society in the years 1914-18, the Council have decided to suspend from active membership during the present war members of enemy nationality resident abroad, with the proviso that they should be at liberty at the end of the war to resume active membership. The position of any members of enemy nationality resident in this country will not be affected.

While communication with enemy countries cannot be maintained during the War, the Council regard the Society as occupying

an international position and will do what they can, subject to the limitations imposed by hostilities, to co-operate to the fullest extent with psychical researchers of whatever nationality.

(12) *Publications*. Four Parts of *Proceedings* were published during the year : Part 157 in February, Part 158 in March, Part 159 in July and Part 160 in December.

The Secretary's sales to the general public amounted to £25 4s. 2d., and to members of the Society, £14 17s. 3d. Returns from the Society's agent in the United States amounted to £5 8s. 6d.

(13) *Meetings*. The following meetings have been held during the year :

- 25 Jan. "Recent Work carried out by the Society", by the Research Officer.
- 29 Mar. "Experiments in Automatic Writing", by Miss Geraldine Cummins.
- 26 Apr. "Incidents of Bygone Days", by Count Perovsky-Petrovo-Solovovo.
- 23 May. "A Novel Proxy Case and its Implications", by the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas.
- 28 June. "A Recent Experiment with Two Automatists", by Mr W. H. Salter.
- 128 Nov. Presidential Address, by Professor Henry Habberley Price.

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### A CASE FOR SURVIVAL?

THE following case has been contributed, under the above title, by Mr G. Zorab, a new member of the Society, whose report was sent to the Hon. Secretary with this letter :

*To the Secretary of the Society for  
Psychical Research.*

Verdistrat 32,  
The Hague.

7 December 1939.

Dear Sir,

Enclosed I make bold to hand you some information about a rather interesting case which came within my own observation. From beginning to end the case was investigated by Mr de Graaf

<sup>1</sup>General Meeting.

and myself, while all documents, newspapers, etc., relating to the case are in my possession and can be consulted.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours truly,

G. ZORAB.

The case is described and discussed by Mr Zorab in the following pages.

A group of investigators, of which I am a member, has been experimenting at regular intervals this year with a medium for trance phenomena. The medium, a Mrs. Hilgersom-Kleiweg, is a married woman of about thirty-five years of age and of a not very high educational level living at the Hague. She is not a professional medium, but allows us to experiment with her in order to further Psychical Research.

Although of late years the medium has had, as she herself confirms, fairly frequent clairvoyant visions, premonitions and such phenomena as the seeing of "spirits", she never went into a trance before the beginning of this year. In April 1939, however, during a spiritualistic séance open to the general public, she all of a sudden fell into a state which to all appearances looked like a genuine trance. After this episode we invited her to coöperate as a medium in our researches, to which proposal she kindly consented.

The trance condition with this medium is a very quiet one and may come on very suddenly, so that often enough the medium may be off in the middle of a sentence or while relating some joke or story. Up to the present the medium only speaks, and does not produce writing, during her trance.

On Saturday evening, 6 May 1939, an entity manifested itself through the medium during a séance and said that its name was *Klaas Kraaijendonk* and that its address had been *Willem Tombergstraat 2 at Gouda*. Gouda is a well-known Dutch town situated about 18 miles to the east of The Hague.

The notes taken down during the sitting are given in full here below. We would like to point out that the questions put to the communicator are not mentioned in the report, but the answers only were written down. As this sitting was our first experience with the medium in question and we did not expect anything of importance to crop up, we did not trouble ourselves to have very full notes made, a neglect we now sincerely regret.

*Extract from Report of the Sitting of 6 May 1939*

"Mother—Gouda—Willem Tombergstraat 2. Please tell Mother not to grieve so much for me—the son—Klaas—My birthday must

be near at hand. Mother must keep an eye on Annie and part with all my belongings, also with my Sunday suit. I was already 19 years old.—I have also a brother, who slept with me.—Terrible, I was gone suddenly. Antoon may have my watch—Father my purse, inside which was not much money. Go to Mother and say that I am making myself uneasy and that Mother must not think. My name is Kraaijendonk, and my sister's name is Annie, but she should not dance so much, she should not care so much for worldly things. They don't believe in a God, but there is one; very high, ve-ery high! But Father and Mother. Antoon and Annie should not think only of worldly things. Don't let them also think of me. Please tell them that there is a God. Go to Mother, she needs so much support."

On the 15th of May the post office of Gouda informed us that the address for which we had applied was indeed correct, but that at the Willem Tombergstraat n<sup>o</sup> 2 did not live a family *Kraaijendonk* but *Kraaijenbrink*.

Two days later Mr de Graaf and I went to Gouda and made inquiries at the town hall about the afore-mentioned Klaas K. As is the case in many other countries on the continent, everybody in Holland is officially registered as regards all sorts of family details, birth, address, etc., and one's family status can readily be ascertained if needed. Here we received a document, signed by the Registrar, saying that in the municipality of Gouda had been registered *Klaas Kraaijenbrink*, born 12 July 1914, who had died owing to an accident on the 25th of March 1939. He had lived at the *Willem Tombergstraat n<sup>o</sup> 2*, where his father *Dirk Kraaijenbrink* was still domiciled.

At the same time we were informed that the family K. consisted at that moment of husband and wife K. and their two children *Johanna* (born 1922) and *Antoon* (born 1926).

We also inquired at the town hall whether the medium or her husband had ever lived in Gouda, and were answered that up till the year 1922 nobody of the names mentioned had been registered in the town.

Thereupon we bought a copy of the *Goudsche Courant*—the most important local newspaper—of Monday, 27 March 1939, and in this paper we read the following report. As a detailed knowledge of what has been published in the papers, etc., is absolutely necessary in order to allow a plausible explanation to be put forward for the phenomena observed, we will give here a complete translation of the report concerning the accident.

CHAUFFEUR RUN OVER AND KILLED  
TRIPPED BEHIND BACKING MOTOR-CAR

On Saturday afternoon a sad accident occurred at "De Nieuwe Vaart", owing to which a young man lost his life.

About a quarter past one a motor-lorry heavily laden with sacks, belonging to the firm of N. V. W. Koemans & Zoon, was being backed from the main road towards the entrance of the works where the sacks are manufactured. The lorry was coming from Rotterdam. Next to the chauffeur in the cab of the lorry was sitting 24-year-old N. Kraaijenbrink, of *Willem Tombergstraat*, who was serving the firm as a chauffeur. The young man had got out and was walking behind the car as it was backed down the entrance-way, in order to direct the driver along the narrow entrance.

Just in front of the factory he tripped and fell under the lorry coming immediately behind him. One of the hind-wheels went over his head. *The man was killed on the spot.*

The victim was unmarried. *His parents lose in him their only child.* The mortal remains have been transported by the ambulance of the Medical Service to the Van Iterson hospital. The police investigated the case under the direction of police-inspector C. Hess. Of course the car-driver cannot be blamed. He had not noticed anything about the accident.<sup>1</sup>

After having ascertained the above we went to the house of the family Kraaijenbrink, where we were received by the father, Mr K.

We started our interview by asking Mr K. whether he knew or had ever heard of a Mrs Hilgersom-Kleiweg or of a Mr Hilgersom living at the Hague, *i.e.* the medium and her husband, but he at once answered in the negative. This same fact was confirmed by his wife a few moments later. Husband and wife also denied having ever heard of the names of the other members of the group of investigators in whose circle the manifestation had taken place.

It was only after having been satisfied on this point that we began explaining to the parents the object of our visit, which was at first a by no means easy procedure, as they knew next to nothing about psychical research or spiritualism. Mr K., however, though an ordinary workman at the railway without much education, possesses quite a lot of common sense.

We read to them the séance report as printed above, which deeply moved them and gave us the impression that several items struck

<sup>1</sup> The italics are mine. (G. Z.)

them jointly as giving an indication that their deceased son was in some way concerned in producing them. The following points were confirmed by them as being correct and in keeping with the facts :

1. That their youngest son was indeed named Antoon, and that their daughter, although baptised and registered as Johanna, was always called Annie in the bosom of the family.

2. That they of eourse were very much upset by the very sad aeident, and that the mother was still worrying her heart out about what had happened.

3. That the faets related during the séanee by the entity purporting to be the deeeased Klaas K., about the eloths, belongings, etc., of their son, were indeed as stated in the report.

4. That the statement about the younger son sleeping together in one bed with his elder brother—though there was a differenee in age between the two of about twelve years—was in every way eorreect. After the aeident the young boy had been so upset that he refused to sleep any longer in that same bed alone.

The parents, however, informed us that what was said in the last part of the report about their religious beliefs and outlook in life and those of their living ehildren was not altogether in aeordanee with the real faets. But at the same time they gave us to understand that the question of daneing in eonneetion with their daughter Annie had been raised of late, but that the faets were in no way suh as indiated by the eommunieator on the 6th of May.

In order to be able to aseertain whether the medium in question eould have got hold of the faets produed in the sitting of the date mentioned above by hearsay, through mutual friends of the two families, we requested Mr K. to tell us as exaetly as possible what friends and aequaintanees he and his wife had in The Hague.

The only aequaintanee he eould reeall living at The Hague or its suburbs was a certain Mr St., with whose address Mr K. supplied us.

Of eourse we paid this gentleman a visit as soon as possible after our investigations at Gouda, and here too we learned that he had never known or heard of the married eouple Hilgersom-Kleiweg. At the same time it beame elear that the aequaintance between Mr St. and the family K. at Gouda was but a very slight one.

Though there was no doubt about the fact that the report published about the aeident in the *Goudsche Courant* of the 27th of Mareh 1939, this being the most important local paper with the largest eireulation in that neighbourhood, was the most eomprehensive and gave most details, so that we felt sure that any other aeount of this aeident in any other newspaper, whieh the medium

might have read, would not contain more particulars about the sad event or its victim than those already related in the Gouda paper, we still took the trouble to look up some newspapers circulating in The Hague, among which was the *Nieuwsbron*, the paper regularly read by the family of the medium and by herself. Both the *Haagsche Courant* and the *Nieuwsbron* gave very short summaries in a few lines about this occurrence, while the *Nieuwsbron* only mentioned the victim of the accident with the wrong initials of *N. K.*, instead of giving the full Gouda reading of *N. Kraaijenbrink*, which, as we know, was also incorrect, but should have been *Klaas K.*

Obituary notices did not appear in the papers, so that the medium could not have got hold of the names of the brother and sister, etc., of the deceased *Klaas K.* through such notices.

It goes without saying that not a word was said about all these investigations and the results to the medium or her husband. Only after all the information had been collected and the whole correspondence carried out did we inform the medium of some of the results obtained. The communicator *Klaas K.* only made one appearance, and, even after the medium had become acquainted with some of the facts, never came forward again.

All documents and papers relating to the case here described are open to inspection for those who would like to have a look at them.

### *Possible explanations.*

Before proceeding to paranormal explanations of the phenomena discussed here, let us first try and see whether a normal explanation can be found to fit the facts.

*Shameless deceit by the medium or one or more of the persons forming the group of investigators.*

Although such a deceit is not impossible, it may in this case be excluded, as, firstly, the integrity of everybody concerned is above suspicion (we know each other well), and, secondly, as the *form* and details of the communication show several little mistakes, which the medium, in case she had intended to deceive us all by making up a brilliant "test-case" beforehand, would in all probability not have made. At the same time, she being a simple-minded woman and knowing nothing about psychical research, it is, in my opinion, psychologically impossible for this medium to have thought out and staged such a subtle and cunning deceit.

As far as our investigations in this direction could be extended, no direct or indirect channel could be discovered through which the medium could have received the necessary information and details

produced in the séance communication, either by hearsay or by written account.

In our possession are signed declarations, not only of all members of the group of investigators, but also of Mr Kraaijenbrink of Gouda, saying that none of the persons concerned in this case knew or had ever heard of one another.

*Cryptomnesia*, or unconscious memory.

It is a well-known fact that in trance or such-like condition, which generally is accompanied by a lowering of the threshold of consciousness, a great many forgotten memories of what has once been read, experienced, heard, etc., may become accessible and are then often produced by mediums clothed in a spiritualistic garb. When I heard at the town hall at Gouda that Klaas K. had died owing to a very sad accident and that an account could probably be found in the Gouda newspaper, the idea was at once forced upon me that in this case, as in so many others, cryptomnesia would in all probability provide a more than ample explanation. This, however, has been disproved by the facts.

Cryptomnesia is in very many cases certainly able to explain information imparted by mediums, if this can be traced to what the medium in question has read, heard, experienced, etc., at an earlier date, but completely forgotten at the time of reproduction. But cryptomnesia cannot explain the production of particulars and details which in the original source to which the information should presumably be traced is incorrect or defective, while the mediumistic utterances are in these particulars correct and give facts not to be guessed or reasonably inferred.

In the case at hand we have had the luck to come up against an instance in which it was found that the newspaper report itself excludes the possibility of using cryptomnesia as a fitting explanation of the phenomena observed. This newspaper report contains several incorrect points as to family conditions, name, address, etc., which, if the medium had really borrowed from this source, should also have been reproduced incorrectly and not, as may be seen in this case, correctly, by the communicator purporting to be the deceased Klaas Kraaijenbrink himself, and which he, alive, would have known very well.

The principal mistakes in the report of the *Gouda Courant*, compared with the correct statements by the communicator, are the following: N. Kraaijenbrink instead of *Klaas* Kraaijenbrink; his parents lose in him their *only child*, while the communicator without a moment's hesitation names his brother Antoon and his sister

Annie ; the number of Kraaijenbrink's house (number 2), not mentioned in the Gouda report, was also given at once.

Once conscious deceit and cryptomnesia have been excluded as normal explanations, we have the right to pass on to *paranormal* explanations.

*Paragnosis : Extra-sensory Perception or telepathy between the living. Animistic explanations.*

I quite agree with Mr Salter when he says in his letter to the *Journal* (1939, p. 111) that " when the evidence can equally well be interpreted either on the hypothesis of telepathy from the living or of communication from a discarnate mind, preference should be given to the former ". In accordance with this thesis we shall start here by giving every precedence to animistic theories in order to try to explain the phenomena described here. The great difficulty, however, is that up till now we have but a very vague idea how telepathy, or, perhaps better, paragnosis, works and how and where its possibilities are bounded. The marking off of these boundaries is at present still dependent on personal opinion, and I therefore beg that my arguments may be considered from this point of view.

Personally I am of opinion that paragnosis with its two characteristic features, telepathy and clairvoyance, cannot give an adequate explanation for this case, and this simply because there was, before or during the séance, nothing whatsoever—at least as far as we were able to discover—to evoke the paragnostical powers of the medium or to guide them in a certain direction. Experience has taught us that in order to bring about some paragnostical connection or phenomenon there must be something to stimulate the coming into action and the guiding of the paranormal capacities of the medium, psychic, etc. (the so-called " influences " of Mrs Piper ; some psychometric object ; a person or thing, who or which can be used as a stepping-stone to reach the mind of another person from whom the information can be obtained ; a name, etc.) But in this case no such an evoking and directing link or *traite d'union* can be traced. During the sitting we are discussing nobody was present who knew anything about this Klaas Kraaijenbrink or had friends or acquaintances who knew the deceased young man, and whom the medium could have used as a stepping-stone to come into contact with the mind of, say, the father or mother of Klaas K. and so get hold of the particulars communicated by the *soi-disant* Klaas Kraaijenbrink.

Keeping all this in view, we have to admit that an animistic paragnostical explanation does not fit the facts, as we cannot understand

how the medium came into contact telepathically with a mind to which nothing whatsoever directed her. For why was the medium guided in the direction of some mind in order to enable her to obtain information of this Klaas K., unknown to all concerned in the sitting?

Referring once again to Mr Salter's letter (*Journal*, 1939, p. 111), I am also in complete agreement with him when he says that we may not allow ourselves "some fantastic exaggeration of the scope of telepathy between the living, but only what may reasonably be inferred as possible from the relevant evidence, spontaneous and experimental".

Spontaneous and experimental evidence in mediumistic and paranormal phenomena has taught us that as long as a link, however subtle, can be traced between the medium and a particular living mind from which the particulars communicated may be derived, or when something is present which may evoke and direct the paragnostical powers of the medium—though these conclusions mean stretching the evidence to an impermissible extent—there is always the possibility that the phenomena observed may be animistic in nature. But if no such link can be indicated, the possibility—at least in my opinion—increases that a particular manifestation, which also shows several other personal characteristics, is due to the influence of the discarnate mind purporting to be present.

If we bear the above in mind I think it can fairly be said that on the whole a spiritualistic explanation better fits the facts than a 100% animistic hypothesis.

#### *Spiritualistic explanation.*

Taking everything into consideration, I think that the greater part of the items communicated are most easily explained by ascribing them to an influence practised on the medium in some way or other by the discarnate mind of Klaas K. Reviewing the number of successful hits to be observed in this communication, we find that these are far greater than those to be classified as doubtful or wrong.

Very significant in this connection is, in my opinion, the little sentence: "I have also a brother, who slept with me." This shows that an association of ideas, typical for Klaas K., was tapped when the communicator said—without any urging—that he had a little brother and they slept together. For Klaas K. the association brother and sleeping together was a highly characteristic and very personal part of his mind-constellation during his life; and indeed it was a fact that these two, though there existed a great difference in age between the two brothers, had shared the same bed for several years. Thinking of his little brother would very probably have

brought up at the very same time the association of sharing the same bed, an association so strong and personal with this Klaas K. that even after death it was produced when he was thinking of his brother; with the result that automatically the thought was followed up by "who slept with me". I am therefore of the opinion that this association of ideas, simple enough in itself, may be claimed as highly characteristic of the personality of Klaas K. and as identifying the communicator as really being Klaas K. That is to say, that in some way or other the discarnate mind of Klaas K. was behind and directing the utterances of the medium.

Of course we should not pick out this one item and then claim that the communicator has proved his identity by this very fact. No, we should only see it as a part which logically and reasonably fits in the framework of the whole personality as brought forward during the manifestation. And if we consider all the items in this way, we become aware that a great many successful hits were made, but that the wrong and doubtful ones are but few.

Not only did the communicator state correctly his address and the names of his brother and sister, but some information was also supplied which, though not to be classified as excellent, gave some characteristic particulars in accordance with the personality of Klaas K.

Thus, for example, the saying: "My birthday must be near at hand." (The séance took place on the 6th of May and Klaas's birthday would have fallen on the following 12th of July.)

Answering a question as to his age the communicator said: "I was already nineteen years old." (Klaas was twenty-four years old when the accident occurred; a fact which was also stated in the newspaper report.) In this connection I would like to point out that he was also asked—he could not remember his correct age at once—whether he had already served in the army (in Holland we have conscription), but we were answered no, Klaas had not served in the army. (This has not been mentioned in the record of the sitting, but both Mr de Graaf and myself remember the question put to the entity purporting to be Klaas K., and the negative answer.) At the town hall at Gouda we also made inquiries about this matter and were informed that Klaas K. had not been called up for military service.

Also the cause of his death was aptly described by the saying: "Terrible, I was gone suddenly." The official medical report ascribes death to fracture of the base of the cranium.

As only partly correct we may classify the wrong ending of the name: *Kraaijendonk* instead of *Kraaijenbrink*.

More or less wrong, at least if we may believe the parents, is the last part of the communication, *i.e.* the remarks about the religious beliefs and ethical ideas of his family. The parents confirmed, however, that there existed a connection between dancing and the sister Annie, though not in the way indicated. Of course we could not very well press this point and delicacy forbade asking too many questions about this matter.

As the point about dancing in connection with Annie was only brought forward *after* the death of Klaas K., it remains possible that the entity who communicated during the sitting was able to make observations *after* the death of Klaas K. The entity's remarks about its clothes and other belongings may also point in the same direction.

Why the last part of this communication shows more mistakes than the first part is perhaps not so very easily explained. It is possible that the medium, on whom the communicator was perhaps loosening his hold, getting impressed by the ideas dancing and Annie, started to embroider these items on her own behalf and produced in this way the wrong statement at the end of the communication. It is not impossible that in this case too there occurred something of the kind observed by Fr. van Eeden during the communication of the Dutch entity Sam through the medium Mrs Thompson (*Proc. S.P.R.*, vol. 17, pp. 110-111).

Whichever explanation one would prefer to accept for this case, I think that there can be no doubt that the case is interesting enough to be stated as fully as possible.

G. ZORAB.

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### IMAGES OF THE SELF

IN his Presidential Address, Professor Price alludes to the difficulty of supposing an image, perceived as "the ghost of" a given person, to have originated in the mind of that person, and asks (*Proc. Vol. XLV*, p. 330): "Is it not most uncommon to form an image of one's own body—especially an accurate one? The puzzle is increased by the fact that the image would have to represent the visible appearance of one's own body *as seen from without*."

A member of the Society, Baroness de Kallucs, has sent to the *Journal* an example of such image-formation, occurring to herself in a half-awake state, and notes that she often experiences the usual type of hypnagogic dream-picture, "nearly always of imaginary places, quite distinct and in very bright colours". "It is very unusual", she says of these pictures, "for me to see people." Her

experience of a self-image differed from her usual hypnagogic pictures, which are small—"as if seen through the wrong end of race-glasses"—and "seem to be under my eyelids", as will be noticed in the following note of the experience and its circumstances:

"It was in the afternoon, when I had been sitting trying to concentrate my mind on a certain subject. It [the image] appeared to be life size, standing in front of me and smiling at me as though it saw me. It did not move. It was a composite picture, as I noticed it was wearing the same green dress which I actually had on, while at the same time it looked very much younger, and had its hair done in an old-fashioned way with a fringe.

"I was not asleep, but in that half-way state which generally ends in sleep. On this occasion I was so much interested in this curious apparition that I woke up completely."

This is an excellent example to show that a self-image can in fact be formed and externalised as an object of perception for the person forming the image. Other members may perhaps be able to furnish some answer to the PRESIDENT'S question whether such experiences are very uncommon. Probably the least uncommon experience of the kind is to see a clear image of the self as a participant in the action of an ordinary dream. It would be of interest if members would send notes of any self-images, occurring in dreams or otherwise, which have occurred in their own experience or that of their friends.

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## REVIEWS

'Symposium on ESP methods at the meeting of the Southern Society for Philosophy and Psychology', *The Journal of Parapsychology*, III, 1, June 1939, Duke University Press, Durham, N.C., pp. 85-115.

The methods discussed in this symposium are largely refinements in the mathematical treatment of ESP data, with an interesting article by Dr J. G. Pratt on an improved experimental method.

A mathematical question which has recently been raised in connection with experiments on clairvoyance and telepathy is how far a positive result might be produced by stopping a series of trials at a favourable point. In this symposium, Dr V. W. Lemmon suggests that if a subject is making purely chance guesses and that if we stop his series every day at a point when the cumulative average is above chance, every day will show a positive result although every guess

has been recorded. This is an argument which might take in the man in the street, but its fallacy should have been obvious to an experimental psychologist. If the series is merely a chance one, stopping each day at favourable points will be no different in effect from making all the observations in one long series, and then drawing a vertical line to divide them off in sections, each of which has a positive total. Obviously no such process could alter the final total. The fallacy in this criticism was, of course, pointed out by other members of the symposium.

If there is a fallacious effect of optional stopping, there is also a real one, and this was dealt with by Dr T. N. E. Greville and Dr J. A. Greenwood. In a random series one could very generally get a positive deviation by selecting, not the stopping point of each day's work, but the stopping point of the whole series at a place where the deviation happened to have become satisfactorily large. Such a deviation might even appear significant if tested by a method which did not take into account the method of selection of the end-point of the series. This source of error may be avoided by any method of selecting the end-point which does not favour a positive deviation (e.g. by fixing in advance the length of the series) or by making a correction in the critical ratio accepted as significant. Apparently the maximum value but not the exact value has been determined for this correction.

Dr J. G. Pratt's method of testing ESP is one in which the pack is handled by the experimenter behind a screen. The pack is distributed into five heaps corresponding to the five symbols of the Zener pack. Which heap belongs to which symbol is indicated to the subject by guide cards hung above the heaps on his side of the screen in an order not known to the experimenter. This seems satisfactorily to rule out both the possibility that the subject may be guided by sensory cues and also the possibility that the experimenter's bias may lead him to deal cards into the right packs. Speed of working is an important consideration in a technique of ESP experimentation, not only because it is desirable to get as many results as possible for a satisfactory statistical demonstration, but also because it is not impossible that a rapid rate of working may favour the appearance of the phenomena. In this respect too, this method of experimenting appears to be satisfactory. Pratt reports an average rate of about fifteen seconds for the run of twenty-five cards.

ROBERT H. THOULESS.

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*My Life as a Search for the Meaning of Mediumship.* By EILEEN J. GARRETT. Oquaga Press, New York, 1939.

This is the second book of late years in which an intelligent woman has written an analytical study, on autobiographical lines, of her psychic perceptions and experiences. (Cf. *Man's Latent Powers*, by Phoebe Payne, reviewed in the *Journal*, Vol. XXX, p. 205.) Both had the fortune or misfortune of being born with a considerable degree of what is now respectably called extra-sensory perception, and it is interesting to find how very similar, in certain ways, were their experiences, living as they did among ordinary adults who knew nothing of their special fields of perception. The result was that the writers were in each case driven into a bewildered isolation because those around seemed so extraordinarily clumsy, ignoring what to these children were obvious facts. Little did either realise, until they were growing up, that others did not see the world as they did. And even then the realisation came as a shock, on the one hand, and an explanation, on the other, of why people seemed so tactless and destructive among the subtleties of the psychic life. There is also a corollary lesson to parents in these books showing how an open mind would save much suffering and damage to a child who appears unduly imaginative.

This book is not by any means a scientific one in the narrow sense : no proofs are offered. That is an aspect of research which can, however, well be left to the mechanised type of psychic researcher, who has in the past done much reliable work, if only by elimination, in establishing the occurrence of parapsychological phenomena. Nowadays, however, when all but the "closed" mind accepts these as facts, this book offers something of greater interest, which is a record of what is obviously real experience. The writing is simple, almost bald. And in spite of an aggravating tendency to italicise words, it conveys a quality of insight and self-criticism which makes it worth studying. Miss Phoebe Payne, the writer of the other book mentioned, comments as follows :

"Mrs Garrett's book is to me a simple straightforward exposition of experience as lived by the natural-born psychic. We are all equipped with a psychic mechanism and have embryonic psychic capacity, but there are few people who are self-aware, with a sense of direction in their psychic life. Mrs Garrett is one who has been psychically aware and vividly alert from earliest childhood, and her descriptions from then on to maturity are essentially honest and describe the dual quality of daily life as I have always known it."

One may question some of Mrs Garrett's conclusions about the nature and mechanism of psychic perception. But, since science has

not yet turned from proving and re-proving what has already been often proved, to studying the physics of the psychic worlds or the psychology of the percipient of them, one cannot, either, say that she is wrong in her views. We are, moreover, coming to realise that there is real value when a person describes experiences, whether objective or subjective, psychic or material, which are live and dynamic to that person. It is here that the interest of this book is to be found. Would it be too much to suggest that we should learn more about psychic research from a deeper study of personal experiences such as these, than in dissecting (and therefore killing) sporadic phenomena occurring here and there?

LAURENCE J. BENDIT.

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THE *JOURNAL* IS PRINTED FOR PRIVATE  
CIRCULATION

The attention of Members and Associates is drawn to the private nature of the *Journal*, from which no quotations should be made without the previous consent of the Council. Ever since the first issue of the *Journal* in 1884, much of the material appearing in it has been contributed on the definite assurance that the *Journal* is, as stated on the cover, issued "For private circulation among Members and Associates only". The Council hope that all Members and Associates will continue to co-operate with them in maintaining this privacy.

# JOURNAL

OF THE

## Society for Psychical Research

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*NOTICE OF MEETING*

### A Private Meeting of the Society

WILL BE HELD IN

THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY

31 TAVISTOCK SQUARE, LONDON, W.C. 1

ON

WEDNESDAY, 24 April, 1940, at 5.30 p.m.

WHEN A PAPER ON

“WHY I DO BELIEVE IN SURVIVAL”

A REPLY TO PROFESSOR DODDS

WILL BE READ BY

MR B. ABDY COLLINS

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*N.B.—No Tickets of Admission are issued for this Meeting. Members and Associates will be admitted on signing their names at the door. Tea will be served from 4.45 p.m., to which Members and Associates are invited.*

## MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

THE 377th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 21 February 1940, at 3 p.m., ADMIRAL THE HON. A. C. STRUTT, and later THE HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTTELTON, G.B.E., in the Chair. There were also present Miss Ina Jephson, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Miss I Newton and Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt, R.N.; also Mr Kenneth Richmond, Editor of the *Journal*, Mr C. V. C. Herbert, Research Officer, and Miss E. M. Horsell, Assistant-Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

THE 378th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 28 February 1940, immediately after the Annual General Meeting, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., in the Chair. There were also present: Miss I. Jephson, the Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E., Miss I. Newton, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter and Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt, R.N.; also Mr Kenneth Richmond, Editor of the *Journal*, and Miss E. M. Horsell, Assistant-Secretary.

Professor Henry Habberley Price, Wykeham Professor of Logic in the University of Oxford, was re-elected President for the year 1940-1941.

Mr W. H. Salter was re-elected Hon. Secretary, Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt Hon. Treasurer, Mr H. F. Saltmarsh Deputy Hon. Treasurer, and Mrs W. H. Salter Hon. Editor of *Proceedings*.

Committees were elected as follows:

*Committee of Reference and Publication*, for the period of the war: The President, Professor C. D. Broad, Mr J. G. Piddington and the Hon. Editor of *Proceedings*.

*House and Finance Committee*: Miss Ina Jephson, Mr G. W. Lambert, Mr W. H. Salter, Mr H. F. Saltmarsh and Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt.

*Library Committee*: Professor E. R. Dodds, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Miss I. Newton and Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt.

Corresponding Members and Hon. Associates were elected for the year 1940-41 as follows:

*Corresponding Members*: Professor Henri Bergson, President Nicholas M. Butler, Dr Max Dessoir, Professor Pierre Janet, Dr C. G. Jung, Count Carl von Klinekowskroem, M. Maurice Maeterlinck, Professor T. K. Oesterreich, Dr R. Tischner, Mr Carl Vett and Dr Elwood Worcester.

*Honorary Associates* : Miss H. A. Dallas, Mr J. Arthur Hill, Professor R. F. A. Hoernlé, the Rev. W. S. Irving, Dr Eva Morton, Professor J. H. Muirhead, Mr Kenneth Richmond, Professor C. M. Sage, Mr G. H. Spinney, Dr A. Tanagras, Dr W. H. Tenhaeff, Professor R. H. Thouless and Dr Th. Wereide.

Mr G. N. M. Tyrrell was co-opted a Member of Council.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THE Annual General Meeting of Members of the Society was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 28 February 1940, at 3 p.m., SIR LAWRENCE JONES, Bart., in the Chair.

The following Members were present : Mrs B. W. A. Dickson, Mr G. W. Fisk, Mr C. V. C. Herbert, Mrs F. Heywood, Miss S. Jephson, the Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, G.B.E., Miss I. Newton, Mr I. B. Nicholl, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter, Mrs Sitwell, Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt, Mrs Gale Thomas and Mrs C. Woolard ; also Miss M. Candler (Associate) and Mr Kenneth Richmond (Hon. Associate).

The Hon. Secretary read the Notice convening the Meeting.

The Hon. Treasurer, in presenting the accounts said that there was little to comment on. The Society was £145 down on the year, indicating that we had great difficulty in the endeavour to keep within our income. Unfortunately we had dropped our membership by 34. This loss was more due to lack of new Members than resignation of old ones. The coming year would necessarily be an anxious time financially.

The Hon. Secretary said it was a matter of some anxiety that our membership was declining, but considering that for the last ten years the country has been moving through a series of financial crises, he thought the Society had done well to keep the membership as high as it was.

Mr Salter moved the adoption of the Balance Sheet and the Annual Report. This resolution was seconded by the Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton, and carried unanimously.

The Chairman announced that there were no candidates for election to membership of the Council, other than the six members who retired by rotation and sought re-election. The following six members were accordingly unanimously elected : Lord Charles Hope, Mr G. W. Lambert, Dr T. W. Mitchell, Mr W. H. Salter, Mrs W. H. Salter and Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt, R.N.

Messrs Miall, Savage, Avery & Co. were re-elected Auditors for the forthcoming year.

THE Hon. Treasurer has pleasure in acknowledging the following contributions to the Society's funds :

Mr T. Eugène Wood	-	-	-	£5	0	0
Miss E. M. Leaf	-	-	-	10	0	

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#### THE MYERS MEMORIAL LECTURE, 1939

THE Frederic W. H. Myers Memorial Lecture, the Sixth of the Series, was delivered by the Very Rev. W. R. Matthews, K.C.V.O., D.D., Dean of St Paul's, at Manson House, 26 Portland Place, London, W. 1, on Wednesday, 17 January 1940, at 3 p.m. THE PRESIDENT in the Chair.

The Lecture, which is entitled "Psychical Research and Theology", has been published in *Proceedings*. It can also be obtained (from the Secretary) as a separate publication, uniform with the five preceding Lectures, price 1s.

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#### PRIVATE MEETINGS

THE 167th Private Meeting of the Society was held in the Society's Library on Wednesday, 28 February 1940, at 3.30 p.m.

A paper entitled "An Experiment in Long-Distance Telepathy between London and Athens" was read by the Research Officer, Mr C. V. C. Herbert.

THE 168th Private Meeting of the Society was held in the Society's Library on Wednesday, 20 March 1940, at 5.30 p.m. MR W. H. SALTER in the Chair.

A paper entitled "Experiments in the Paranormal Cognition of Drawings" was read by Mr W. Whately Carington, which will be published in *Proceedings*.

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#### MISS ALICE JOHNSON

AFTER Part 161 of our *Proceedings*, containing an Obituary of Miss Alice Johnson had gone to press, we received some further particulars of her scientific work, which will be of interest to our members.

In 1884 she contributed to the *Proceedings* of the Royal Society a paper "On the changes and ultimate fate of the blastophore in the newt (*Triton Cristatus*); this paper was later printed in an expanded form in the quarterly *Journal* of Microscopical Science. In 1886 she contributed to the *Proceedings* of the Royal Society, a further paper

“ On the development of the Cranial nerves of the newt ”. At that time contributions by women to the Royal Society's *Proceedings* were a considerable rarity.

A former colleague of Alice Johnson writes :

“ When the Society was housed in 20 Hanover Square, it had for neighbour the Irish Literary Society, of which W. B. Yeats was a leading member. He used sometimes to drop into the Society's rooms, and on one occasion after a talk with Alice Johnson, whose attitude to psychic phenomena was a good deal more critical than his own, he said to me, as he left the office, ‘ It is my belief that if you people had been standing round when the Almighty was creating the world, He couldn't have done ut. ’ ”

### CASE : COINCIDENT DREAMS

THE following was communicated to the Society by The Hon. Mrs Robert Trefusis, O.B.E. :

#### *Statement by Mrs Trefusis*

On the morning of February 5th Miss Granville Hey came into my office and told me the following : That the night before, viz. the Sunday night, February 4th, she had had an awful dream, that she had dreamt that Mary Bromwich was being murdered, that she saw it quite distinctly, and that I had appeared and started the most awful screaming, and went on and on. She said that in her dream she said to herself : this cannot be real, as Mrs Trefusis would never scream like that.

Mary arrived in the building about half an hour after this, and a little later on when I went into the office where she works, she said to me, “ Wasn't it funny Miss Granville having that dream, as I dreamt that I was being murdered last night.” I said at once, “ Did you tell Miss Granville that before or after she told you of her dream? ” and she said, “ Oh, I didn't mention it until Miss Granville told me.”

However, she then told me that she had told her husband about her dream that morning, and I have ascertained that she told him before she had had any communication with either of us.

(Signed) DOROTHY M. E. TREFUSIS

At the request of the Research Officer, Mrs Trefusis has obtained the following signed statements from Miss Granville Hey and Mrs Bromwich.

*Statement by Miss Granville Hey*

On Sunday night, February 4th, 1940, I dreamt that Mrs Bromwich and I were in the back of an old-fashioned open touring car. Suddenly when the car was stationary, Mrs B. was shot through the left temple. She fell back but was not apparently dead. Before I could attend to her, Mrs Trefusis rushed up and started screaming, "Who did it?"; but there did not appear to be anyone else there.

On arrival at the Office on Monday morning, I told Mrs Trefusis about it, about half an hour before Mrs B. arrived.

I have never before dreamt about Mrs Bromwich or Mrs Trefusis.

(Signed) R. GRANVILLE HEY

*Statement by Mrs Bromwich*

I dreamt I was at a railway station, and on the opposite platform there seemed to be a nasty crowd. Instead of rails, water separated us. This crowd came across to our hut,<sup>1</sup> and we tried to prove to them they could do us no harm as we showed them the needles we had which could kill someone: they were like large gramophone needles.

Well, we thought they had gone. Next I remember being in a room and turning round and seeing one of the men, and he had the needles and started hurling them at me, and I felt them going into my body; and in the room with me was my small niece and I was terrified they would touch her and screamed for my sister-in-law but she never came. I just felt myself dying and could do nothing, and the fear of my niece being hurt was worrying me.

I told my husband when I woke up what a nasty dream I had had.

I have never before dreamt of being murdered.

Dream took place between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. on night of Sunday, February 4th.

(Signed) MARY D. BROMWICH

*Statement by Mr Bromwich*

My wife told me about this dream the next morning, and how she had been murdered by a form of a silver needle.

(Signed) H. G. BROMWICH

The original statements are in the possession of the Society.

<sup>1</sup> In answer to an inquiry, Mrs Bromwich has explained that in her dream there was a *hut* on the platform instead of a waiting-room.

## A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE?

BY T. R. C.

[The following record of a personal experience has been sent by a correspondent who is known to us as a scientifically interested observer of subjective events. F. W. H. Myers, referring to the possible nature of experience at or immediately following the time of death, speaks of "a small group of cases, which I admit to be anomalous and non-evidential—for we cannot prove that they were more than subjective experiences—yet which certainly should not be lost, filling as they do, in all their grotesqueness, a niche in our series otherwise as yet vacant."<sup>1</sup> The present record is an interesting addition to the few cases of this type which are available.]

During the afternoon of 22nd June 1939, having been seriously ill for two or three days, I began to feel that I might not live much longer.

By about 9.0 that night I had become entirely resigned to death. An injection given me by the doctor failed to produce sleep except for very brief periods, and my vitality got gradually lower in a fluctuating way. More than once it reached a very low level, when I felt a numbness in my feet. On one occasion the numbness crept upwards until there was no sensation of feeling below my knees and very little in my fingers and hands. For a moment my heart suddenly failed to beat and I was convinced that the end had come.

The following account is an attempt to describe my feelings on this particular occasion; but more than once during the night I had the same experiences, though in a less vivid form.

I seemed to be descending a vertical shaft or tube roughly the shape of an inverted chimney-stack. (It may, however, have been cylindrical, the slightly conical aspect being just a matter of perspective.) The shaft seemed if anything rather narrow in diameter, but there was no feeling of constriction. Nor was there any sense of gravity, or of going down head or feet first—in fact no physical feeling at all except that of sight and descent. (The speed was perhaps rather rapid at first but subsequently indeterminate.)

I cannot describe what composed the shaft beyond saying that it seemed to be made of some impenetrable unmaterial substance or vapour, intensely luminous in appearance—not absolutely white, more a very light cream colour—and had a definite mesh-shaped

<sup>1</sup>F. W. H. Myers, *Human Personality*, Vol. II, §713. The whole passage suggests some explanation of the "dreamlike and fantastic" form which such experiences are observed to take.

pattern of black intersecting lines in squares. Owing to their extreme brightness it was impossible to see through the sides or walls.

Some distance below the bottom of the open shaft, which ended as it were in mid-space, was a flat level surface resembling an apparently endless desert of which I could only see a comparatively small part; though as I neared the bottom the range of vision automatically expanded. Above this surface was an indescribable atmosphere unlike anything on earth, dull and opaque, rather dimly lit and all of one monotonous colour, a curious dark drab. It gave me the impression of being boundless except for the level surface below.

The atmosphere was not uninhabited though it is impossible to describe its occupants of whom I caught only the vaguest glimpses as they hovered about half-hidden in a sort of foliage. (I felt certain that these winged spirits or souls, whatever they were, had all previously lived on this earth.)

I can think of no other positive terms in which to describe what might perhaps best be called "The Shades". The main impressions it made on my mind were *negative*, set out very roughly in order of intensity as follows

1. Monotony of drab colour.
2. Silence.
3. Absence of pleasure.
4. Extreme banality, sombre rather than actually melancholic.
5. A feeling that everything was of a lower order, or on a lower scale than what one is accustomed to on earth.
6. A considerable differing from earthly conceptions of time and distance, too vague for exposition or even for clear comprehension at the time.
7. Absence of pain. (This may have been an afterthought.)

[N.B.—These impressions would naturally arise from the before-mentioned absence of all physical feeling except that of sight.]

The main sensations I experienced were as follows :

The shaft was simply a brief transitional state of being, connecting life on this earth with that of The Shades.

I had *actually* left this earth, but as long as I remained in the shaft it would be possible for me to return.

There was no sense of my going to *fall* through the bottom of the open shaft on to the surface beneath—as aforesaid, no sense of gravity. If I did reach the bottom of the shaft I should simply escape or *move* from its confines into the Shades, at which moment

death would occur, and return to earth would become wholly impossible. I should then no longer be in any way confined, but free to explore at my leisure and will, in novel conditions of time and distance, the strange and rather unwelcome surroundings that began to expand as my range of vision increased; free to get into communication with "dead" people whom I had known on this earth.

There was a marked feeling of disappointment, not so much at leaving this earth as of a sense of banality or commonplaceness in the earth I was approaching; an earth which was, unexpectedly, far inferior to the vague conception of heaven or a future life I had hitherto entertained. Put very bluntly, it did not come up to expectations!

Simultaneously with this feeling was a partially compensating sense that this was not the end, merely the beginning of another life in which, somehow, I should not be entirely separated from those whom I was leaving on this earth (though they would be from me), and in which I was just about to rejoin several who had previously departed from me by death. In other words I felt that the new approaching life was a mere continuation (in not very pleasant circumstances) of what was ending here. This was, perhaps, my most vivid sensation—satisfaction at the *supreme certainty* that Life did not end on this earth.

I also felt a keen sense of wonderment at what was approaching, vaguely comparable to the feeling of entering a new school. Mingled, however, with this was a curious feeling of self-consciousness and surprise at finding myself still my present age, and not entirely unfamiliar with my rapidly approaching new surroundings.

These impressions and sensations, objectively imposed on my mind, I have just strung together as best I can. My keenest recollection is that of reaching the very bottom of the shaft and feeling that it was my moral duty to make an effort to return to earth. To describe this, however, would be to deal with subjective matter (concerning my conscience, etc.) which I have tried throughout to avoid.

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### IMAGES OF THE SELF

WE have received only three letters describing images of the self seen in dreams, and no description of such an image seen otherwise than in dream, during seven weeks following the last issue of the *Journal*. In this, it will be remembered, there was printed an account of a clearly visualised and externalised self-image, seen by

Baroness de Kakucs in a state of consciousness somewhat resembling that in which hypnogogic pictures are commonly formed, though in this case sleep did not follow, and the experience was in other ways unlike that of the typical hypnogogic dream. Considering the question put by Professor H. H. Price in his Presidential Address, whether images of the self are not extremely rare, we suggested that members should send notes of any similar experiences that might be known to them. There has been, at any rate, no response from our members suggesting that such experiences can be regarded as common.

Indeed, two of the correspondents who write of visualising themselves in dreams speak with considerable doubt on the question whether they have dreamed of true self-images (in the visual sense) or only of figures "known", in the dream, to be themselves. The third correspondent describes a clear dream-picture of himself—seen standing on a ladder, and wearing a hat; but he, again, expresses a feeling of doubt whether the figure was *visually* identified as that of himself or only "known" to be himself. It would appear that self-images observed in dreams are presentations which, like dream-presentations of other people, shade off from visual verisimilitude into a mere impression of the dream-personality, coupled with a visual image which may be vague or, in some cases, absurdly unlike the person "known" to be represented. The dream-mind is not, in fact, very often concerned with verisimilitude.

The result, so far, of inquiry from our members is that no case has been reported which resembles the experience of Baroness de Kakucs in presenting an image of the self that can be identified by form and feature or by other visible characteristics.

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### CORRESPONDENCE

SIR,—Among the many points of interest raised by Professor Price in his recent Presidential Address, one at least is perhaps capable of receiving some light from experience. Professor Price urges the importance of getting accurate descriptions of what the subject experiences in extra-sensory perception. It would be best, he says, if the experimenter himself could have these experiences and particularly if psychologists and philosophers could have them, for they would know exactly what points to look out for and how to compare the supernormal with the normal sensory experience. In this way we should accumulate material for building a hypothesis of the extra-sensory process.

Unfortunately the excellent plan seems to be fraught with difficulty. The indications occurring in my work with Miss G. M. Johnson (which I give for what they are worth) tend to show that we are forced to deal with two separate states of consciousness, one belonging to the extra-sensory experience and the other to normal sensory experience, and that the *liaison* between them is of the slightest, so that the critical faculty cannot be carried over from one to the other.

In January 1936, Miss Johnson read a paper to the *S.P.R.*, which was specially designed to describe her experiences during the process of acquiring extra-sensory knowledge. This paper was not published, which is perhaps to be regretted, since any facts which serve as a guide in our present necessarily wild state of theorising are not to be despised. She laid stress on the fact that her extra-sensory knowledge lies in a separate compartment of consciousness from her normal knowledge; and she gave examples. A typical and common experience of hers is that of meeting a person without an appointment. She will turn up unexpectedly where that person is and while that person is wishing to find her. When this happens, she does not have the experience of entertaining a proposition in her conscious mind, such as, "I know that A is now at the place X and I must therefore go to X to find him or her". (I do not know whether her state of mind can strictly be called "cognitive".) If she is in possession of "knowledge", that knowledge exists in a parallel and separate compartment of consciousness and not in her normal consciousness. She experiences an urge or inclination to go to the place X, coupled with something comparable with a visual image of A, which is somehow linked with the idea of X. But it must not be thought that the image of A stands in the same relation to conscious thought as does an image called up by the imagination. It is not in a position to be scrutinised or analysed; moreover she says that the whole experience happens in a flash. (I think however that the *urge* may be continuous.) To use her own words, she "sees A at the back of her mind". The point is that none of the experience—urge or image—occurs in that part of the consciousness which can be subjected to critical analysis, so that a trained psychologist, having the experience, would be little better off than an amateur. It sometimes happens that, while this extra-sensory experience is going on, a parallel process of logical deduction is going on in the normal part of the consciousness. Thus, while "knowing" extra-sensorily that A is at X, Miss Johnson may be reasoning that he is much more likely to be at Y: and she may actually go to Y, still "knowing" extra-sensorily that he is at X.

Here the two conscious fields would appear to be independent. But it sometimes happens that a partial piece of extra-sensory "knowledge" will finish as a logical train of reasoning in the conscious mind, and thus, although starting correctly, may end in a false conclusion. This gives evidence of a certain amount of bridging between the two states of consciousness. It also suggests what probably occurs when the pronouncement of a genuine sensitive turns out to be wrong.

The suggestion that the extra-sensory faculty might be brought under control may therefore be impracticable in principle: or it may be practicable only after the application of a difficult technique. Perhaps this conclusion does not sound very helpful: yet the mere knowledge that important cognitive processes of some sort are going on in a department of the mind separated from normal consciousness (but comprised within the same personality), may help to fill in the perspective for a psychical theory. It *may* turn out that normal consciousness, with its own range of concepts, is not so much in the centre of things as we thought but, rather, is a highly specialised by-product evolved for dealing with an odd little corner of the universe called the "physical world".

It would seem to be essential that as many workers as possible should examine the subjective experiences of sensitives with the importance of theory in view. The present vogue of statistical research does not encourage this, since it places all the importance on the results and none on the process. But the subjective experiences of a reliable subject, vivid and impressive as they are, do in themselves constitute evidence for the supernormal, which it would be unreasonable to ignore.

Yours, etc., G. N. M. TYRRELL.

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#### EVIDENCE OF SURVIVAL AND OF TELEPATHY BETWEEN THE LIVING

DEAR SIR,—Part 150 of *Proceedings* has, it seems to me, brought to the fore a somewhat curious and paradoxical situation.

On the one hand we have the very striking material presented in Mr Thomas' paper on his proxy sittings<sup>1</sup>—so difficult to account for, in fact, that even Professor Dodds seems to be rather "stumped" in his efforts to explain it. In fact, his only alternative suggestion is that the supernormal information undoubtedly displayed was

<sup>1</sup> "A Proxy Experiment of Significant Success," *Proc.*, Vol. XLV, p. 157.

obtained by unconscious telepathic transfer from persons at great distances—persons who were not thinking of the facts at the time, and even unaware (specifically) of the progress of the experiments.

On the other hand we have the negative results in simple telepathy reported by Professor Thouless!<sup>1</sup> In these it was found that the greatest difficulty was experienced in securing even the faintest indications of telepathy—and this when both agent and percipient were actively co-operating; when the information to be conveyed was vividly in the mind of the agent, and when the time-element was obviously the same for both. (This difficulty in obtaining positive results has, seemingly, been noted also by Mr Soal and others, in their recent tests.)

Now the point is this: If telepathy be such a universal, free-and-easy process, as postulated by Professor Dodds, why does it not evidence itself in the telepathic experiments? And if it be as rare and difficult a process as the telepathic experiments seem to indicate, how is it that it manifests itself so easily and with such enormous complexity in the spiritistic experiments?

One cannot both have one's cake and eat it; and this seems to be a case in point. Surely (to vary the metaphor) there must be a "nigger in the wood-pile" somewhere!

Of course, it may be contended that Mrs Leonard's "subliminal" is a very rare one, capable of acquiring such information in a way quite impossible to the "normal" person. (It is this ability, in fact, which constitutes her a medium.) But this is tantamount to saying that the ability to obtain supernormal information is likewise rare, and that only few subjects possess it. . . . Yet when this very point is emphasised by experimenters in E.S.P., they are immediately accused of subterfuge, and the assumption made that, if telepathy be a fact, it should be capable of demonstration by anyone at any time—as witness the remark by Professor Thouless that "if E.S.P. is a genuine phenomenon, it is to be hoped that investigators of it will so standardise the conditions that the results can be repeated in any laboratory".

If special psychic ability is necessary in order to obtain spiritistic (telepathic) information, why should it not be necessary in order to ensure significant E.S.P. results? And if it is a mere excuse, and not really necessary, in the E.S.P. tests, then why isn't everyone a medium? Either outstanding psychic ability is rare or it isn't: if it *is*, why not grant this in telepathic experiments? If *not*, then why aren't the E.S.P. tests more successful?

<sup>1</sup> "Report on Glasgow Repetition of Dr Rhine's Experiments on Extra-Sensory Perception," *ibid.*, p. 252.

Assuredly it is easy to "standardise the conditions", but unfortunately that is not the main problem involved. The problem is to "standardise" the psychic faculties of the participants in the experiments—a very different matter! I am quite convinced, from personal experience, that there is an element in E.S.P. tests which does not and probably never will lend itself to statistical analysis, much as this may be regretted. And this element is the most important one involved, being in fact the whole *crux* of the matter. Let me give an illustration of this.

On numerous occasions I have tried experiments in E.S.P., using the regular Zener cards while doing so. The results were always "chance". During the afternoon of March 6, 1937, some friends came in to tea, and I tried again, with the usual results. Soon after they had gone, however, I said to my wife, "I feel psychic! Let's try some tests now!" We tried five runs through the pack of coloured Zener cards, I acting as percipient. During these trials my correct "hits" were: 9, 13, 13, 18, 12. I *felt* that I was getting the cards correctly, whereas on all previous occasions I had felt that I was merely guessing. This feeling of uncertainty was noted on all subsequent occasions, when my averages again fell to "chance".

Now, on this particular occasion, I am convinced, something happened inside me which rendered such success possible—which opened a door, so to speak, to telepathic impressions. What it was that happened, and what this Door may be, I have not, of course, the ghost of an idea. But I am also convinced that, if we knew this, we should have gone a long way toward understanding the secret of telepathic transfer—and perhaps even more startling psychic phenomena.

The point I wish to make, however, is that this peculiar subjective condition is not subject to laboratory control or to statistical treatment. It is rare and spontaneous, linking it to the dramatic and striking "spontaneous" cases, which seemingly illustrate the same inner mechanism, quite beyond the voluntary control of the subject.

Emotion plays a major rôle in all such spontaneous cases, and I am convinced that it is largely due to the absence of this emotional factor that experimental cases fall so far short of the spontaneous ones, in all telepathic experiences.

I fully realise that all this must prove highly exasperating to the mathematician; but that is part of the penalty he must pay for becoming a psychological researcher!

To return once more to the point raised at the beginning of this letter: Professor Dodds frankly acknowledges that there are only

two conceivable theories capable of accounting for the facts contained in the Thomas proxy sittings. These are (a) the telepathic, and (b) the spiritistic. All others he raises only to dismiss them; and in this he agrees with Hodgson, Hyslop, Lodge and many others who have discussed similar cases. Professor William McDougall, also, in summing-up his impressions of the material contained in John E. Thomas' book *Beyond Human Cognition*, stated that the alternatives seemed to lie between some extensive and hitherto unproved type of telepathy, and genuine spirit communication. The alternatives seem to be much the same here.

Without in any way attempting to decide this question, two points may, I think, be made in conclusion. These are:

(1) Dr Hodgson, in working with Mrs Piper, tried the telepathic hypothesis for ten years, and the spiritistic hypothesis for another ten years, and came to the deliberate conclusion that the latter was justified, while the former was not.

(2) Those who reject telepathy, or refuse to accept it as a *vera causa*, are left with no other alternative *but* spiritualism. If there be but two alternatives, and one of these be rejected, the other must be accepted. For, as I said in a lecture, some time ago, before the Anthropology class at Columbia University (which had tried to discredit Rhine's work), "You had jolly well *better* believe in telepathy, because if you don't there is no possible escape from spiritualism as an explanation of the phenomena!"

I don't think they liked it very much, but it is the truth nevertheless. The rarer such telepathic "faulities" are shown to be, the more striking and convincing do the seemingly spiritistic messages become.

In all this, of course, I am not contending that the spiritistic interpretation is necessarily the true one. I am merely endeavouring to emphasise the weaknesses of the alternative explanations. Time alone will tell which interpretation is correct.

Yours, etc.,

HEREWARD CARRINGTON.

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#### CRITICISMS OF REVIEWS

##### *Moses and Monotheism*

SIR,—In the Proceedings for December 1939 (Part 160, Vol. XLV) the reviewer of Professor Freud writes, "His undeviating search for truth... has never been surpassed in the history of

science" (page 346). On the opposite page is a review of Professor Freud's book *Moses and Monotheism*.

Now a good deal of archaeological evidence has come to light that bears both on Moses and Monotheism. It contradicts Professor Freud's conclusions. For example, Moses died before Ikhnoton's reign. Monotheism goes back long before Ikhnoton's time.

The contents of Professor Freud's book are a series of ingenious speculations on the part of himself and other people. But, to use the language of our Society, this is not "veridical". We demand rigorous evidence in psychical matters. How comes it that Professor Freud's speculations about Moses and Monotheism are to be exempted, and to be dignified with the honoured name of science? Why strain at gnats in *Psychical Research* when we swallow camels elsewhere?

Yours very truly, CHARLES MARSTON.

(Sir Charles Marston has explained, on inquiry, that the view of the historical evidence assumed in the above letter is that expressed in his book, *The Bible Comes Alive*, and in his other publications.—ED.)

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#### THE STUDY OF PSYCHIC EXPERIENCE

SIR,—In the January-February, 1940, issue of the *Journal* appears a review, signed Laurence J. Bedit, in which occurs the following passage: "This book is not by any means a scientific one in the narrow sense: no proofs are offered. That is an aspect of research which can, however, well be left to the mechanised type of psychic researcher, who has in the past done much reliable work, if only by elimination, in establishing the occurrence of parapsychological phenomena. Nowadays, however, when all but the 'closed' mind accepts these as facts, this book offers something of greater interest, which is a record of what is obviously real experience."

The writer of this passage is, of course, alone responsible for it. Nevertheless, may I be allowed to say, in most restrained language, that I think it somewhat ill-judged? What the writer means by scientific "in the narrow sense" I do not know. Nor do I know how a book on psychical research in which "no proofs are offered" can be scientific in any sense. In the next sentence "reliable" is presumably a misprint for "valuable"; but what on earth is "the mechanised type of psychic researcher"? The context appears to imply that the writer means by this the type of researcher who "establishes" the reality of phenomena by "eliminating" error

and fraud. Is it seriously suggested that this type of investigation was useful only "in the past" and that "nowadays" this kind of work is superfluous?

In the following sentence, what are "these" parapsychological phenomena which "all" "but the 'closed' mind accepts"? The book under review (of which I know nothing and which is not in question so far as this letter is concerned), we are told, "offers something of greater interest" than parapsychological phenomena (this is what the writer says, but he means, I think, something of greater interest than "mechanised" investigation). How then are the experiences recorded in it "obviously" real? The writer is of course quite entitled to use his intuition rather than his critical faculties in reviewing books—but not dogmatically to assert, as a general principle, the superiority of the former over the latter as a method of research.

Yours, etc.,

THEODORE BESTERMAN.

(Dr. Bendit's views are, of course, his own; but the question has been raised by others, and notably by the PRESIDENT, whether psychical research should not go beyond the establishment of fact to the construction of theory for its better comprehension. This may involve paying more attention to psychological facts for what they are. It need not involve lowering our standards of evidence in interpreting what they mean.—ED.)

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#### MEDIUMSHIP OF THE LATE MR JACK WEBBER

REPORTS of various sittings with Mr Webber, whose death was recently announced, are in the possession of the Society and may be seen by Members and Associates on application to the Research Officer.

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#### DR L. R. G. CRANDON

WE regret to record the death of Dr L. R. G. Crandon of Boston, U.S.A., who had been a member of the Society since 1924. He took a prominent part in the investigation of the phenomena of his wife ("Margery"), and in the heated controversies which resulted from them. In 1929, when on a visit to England with Mrs Crandon, he was granted the loan of the Society's Séance room for an interesting series of sittings, of which a report is to be found in Vol. XXXIX of *Proceedings*.

Several of our members who visited the United States have cause to remember Dr and Mrs Crandon's courteous hospitality.

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### REVIEW

*The Dream World.* By R. L. MÉGROZ. John Lane. 10s. 6d. net.

Mr Mégroz has made an interesting survey of the position of the dream in the estimation of civilized people, from early days up to the present, and prints many records of dreams of different kinds. While Mr de la Marc's recent work, *Behold, this Dreamer*, represents the literary and poetic quality of dreaming and of dream-inspiration, Mr Mégroz may be said to have represented the status of dreaming, as it has been regarded by observant and more or less thoughtful people. It is of interest to note that modern views of dream-psychology, including that of psycho-analysis, are not so foreign to the views of early commentators as might have been expected, and that old interpretations of the significance of dreaming have been by no means confined to fanciful and superstitious patterns.

A proportion of the general interest in dreams is concerned with those that have, or seem to have, a paranormal character, and this proportion is fairly represented in the examples that Mr Mégroz has chosen. He is not concerned with the question of strict evidence for paranormality in dreaming, his general plan being rather to survey the field of human regard for dreams than to criticise any views that may be held. Psychical research workers may wish that paranormal dreams had been included for which more definite and accurate evidence could be adduced, but the setting-out of such evidence is an elaborate and often a cumbrous business, somewhat outside the scope of a book of this kind, not primarily intended for students of psychical matters. The value of the work lies in the conspectus that it provides of dream-activity in many aspects, and in the very readable and often acute commentary with which Mr Mégroz has strung his material together.

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### NOTES ON PERIODICALS

*Revue Métaphysique.* May-June 1939.

*A Metagnome graphologist: M. Otto Reimann,* by R. WARCOLLIER.

Otto Reimann undertakes to describe persons whose letters he holds and to give a full account of their lives. M. Warcollier here

gives extensive material for judging his achievements. These are somewhat reminiscent of those of Stefan Ossowiecki, though Otto Reimann limits himself as regards his "objects" to letters.

*Great Vision of Crosses, Armies and Fights in the Air*, by C. DE VESME.

M. de Vesme finishes his series. He rejects the explanations which have been advanced from various sides and says we must seek further for the true cause of those strange happenings.

*Psykisk Tidsskrift*. July-September 1939.

*Nona. Louisa's Secondary Personality*, by DR THORSTEIN WEREIDE.

Louisa is a Hungarian medium, and Nona has been her companion from childhood. Experiments with this medium at Oslo in 1930 produced phenomena of the order of materialisations and direct writing. Jorgen Bull of Oslo made experiments with Louisa-Nona which resulted in the appearance of the word "Nona" on suitably secured photographic plates.

*The Mediumship of Fru Ingeborg Kober*. K. EMIL BODTKER.

The author describes Fru Kober's various trance-states, including "sleeping trance", "Waking trance" and "half trance", and certain of her phenomena, comprising evidence for the identity of a visiting spirit, and reading in closed books. Reference is made to the book test given by her to Mr Besterman (see *Journal*, Vol. XXVII, p. 343.

*An Account of New Control and Experimental Methods for Psychic Phenomena*. By DR G. A. SCHWAIGER.

Dr Schwaiger was the vice-president of the Austrian Psychical Research Society. He devised a new method of control for physical phenomena, an apparatus somewhat similar to that devised by Dr Osty. In his experiments with Rudi Schneider his results were, however, negative.

*Tijdschrift Voor Parapsychologie*. November 1939.

*Prophecy and the Problem of Time*. DR J. F. CARRIÈRE.

Dr Carrière discusses the theory that time has a varying significance for individuals, and that prophecy may be thus tentatively explained.

*Some Remarks on Memory*. By DR W. H. C. TENHAEFF.

Dr Tenhaeff discusses the connection of memory with the brain and the views of physicians and philosophers, ancient and modern,

on the subject. He further deals with psychoscopy and the theory of the super-individual consciousness, and finally remarks on the theory, common to Leibniz and Osty, that every man is, in his "deepest self" acquainted with his future, so that those who prophesy a man's future merely read his subconscious mind.

H. E. K.

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#### ERRATUM

In the *Journal* for Jan-Feb. 1940, p. 152, 6th line up, for "Baroness de Kallucs" read "Baroness de Kakucs".

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#### THE *JOURNAL* IS PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION

The attention of Members and Associates is drawn to the private nature of the *Journal*, from which no quotations should be made without the previous consent of the Council. Ever since the first issue of the *Journal* in 1884, much of the material appearing in it has been contributed on the definite assurance that the *Journal* is, as stated on the cover, issued "For private circulation among Members and Associates only". The Council hope that all Members and Associates will continue to co-operate with them in maintaining this privacy.

# JOURNAL

OF THE

## Society for Psychical Research

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### NEW MEMBERS

*(Elected 20 March 1940)*

**Cozens Gentry, F.**, The Leas Hotel, Folkestone, Kent.

*(Elected 1 April 1940)*

**Bartholomew, Ralph**, 14 West 10 Street, New York, U.S.A.

*(Elected 29 May 1940)*

**Fanshawe, Miss M. M.**, Kerry House, Basil Street, London, S.W. 3.

**Gardiner, S. M.**, 19 Orchard Road, Erdington, Birmingham 24.

**Librarian**, Trinity College, Cambridge.

**McLean, Dr Gladys F. A.**, 3 Avenham Coloniade, Preston, Lancs.

**Smith, B. D.**, 145 Ramsden Road, London, S.W. 12.

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### MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

THE 379th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 20 March 1940, at 3.45 p.m., THE HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTTELTON, G.B.E., in the Chair. There were also present: Mr Whately Carington, Miss Jephson, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Miss Newton, Mr W. H. Salter, Mr S. G. Soal, Admiral the Hon. A. C. Strutt, and Mr G. N. M. Tyrrell; also Mr C. V. C. Herbert, Research Officer, Mr Kenneth Richmond, Editor of the *Journal*, and Miss E. M. Horsell, Assistant-Secretary.

The Minutes of the last two Meetings of the Council were read and signed as correct.

The Report of the Annual General Meeting was presented and taken as read.

One new Member was elected. His name and address are given above.

The following co-optations were renewed for the year 1940-1941 : Mr Oliver Gatty, Sir Robert Gower, M.P., Mr Gerald Heard, Professor Julian Huxley, Miss Newton, the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, Mr G. N. M. Tyrrell and Miss Nea Walker.

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THE 380th Meeting of the Council was held at 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. 1, on Wednesday, 29 May 1940, at 5.30 p.m., THE HON. MRS ALFRED LYTTTELTON, G.B.E., in the Chair. There were also present : Mr Whately Carington, Miss I. Jephson, Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Miss I. Newton and Mr G. N. M. Tyrrell ; also Mr Kenneth Richmond, Editor of the *Journal*, Mr C. V. C. Herbert, Research Officer, and Miss E. M. Horsell, Assistant-Secretary.

The Minutes of the last Meeting of the Council were read and signed as correct.

Five new Members were elected. Their names and addresses are given above.

Dr Gardner Murphy and Dr J. B. Rhine were elected Corresponding Members of the Society, and Miss H. Carruthers was elected an Honorary Associate.

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#### PRIVATE MEETING

THE 170th Private Meeting of the Society was held in the Society's Library on Wednesday, 29 May 1940, at 3.30 p.m. MR KENNETH RICHMOND in the Chair.

A paper entitled "The Ultra-Perceptive Faculty" was read by Dr J. Hettinger. A discussion followed in which Mr Whately Carington, Mr C. V. C. Herbert, the Hon. Mrs Alfred Lyttelton and Mr Kenneth Richmond took part.

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#### CASE : THE MISSING WATER VALVE

##### A SEQUEL TO AN EXPERIMENT IN E.S.P.

(The following incident has been communicated by Mr E. P. Gibson, who is known to Members in connexion with the investigation of E.S.P. in the United States.)

On July 19, 1935, Mrs Gibson and myself were testing Mr J. H. for extra-sensory perception. Previous to this time he had produced interesting automatism. His ability to produce poetry spontaneously and rapidly by means of the Ouija board had intrigued us and when the opportunity offered, we decided to test him with E.S.P. cards. The cards used for this experiment were several packs of E.S.P.

eards, prepared by hand-stamping upon playing card blanks. They were quite free from marking and other discernible sensory-cues and were examined before and after the experiment. In 350 trials using the technique of Open Matching, J. H. made 192 hits or an average of 13.72 hits per 25. Mean chance expectation would have been 5 hits per 25. During the experiment he directed the placing of some of the eards from across the room, where he walked slowly back and forth in what seemed a semi-dissociated state. A few runs were made while he sat at a table, with eyes apparently closed, indifferent to remarks in the room, choosing the pile and dealing spasmodically. There appeared to be no difference between the runs made at the table and the runs in which Mrs Gibson laid the eards for him from across the room. He was permitted to shuffle the pack during the first and second runs but when the high scoring tendency manifested with the second run, the shuffling and eard control was taken from his hands. His first 8 runs with this procedure netted the following number of hits: 5, 19, 21, 15, 23, 20, 20, 12.

This series was quite astounding, the apparent E.S.P. ability surpassing any demonstration made by other subjects. It was decided to test him in a practical manner if possible to see whether what we had witnessed could be turned to useful ends.

At the time of this experiment, I was employed as City Engineer of East Grand Rapids, Michigan. It occurred that he might be tested in a manner which might settle a problem which had been perplexing the local water department.

For over a year, that department had been searching for an unrecorded and lost valve on a large water service feeding a large estate outside of the municipal limits. The amount of water being used was considerable, there had been arguments about meter readings, and it was important that the valve be located. Search of the parkway and pavement with a dipping needle had failed to yield anything and there were no municipal records indicating where the valve might be found.

At the close of J. H.'s test in open matching, he was asked as to the location of the lost valve, the property and street intersection being described to him roughly. He asked what there was near by from which such a valve might be located and it was suggested that the corner boundary post of the estate would serve. J. H. then slipped again into the semi-dissociated state which resembled that of light hypnotic trance. Then he said sleepily:

"I get sixty-four feet."

Questioned as to the direction from the pillar in which the valve-box would be found, he said that he had no feeling as to direction

but a feeling as to sixty-four feet. As we were intrigued that J. H. would tackle such an impossible task, the test was described to a witness<sup>1</sup> in a letter dated July 20th and a sketch of the estate was sent him, showing the wide frontage and the direction in which I assumed the missing valve box must lie.<sup>2</sup>

On August 5, 1935, after fruitless searching in various places, the pavement was broken in four places in hope of uncovering something and the missing valve was found four and one-half feet below the pavement of Plymouth Road, the extension box which would have extended to the pavement surface never having been installed. The box had been paved over and had been forgotten.

The valve was found sixty-three feet almost due south of the centre of the corner pillar of the estate. This is within one foot of the dimension given by J. H. on the night of July 20. Throughout it had been my assumption that the valve would be found somewhere east or south-east of the corner pillar and inasmuch as the estate was five hundred feet in width, a wide latitude in possible locations seemed to exist.

The service in question was installed in the winter of 1914-1915. The superintendent who was in charge of the construction was dead. One of the labourers who had worked on the installation was found after the guess of J. H. was made and he suggested opening Plymouth Road instead of hunting further in Robinson Road where our early search had been made. The suggested location pointed out by this man proved to be ten feet away from the location where the valve was finally found.

Plymouth Road was paved with concrete in 1927 and no valve indications or signs of a trench had been in existence since that period. J. H. did not come to Grand Rapids to live until 1929. Normal knowledge of the valve location would be impossible for him. The whole perceptive incident took place at my home, five miles air line distance from the location discussed. The topic was brought up on the spur of the moment.

Two hypotheses offer themselves in this case. (1) The location of the valve measurement so closely was merely fortuitous and a case of coincidence. (2) The other theory is that extra-sensory perception operated in some manner so as to furnish J. H. with a distance measurement to the missing shut-off. In the light of his E.S.P. scoring which occurred coincidentally, I am inclined to favour the

<sup>1</sup> Known to the Society. We have due confirmation that the incident was put on record as described.

<sup>2</sup> Mr Gibson's report to the Society is accompanied by a scale plan, which can be seen at the Society's Rooms.

latter hypothesis. Inasmuch as no one could offer definite information as to the location from memory, clairvoyance seems more tenable than telepathy as an explanation.

The case may have some kind of relationship to the dowsing experiments as I remember reported or made by Sir William F. Barrett and Theodore Besterman in which the dowser worked from maps, locating the water source thereon. In this case, the measurement was given with fair accuracy after a description of the locality, known by sight to J. H., had been given him. The weakest part of the evidence is that J. H. failed to give us any idea of a direction, insisting merely on the figure of sixty-four feet. The actual measurement was sixty-two feet to the pillar face and sixty-three feet to the centre of the pillar.

EDMOND P. GIBSON.

In further correspondence Mr Gibson makes it clear that, as his description implies, the actual discovery of the missing valve was made by the local water engineers without making use of the measurement given by the percipient in this case. Mr Gibson adds a piece of information which helps to define the improbability that knowledge concerning the missing valve could somehow have reached the percipient by normal channels:

“Inasmuch as the measurement was not used by the city employees as a guide, they continued to dig holes on the best information normally available, that of the workman who was found to have worked on the watermain project in 1914-1915 and who remembered that a trench had been dug in Plymouth Road to connect the property, inasmuch as the main in Robinson Road in front of the property at that time was not yet complete and without water. Mr J. H. had no knowledge of this workman and it was after considerable detective work on my part early in August<sup>1</sup> that he was discovered.”

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### FREAK BRIDGE HANDS:

AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO TESTS OF SIGNIFICANCE IN  
PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

BY W. WHATELY CARINGTON

I HAVE been asked to comment on the fact (of which there seems to be no reasonable doubt) that Bridge deals yielding four hands each containing 13 cards of the same suit occur with a frequency such

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* some weeks after the experiment in which the measurement was given.

that the odds against it would be of an "astronomical" order, if chance alone were responsible<sup>1</sup>.

Many people seem to feel that this kind of thing throws doubt on the applicability of probability theory and statistical methods to psychical research. But this is not the case, as I think can be made clear by a simple and non-mathematical discussion.

The argument seems to be substantially as follows: "It is claimed that certain events (e.g. reproductions of drawings or guessings of cards) observed in experiments occur with a frequency such that the odds against their being due to chance are very great: and from this it is argued that some 'paranormal' cause must be invoked to explain them. But even more improbable events occur under the chance conditions of shuffled packs at bridge tables, where there seems no question of anything paranormal being involved at all. And if these normal events violate the supposed 'laws of chance', then it looks as if the laws were wrong, or at least not inviolable. Why then should we not attribute the experimental events to imperfections in these laws rather than to paranormal causes?"

The weakness lies in the assumption that bridge table conditions are chance conditions in the mathematical sense. If they are not, the probability calculations are not applicable, and the whole argument falls to the ground; for probability theory, like every other mathematical procedure, depends on the validity of its assumptions, and if these be unjustified in any practical situation the theoretical treatment will not apply.

Now a pack which is well enough shuffled for the purposes of the game is by no means necessarily "well-shuffled" in the sense assumed by the mathematician. On the contrary, both the nature of the game and the methods of shuffling most commonly used, tend towards facilitating the type of freak hands we are considering.

As a deliberately simplified example, suppose that the dealer picks up four perfect (one-suit) tricks, in any order, and gives them two perfect "fantail" shuffles, thus twice alternating the cards of one half with those of the other half. We should then have

First arrangement :	AAAABBBBCCCCDDDD
Second            ,,	ACACACACBDBDBDBD
Third             ,,	ABCDABCDABCDABCD

which would be dealt to the four players as AAAA, BBBB, CCCC, DDDD, tending towards the type of hand here discussed.

<sup>1</sup> Cf, for example, a letter and note in the *Daily Telegraph* for April 14th, 1940.

It is clear that if this kind of thing happens in *any* part of the pack it will to that extent (which may well be large) reduce the size of the remainder of the pack to be brought into the required order by random shuffling. But, from what we know of the nature of the game and the methods of shuffling usually adopted, we may be pretty sure—as I am confident most players would agree—that something of this sort, in greater or less degree, is likely to be the rule rather than the exception; so that, in general, there will be a definite tendency towards the dealing of hands of this type.

Thus the assumptions on which the mathematical treatment is based will not in general be valid, and the apparently too frequent occurrence of four hands of thirteen of a suit need not surprise us.

The only relevance of this to psychical research is as a reminder that, in addition to guarding against such sources of error as sensory clues and fraud, we must also satisfy ourselves that those conditions are fulfilled which correspond to the randomness of a shuffled pack assumed by probability theory in card problems.

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#### CORRESPONDENCE

SIR,—Professor Broad's Introduction to Mr Whately Carington's and Mr Soal's papers in the current Part of *Proceedings* raises several points which psychical researchers would do well carefully to ponder. May I be permitted to make a few comments on two points, namely, (1) the position of the scientific expert in psychical research, and (2) the relation between quantitative and qualitative investigation of paranormal cognition?

In the first place, it is important to emphasize that psychical research has a technique of its own. The principles underlying this technique are in themselves simple, but not always easy to apply in the varying circumstances arising in the course of any psychical investigation. Success in applying them depends largely on experience. Until these principles have been mastered and the necessary experience in applying them has been gained, any person engaging in psychical research, however distinguished he may be in science or in any other walk of life, must be considered an amateur.

The closer the connection between the expert in psychical research and the expert in whatever branch of learning is specially relevant to any particular investigation, the more satisfactory the results will be. There are two stages of an investigation at which the psychical researcher may wish to call in the expert in some other study, first, in devising and putting into effect a system of control

so as to eliminate deception, normal leakage, or whatever in that particular case may be the danger to be guarded against, and secondly in evaluating the results. The same expert and same technique may happen to be of use at both stages and for both purposes, but this is not necessarily so.

To take, for example, the study of physical phenomena, the first need for the researcher in charge of the investigation is to know how to take precautions against deception, mal-observation, etc., and it is important that as an aid to that technique he should also be familiar with the electrical and photographic technique to which Professor Broad refers : the Society is indeed fortunate in having a Research Officer so well qualified in both these respects. When, however, it comes to evaluating the results it may be necessary to call in aid expert knowledge of the most diverse kind. To take two notable recent instances, in the later stages of Rudi Schneider's mediumship, expert knowledge of the use of infra-red rays was required ; in the later stages of the Margery mediumship, what was needed was expert knowledge of thumbprints. A well-known medium of the last generation produced a wide range of apports, including the freshly laid eggs of exotic birds and cuneiform tablets from Ancient Mesopotamia, or so it was claimed. As it is improbable that any Admirable Crichton will be found who will add to expertise in psychical research a profound knowledge of physics, dermology, ornithology, Assyriology and whatnot, it seems probable that the best results will be achieved by a close co-operation between psychical researcher and scientist, each being content to be an expert at his own job, with sufficient knowledge, if possible, of his partner's job to render their co-operation fruitful.

The real difficulty, however, in the investigation of physical phenomena has for long seemed to me to be, not the psychical researcher's lack of scientific knowledge or assistance, so much as refusal by a large number of mediums to submit to adequate control, whether of the technical or non-technical kind. The first forward move would appear to be of what one may call a political rather than a technical nature, namely, an agreement between all persons seriously interested in this line of investigation to have nothing to do with, and to take no notice in their publications of any mediums who refuse to accept adequate control. In connection with mental phenomena somewhat similar conditions obtain, except that normal leakage of an innocent kind, rather than deception, is the principal danger towards which the control system must be directed.

Professor Broad says of non-statistical investigation of para-

normal cognition "experience shows that it leaves most plain men and scientists completely unmoved". As regards the reactions of plain men my experience in addressing a good number of Societies and Clubs of one's ordinary fellow citizens emboldens me to disagree with Prof. Broad; I find them a great deal impressed by phenomena of the kind collected in "Phantasms of the Living" and the "Census of Hallucinations", and also by such experiments of a non-statistical kind in telepathy and clairvoyance as they may have heard of. The trouble is that they are as much impressed with badly documented and badly evidenced cases as with good ones. Few books connected with psychical research have made as much impression on the general public as J. W. Dunne's "An Experiment with Time" and the book known as "An Adventure", both of which, whatsoever their other points of interest, fall much below S.P.R. evidential standards. The plain man, though probably aware of the general truth that "what the soldier said is not evidence", does not know or at any rate does not bear in mind, those rules regarding contemporary record, corroboration, etc., which experience has taught us to be necessary.

As regards the establishment of the facts, therefore, the plain man needs guidance. As to the evaluation of the facts with reference to the likelihood or otherwise of their being attributable to chance-coincidence, I greatly doubt whether the plain man of average intelligence goes very far astray. It is the sort of problem which he is constantly confronted with in his everyday life, and his success or failure in life depends largely on the decisions he makes when so confronted. I would, in fact, back his judgment against that of the scientist, unless the scientist happens also to be a member of our Society, because the plain man judges without any bias against the paranormal explanation, and the specialised training of the scientist tends to make him rely on criteria which may have no validity in connection with our subject.

So with the non-statistical experiments reported in our *Proceedings* and *Journal*. It is the fact that some of these were not conducted under strict control conditions, reliance being placed (justly, in the circumstances of the time) on the *bona fides* of the persons participating in the experiment. The present generation, accustomed as it is to breach of faith on a scale and in circumstances that our fathers could hardly have imagined, naturally demands that experiments should be framed in such a way that the issue of *bona fides* does not arise. But on the issue of chance or non-chance, which is an entirely separate one, the non-statistical experiments seem to be as conclusive as any statistical experiments so far reported.

The case for statistical experiment should therefore, I suggest, not be based on its supposed superiority over non-statistical work, because in some respects it is inferior, that is to say, less informative, but partly on the desirability of providing a particular type of evidence making a special appeal to minds trained in particular methods, and partly on the need for surveying the subject from as many different angles as possible. It would seriously retard advance in psychical research if spontaneous phenomena, when properly observed and reported, and experiments not amenable to statistical analysis, when conducted under good control conditions, were to be regarded as either obsolete or as of secondary importance to the statistical researches of Mr Carington, Mr Soal and Dr Hettinger, which we all so greatly admire.

Yours, etc., W. H. SALTER.

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#### THE STUDY OF PSYCHIC EXPERIENCE

SIR,—I am not sure, in the midst of Mr Besterman's rather confused attack, what he is really after. But I suspect that I have touched a sore spot in suggesting that psychic research can do something more than to continue in its old routine of collating and collecting (useful as this is), and re-proving what has already been proved *ad libitum* (if not *ad nauseam*) "beyond all reasonable doubt". One cannot build a house without stones. And, of course, the wider the choice of them, the better. But to go on piling stone on stone, even if each be marked "Tested and approved" is to build, not a house but a cairn under which lie ever more deeply buried the bones of creative understanding. But before the material so piled up can be used, a most (in Mr Besterman's view) unscientific process must take place, in that the architect must produce from his subjective intuition the concept of the house he wants to build. Only then does his material justify itself and come alive.

In my opinion, the next step must be the unscientific (Mr Besterman) or meta-scientific (myself) step of approaching psychic material from the viewpoint of experience-values, and trying to understand the subjective psychological meaning of parapsychological happenings to the individual experiencing them. Academic psychology opened up an interesting field. But it had no human, as distinct from laboratory, value until it became linked with subjective experience through Freud in the first place, Jung and others afterwards. The same applies to psychic research.

Yours, etc., LAURENCE J. BENDIT.

## REVIEWS

*The Ultra-Perceptive Faculty.* By J. HETTINGER, PH.D. Rider ; pp. 204. 12s. 6d. net.

Whether we call it the Ultra-perceptive Faculty, or Extra-sensory Perception, or non-sensory Cognition, or something with paranormal in it, we should all agree that Dr Hettinger has made a valuable contribution to its study.

During his experiments, which covered the period from May 1934 to September 1937, Dr Hettinger had the constant advice of Prof. Aveling, and on their completion the book was approved by the University of London for the award of the degree of Ph.D., a further welcome example of the present willingness of academic psychology to recognise and assist serious experimental work in psychical research.

The sensitives tested were two professional psychometric mediums of good reputation. The objects used were of divers kinds, the only stipulation being that they should have been in contact with the "subjects", that is the persons offering them for the experiments. The subjects were never present at the sittings, and the sensitives did not know who they were. "As regards the articles, with very few exceptions they were always enclosed in sealed envelopes and, in the case of one of the sensitives, most of the tests were carried out without her touching the envelopes." The presentation of each object resulted in a "test", and each statement made by the sensitive during a test counted as an "item". There were twelve series of experiments; the total number of tests, each generally lasting an hour, was 623, and the total number of statements or "items" given was 6631.

As the subject-matter of the items was "free", and the chance-probability of any item being a hit could not be determined by the simple process available when, *e.g.*, a pack of playing cards is used, Dr Hettinger had to devise a technique of objective statistical assessment applicable to experiments of this kind. He tried various types of matching, separately or by groups, the items given at one test against those given at other tests, and invited his subjects to say which items they accepted as applicable to themselves, all knowledge as to which test the items were given in having, of course, been kept from them. The different methods are explained by the author, whose comments on the pros and cons of each should be of great help to other researchers faced with similar problems.

The two methods found most useful were (*a*) that of "admixed control items" in which the subject was given a list composed, as to

half, of items given by the sensitive with reference to his object, and, as to the other half, of items given by the sensitive on other occasions; and (b) the method of "paired items", in which each item given by the sensitive with reference to one subject's object was paired with a control item given with reference to another subject. Under each method the subject was asked to indicate the items which were substantially more applicable to him than the others. For methods of matching to be objective, it is of course essential that whoever arranges the grouping or pairing of the items should have no knowledge which of them would be applicable to the subject to whom the list is to be submitted. Dr Hettinger gives his reasons for feeling satisfied on this head.

The scores so obtained were analysed by statistical methods with the general nature of which psychical researchers are by now fairly familiar. There is an analysis of each series of experiments and also for the twelve series taken together, and these should be consulted in the original text. Suffice it here to say that the analysis gave significant results suggesting the possession of ultra-perceptive powers by each of the two sensitives.

Interesting chapters are devoted to a classification of the subject-matter of the items, e.g. emotions, actions, personal characteristics, relationships, names, etc., and to a discussion of the time-factor, that is, references to past, present and future events. The author notes that several apparently veridical items related to events occurring after the object had left the subject's possession, and points out that this tells against a frequently held view, that in psychometry the subject's experiences, while the object is in his possession, are registered in the object by means of vibrations, which the sensitive can later read. He did not find in the experiments any substantial evidence for a paranormal pre-cognitive faculty.

Dr Hettinger considers that as "with very few exceptions the items perceived were found to form part of the subject's psychological make-up at the time of the test", telepathy is the most plausible explanation, but that any theory of ultra-perceptive cognition ought not to exclude clairvoyance. In psychometry the object seems to play an essential part as a connecting link between sensitive and subject, but how it does this the author admits he cannot explain.

We look forward to the account of further experiments which, we understand, Dr Hettinger will shortly be publishing.

W. H. S.

## THE JOURNAL OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY

This Journal was originally started by Dr Rhine to constitute a medium through which the results of experimentation in E.S.P. might be reported and criticised. Dr Rhine has relinquished the editorship and this is now in the hands of Dr Gardner Murphy of Columbia University and Dr Bernard F. Riess of Hunter College, New York City.

The December issue contains a long report of experiments by Pratt and Woodruff designed to test (1) the reality of E.S.P. (2) the effect of size of symbols (figures on the cards), (3) the effect of "experience" of the subject, (4) the effect of newness of material.

Highly significant scoring was obtained which is claimed by the authors to demonstrate the reality of E.S.P. Neither size of symbols nor experience of subject appeared to have any direct relation with the rate of scoring but subjects were found to score significantly better with new material.

The conditions of the experiment are fully reported and great care was taken to exclude the possibility of sensory clues, experimental and recording errors. An elaborate system of checking was devised in order that the charge of deception could not be sustained against the experimenters and others concerned.

Contrary to the policy hitherto adhered to, the editors have published an article dealing entirely with the theoretical side of the subject. This has been contributed by O. L. Reiser and is entitled "Theory of Extra-sensory Perception". There are four constituent elements of the theory, viz. (1) Emergent Evolution, (2) Non-Aristotelian Logic, (3) the notion of Psychic Levels, (4) Religious Humanism.

The local time of a system is transposable across its parts but not outside the system. If the system enters into relations with other systems so as to form an organic whole, a new local time for that organism emerges. This is an Emergent Dimension.

Aristotelian Logic and Newtonian Physics, which are founded upon it, are inapplicable to an organismic world, their fundamental assumptions are invalid and their time is an abstraction from organismic time. The rigorous dichotomies, the point-particle aspect is lost when a new organic whole emerges.

On the new psychic level attained by the organism fresh modes of psychic interaction come into play; thus E.S.P. may be regarded as an emergent faculty. To quote from the article: "Evolution is not through with the human organism, for still higher functions remain to be developed." "Humanity thus appears as a god in embryo, a

developing being with psychic powers—omniscience and omnipresence—which man has hitherto assigned to God.” This doctrine, Dr Reiser says, is a form of humanism.

The object of this brief sketch is to indicate that Dr Reiser’s article merits a careful study by those who are interested in the theoretical side of psychical research.

Kennedy and Uphoff contribute a study of Recording Errors and arrive at the conclusion that these may, in large measure, be responsible for extra-chance scoring. The antecedent positive or negative belief of the recorder tends to produce increased and decreased scores respectively.

An article by Greenwood entitled “A Covariation Statistic” deals with the purely mathematical side.

H. F. S.

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#### BOOKS RECEIVED

*Alchemy Rediscovered and Restored.* By A. COCKREN. Rider ; 158 pp. 6s. net.

*This Spiritualism.* By CHARLES J. SEYMOUR. Longmans ; 143 pp. 5s. net.

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#### MR OLIVER GATTY

As the *Journal* goes to press we learn with deep regret of the sudden death of Mr Oliver Gatty. An Obituary will be found in the accompanying Part 162 of *Proceedings*.

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#### THE *JOURNAL* IS PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION

The attention of Members and Associates is drawn to the private nature of the *Journal*, from which no quotations should be made without the previous consent of the Council. Ever since the first issue of the *Journal* in 1884, much of the material appearing in it has been contributed on the definite assurance that the *Journal* is, as stated on the cover, issued “For private circulation among Members and Associates only”. The Council hope that all Members and Associates will continue to co-operate with them in maintaining this privacy.

# JOURNAL

OF THE

## Society for Psychical Research

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### NEW MEMBERS

(Elected on 30 September 1940)

**Baynes, Dr H. Godwin**, Reed House, Old Avenue, West Byfleet, Surrey.

**Gatty, Mrs Oliver**, The Rectory, Much Hadham, Herts.

**Maas, Waldo A.**, c/o Mrs Jones, The Priory, King's Road, Colwyn Bay, N. Wales.

**Nesbitt, The Lady Faith**, Hinchingbrooke, Huntingdon.

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### PRIVATE MEETING

THE 169th Private Meeting of the Society was held in the Society's Library on Wednesday, 24 April 1940, at 5.30 p.m., SIR LAWRENCE JONES, BART., in the Chair.

A paper entitled "Why I do believe in Survival" was read by Mr B. Abdy Collins.

[We regret that by an inadvertence no record of this Meeting appeared in the *Journal* for May-June 1940.]

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### OBITUARIES

WE deeply regret to record the deaths of Sir J. J. Thomson, O.M., Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, a Vice-President of the Society, and of Sir Oliver Lodge, F.R.S., a Council member and former President: an obituary notice of both will be found in the Part of *Proceedings* accompanying, also of Mr Nathaniel Wedd, Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and a very old member of the Society.

## SIR OLIVER LODGE'S "SEALED ENVELOPE"

As most of our members will know, Sir Oliver Lodge, several years before his death, deposited with the Society a sealed envelope, with instructions that it should not be opened until after his death, the intention being that, if a communication in his name was received through a medium, automatic writing, etc., and was found to correspond with the contents of the sealed envelope, this would provide evidence for survival by elimination, or at least great diminution, of the risk of telepathy from a living mind. The intention of the test would clearly be defeated, if the envelope were opened as soon as any claim, however ill-founded, were made that a communication relating to the contents had been received; the Council accordingly do not propose to be too hasty in opening the envelope.

They will be glad to accept the custody of any communication which those who receive it believe to relate to the contents of Sir Oliver's envelope, until such time as that is opened, and they would suggest to intending depositors the following procedure. The communication should be placed in an envelope on the outside of which should be written the date of receipt, the name of the medium or automatist and other relevant particulars, and this should be placed inside a second envelope addressed to the Society. The officials of the Society will thus have no knowledge of the nature of the communication until Sir Oliver's envelope is opened, and a further step will have been taken towards carrying out the main object of the test.

## CORRESPONDENCE

*To the Editor of THE JOURNAL*

SIR,—There are several points in the current *Journal* and *Proceedings* on which I should like to comment; and I hope you will allow me to do so, for convenience, in a single letter.

First of all I want to add a brief tribute to the memory of Oliver Gatty. I worked with him, during our investigation of Rudi Schneider, for several hours every day for six months; and the personality that revealed itself then, and in later association, is one I shall always consider it a privilege to have known. Oliver Gatty appeared to have every gift: a brilliant, leaping mind, at once open and sceptical, daring in its willingness to play with new ideas, but cautious in not accepting them without the closest examination; the mental and physical energy which enabled him to acquire

specialised knowledge in a wide range of interests; an uproarious sense of humour; a gift for friendship; outstanding personal charm. . . . There can seldom have been any young man so clearly destined for great things. He died as he would have wished, as in fact he did wish, fighting the things he hated, ugliness, cruelty and intolerance.

\* \* \*

I should like to correct a trifling lapse of memory by Mr Gibson in the *Journal* (p. 181). There is no report in *The Divining-Rod* of any case in which a dowser has located water by working from a map. Nor have I ever succeeded in obtaining good evidence of this phenomenon. Published examples of this form of dowsing have doubtful value owing to the unsatisfactory conditions under which they took place. The dowser almost invariably sees the map which he is using and normal map-reading is therefore not excluded.

Professor Broad writes (*Proceedings*, xlvii, 27) that experience shows that a non-statistical report of a paranormal phenomenon "leaves most plain men and scientists completely unmoved" (Dr Bendit, please note). I would not lightly disagree with any *dictum* of Professor Broad, even with the accent on the *obiter*, but I respectfully submit that experience shows nothing of the sort. I go further than Mr Salter (*Journal*, pp. 184-5), for I do not think that the statement is true even of most scientists. Everyone has met the "scientist" who says, "I can't explain just how this was done, but of course it must have been faked." And I am sure that I cannot be the only one who has heard a statistician say, "I can't just put my finger on the flaw in these figures, but of course there must be one." Even the ablest statistician knows himself capable of serious slips in this tight-rope science (cp. successive editions of statistical textbooks), and therefore feels himself justified in falling back on undetected error if he is a determined or lazy sceptic, that is, if he is typical. Such, at any rate, is my experience, and it is also my experience that the only thing really capable of making the average person sit up, be he plain man or scientist, is a good knock-down "experience" of the natural history era. I do not defend this attitude—it is most certainly unscientific—but I do state it as a fact which the S.P.R. must take into account in framing its research.

I have read Mr Carington's new report (*Proceedings*, xlvii, 34 ff.) with the close attention so important a contribution deserves, and I have been struck by an apparent omission from the admirably minute description of his experimental procedure. Mr Carington

seems not to have told us what independent evidence he obtained, as he undoubtedly did, for the display in his flat of given drawings at given times. At present it seems to be open for a critic to suggest that this vital factor rests on the testimony of Mr and Mrs Carington alone. And as Mr Carington has taken so much trouble to devise a fraud-proof technique I hope he will think it worth while to add this one corroborative detail.

Yours, etc., THEODORE BESTERMAN.

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## REVIEWS

*Poltergeists.* An Introduction and Examination followed by Chosen Instances: SACHEVERELL SITWELL, with decorations by IRENE HAWKINS and silhouettes by CRUIKSHANK. Fabers, pp. 419. 15s. net.

*The Most Haunted House in England.* Ten Years' Investigation of Borley Rectory. HARRY PRICE. Longmans. Pp. vi+255. 10s. 6d. net.

It is always a matter of interest to the Psychological Researcher when his own area of activity is carefully explored by an author who has gained distinction in other fields, and there is none of the many departments of Psychological Research where such intervention is likely to be as profitable as that relating to Poltergeists. Specialised knowledge of physical phenomena, of what can be done by simulation, and of the points where the testimony of untrained observers is likely to be fallible, is indeed indispensable, and an author who is not himself a Psychological Researcher must in these matters put his faith in the expert. It may happen that some of his selected experts are not worthy of the faith reposed in them. But in the investigation of Poltergeists a correct judgment of psychological factors is of the utmost importance, and this is a matter as to which a writer with such wide human interests as Mr Sitwell shows is worthy of attentive hearing.

"The method of this book," writes the author, "is as follows. We begin with an Introduction dealing with many Poltergeist stories in general. This is followed by the Examination of particular cases, after which the Chosen Instances are printed. A Story, therefore, which is discussed in the Examination will appear, narrated at full length from the original sources, among our Chosen Instances." This method offers several advantages. The reader with little or no previous knowledge of the subject does not find himself plunged

suddenly into a mass of detailed narrative, the significant points of which he cannot at that stage distinguish; while the danger of superficiality, inherent in any summarising of the original accounts, is also avoided. Praise should also be given to the appropriately fantastic drawings which enliven the book.

The Chosen Instances are divided into ten sections, two of them being the classic Drummer of Tedworth, and the "Supernatural Disturbances" at Epworth Rectory. For five out of the remaining eight sections Mr Sitwell draws, with acknowledgments, on the records of the S.P.R. We may congratulate him on making so good a choice of instances, and ourselves on having been able to provide so much of the raw material for this interesting book.

Before he has read many pages of the Introduction the reader will have discovered that Mr Sitwell's delightful style is the appropriate vehicle of an imaginative insight into the problem as a whole, which is not at all incompatible with scholarly treatment of the records. The significant features common to many reports of Poltergeists are clearly indicated; the scene a backwater of civilisation, the manifestations (often but not always) centring round a child or person of low intelligence, the traditional linkage between one reported case and another, the resemblance of the phenomena to those recorded in the trials of witches, not to mention the lives of the Saints.

It is admitted that many of the minor phenomena are due to trickery, but Mr Sitwell considers that some of the major incidents cannot be explained in that way. In this view he has the support of several Psychical Researchers of eminence, and there are undoubtedly some cases, mostly rather old cases, recorded by persons who obviously were intent on telling the plain truth, and seeming on the face of them beyond explanation by normal means. The question is, would their apparent supernormality have successfully stood the challenge, had the events occurred at a time when the general nature of Poltergeists was as well understood as it now is, and had they been at once submitted to critical examination? It is notable that ever since the days of the Lang-Podmore controversy (see *Proc.* XII and XVII) the advocates of supernormality have largely relied either on what must, in Psychical Research, be regarded as pre-history, or on modern cases where either the accuracy or the critical power of the recorders is open to suspicion. Modernity is not everything: some modern records compare very unfavourably for candour and completeness with, *e.g.*, those of the disturbances in the Wesley household.

As to the purpose behind these incidents Mr Sitwell quite correctly

points out that they are not mere innocent childish pranks designed to amuse. The intention is to mystify, or even terrify, the household and neighbours, and where a subnormal person, child or adult, is the focus of the disturbances, an ulterior purpose, to magnify that person and compensate him (or, more often, her) for the subnormality, can usually be inferred. It is an unpleasant business admittedly, but the evidence for invoking, as Mr Sitwell does, some malign external agency is not very strong.

Borley Rectory, now gutted by fire, has been the scene of one of the most interesting "haunts" of our time, well deserving thorough investigation and record. Mr Price had the good fortune to be called in at a critical stage, and later to have the building for a year (19 May, 1937, to 1938) under his exclusive control.

The peculiar features of the Borley case are that, prior to Mr Price's tenancy in 1937, the Rectory, built in 1863, had been haunted during its occupation by four incumbents, the last of whom left in 1935, and that in 1929, shortly after the third incumbent had been inducted, the nature of the phenomena radically changed. During the first two incumbencies, that of the Rev. Henry Bull, who built the Rectory, and his son "Harry" Bull, there had been no certainly objective phenomena.<sup>1</sup> Apparitions were seen, notably a "Nun"; and footsteps, human and animal, and other noises were heard. Of the "Nun" Mr Price writes "It is quite certain that this figure, seen first by four persons simultaneously, was *objective*. It was solid, like a human being: *not* a subjective image, a phantasm, or figment of the imagination." But neither the appearance of solidity, nor collective perception can be regarded as tests of objectivity; at any rate they were not so regarded by the authors of *Phantasms of the Living* or the signatories of the Report on the Census of Hallucinations, who were entitled to speak with authority. The pattering of feet, etc. are typical of subjective illusions or hallucinations.

In course of time a romantic, but quite unhistoric, legend grew up, of a novice who had broken her vows, and after an unsuccessful elopement with a lay brother in a coach and pair, had been immured in the convent walls. The "coach" was in due course seen by two percipients. It would have been of great interest, and of assistance in judging the "objective" phenomena which happened later, if the

<sup>1</sup> It is not clear from the text (p. 45) and Appendix F, when the ringing of bells mentioned on p. 45 occurred. Whatever the date, it was presumably objective, but without further evidence should not be assumed to be super-normal.

reader had been given a full statement, with dates, showing the growth of the legend and the sequence of the phenomena relating to it. It is of the utmost importance in cases of recurrent phantasms, visual or auditory, to trace with great precision the time and circumstances of the first occurrence, and to show to what extent the later percipients were aware of the earlier percipients' experiences. In the particular case of Borley it may be inferred that the occurrences were public property in the neighbourhood from the start, but who started it all, and what was his or her mental condition?

Mr Price states (p. 74) "that not one of the Bull family . . . is concerned with psychical research or spiritualism, or knows anything of the subject", but this is contradicted by the statement on p. 25 that the Rev. Henry Bull used to retire to a small summerhouse in the early morning to "commune with the spirits". From this and other passages it is evident that the atmosphere of the Bull household at Borley was strongly spiritualistic from the beginning, and highly favourable to the occurrence of hallucinations due to suggestion. This should be borne in mind in considering the many incidents related on the testimony of the Bulls, their servants and neighbours.

The third incumbent, the Rev. G. E. Smith, entered into occupation in 1928, and soon after an enterprising journalist called in Mr Price. It was at this stage that the haunt changed its nature: Poltergeist activities which, whether supernormal or not, were certainly objective, became the leading feature. Mr Price had the good fortune to be present when the first of these occurred. A month later Mr Smith left the Rectory, a large ill-arranged building, expensive and inconvenient to maintain, but the phenomena still continued. In 1930 Mr Smith ceased to be Rector, the Rev. L. A. Foyster, a cousin of the Bulls, was appointed, and he and Mrs Foyster took up residence. To Mrs Foyster, a young woman accustomed to life in a holiday town on the South Coast, the change to the lonely barracks of Borley Rectory must have seemed very dreary.

Poltergeist phenomena continued unabated, and included supposedly supernormal writings addressed to "Marianne", Mrs Foyster's christian name. In October 1931 Mr Price was again called in, and brought with him a party including two members of the S.P.R., Mrs Goldney and Miss May Walker. They experienced various incidents, all of which occurred when Mrs Foyster "was not within our sight or under our control", and the following morning they informed her husband that she *could* have produced all the manifestations normally. Mrs Foyster "stoutly denied that she was in any way responsible, and we accepted her word. The

Rector pointed out that every occupant of the Rectory since the place was built had been similarly accused—which was correct”.

It is to be regretted that nowhere in the book does Mr Price thoroughly tackle the question of trickery. The phenomena occurring during the first two incumbencies were, as we have seen, subjective, and call for no explanation beyond morbid imagination and suggestive hallucination. But many of the later phenomena were of the kind that, alike in the séance-room and in Poltergeist cases, have often been simulated. That any single individual was responsible for them all is improbable, but that does not dispose of the question. Mr Price ends a chapter headed “Can the phenomena be explained?” with the words “that hypothesis [*i.e.* the spirit hypothesis] is immensely strengthened by these phenomena, if they are genuine”. Does Mr Price think they were genuine, or not? Which, if any, does he consider genuine? After ten years’ investigation he ought to be able to enlighten his readers.

The Foysters left in 1936 and the new Rector decided to live in the other parish, with which Borley was now amalgamated. Borley Rectory thus became vacant, and was rented by Mr Price for a year (May 1937 to May 1938). Seldom, if ever, can a Psychical Researcher have had such a magnificent opportunity in his grasp, and never, surely, was such an opportunity so pitifully wasted. What addition to our knowledge might not have resulted if the persons invited to investigate this house, with its long history of recurrent phenomena of many kinds, had been Psychical Researchers of standing, with experience in investigating both hallucinatory phantasms and the physical phenomena of the Séance room, and not a random collection of B.B.C. officials and others whose publicity value notably exceeded their usefulness as investigators of a difficult case? In the long list (Appendix E) of “Official Observers and others . . . who witnessed phenomena or alleged phenomena”, and omitting Mr Price himself, the only persons named who have any standing in Psychical Research are Mrs Goldney and Miss Walker, who visited the Rectory in 1931 and not, it would appear, during the year when Mr Price had exclusive control of it.

After Mr Price’s tenancy expired the house was bought by a layman, and occupied by him till its destruction by fire in February 1939. On 27 March 1938 Miss Glanville (a collateral descendant, it is said, of the author of *Saducismus Triumphatus*) received a planchette message, which began: “Sunex Amures and one of his men [indistinct] MEAN TO BURN THE RECTORY to-night at 9 o’clock . . .” The Rectory was in fact burnt at midnight eleven months later, through the owner carelessly upsetting an oil lamp.

At first this reads like a parody of Mr Dunne in his less evidential moods, but apparently Mr Price takes it, or intends the reader to take it, as a serious instance of prediction.

Particular attention should be called to the footnote on p. 192. "Since the above was written, there has been established (January 1940) at Trinity College, Cambridge, a studentship in Psychological Research—the first of its kind in any British University. My twenty-years fight for academic recognition is at last bearing fruit. H. P." It is always of interest to learn the true history of important events from their authors, but possibly the facts that three of the Society's principal founders were fellows of Trinity, that for nineteen out of the Society's fifty-eight years of membership the Presidency has been held by Trinity men and that for the last twenty years the Mastership of the College has been held by a Vice-President of the Society, may have in some measure contributed to the happy result.

W. H. S.

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*The Mediumship of Jack Webber.* By HARRY EDWARDS. Pp. 119. London: Rider & Co. (1940.) Price 12s. 6d.

It is not easy to know how to review this book. It is in no sense a scientific publication but consists of a collection of stories, incidents and anecdotes where the principal rôle is played by one John Boaden Webber ("Jack Webber"), a public medium, who has recently died and in whose presence alleged physical phenomena have been reported.

The mediumship is of a type familiar to all psychological researchers. There are "ectoplasmic" arms and voice boxes; apports; trumpet manifestations; breakings of furniture, materializations; levitations; and so on. Among the more striking phenomena was the removal of the medium's jacket when his hands and arms were secured by rope to the arms of his chair; and more striking still the removal of the same jacket when his hands were held, or rather were said to be held, by members of the audience.

Since there is not a single detailed or scientific description of any sitting in the book, criticism or appraisal of the material is not possible. The believer in these manifestations will continue to believe and have his belief strengthened: the unbeliever will still remain unconvinced. Probably the best attitude for the critical psychological researcher to adopt is to remain critical and observant of the little that can be observed. Even if the photographs reproduced in this book show no supernormal phenomena they show at least one thing, namely, the uselessness of using one length of rope

to tie up a medium. Plates 3, 4, 5, 6 and 12 all show clearly the process by which slack can be taken up and the hands freed. Although this has been pointed out to spiritualists for over half a century it still falls on deaf ears. One encouraging feature is, however, to be noted. Ectoplasm is becoming stronger. In the case of Frau Silbert even the glance of the human eye was detrimental. But with Jack Webber the material could be handled, and on one occasion two sitters had to be asked to arrange its folds so that it could be photographed. Indeed sometimes it had to be unravelled to "open it out", but none of these operations seems to have helped us in knowing anything about it. It is described as like silk of rich quality, wet toy balloon rubber and thin seaweed. Evidently true to type it changes its appearance and texture just as it did with Eva C. and Margery. The reader can put what interpretation he likes upon this fact. The evidence for a decision does not exist. So we are back almost where we started. The will o' the wisp has jumped another hedge.

E. J. D.

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*This Spiritualism. Results of an Inquiry.* By CHARLES J. SEYMOUR.  
(Longmans, Green & Co.) 1940.

I confess that, when I first read the title of this little book of 143 pages, this "THIS" misled me. I supposed it implied a sceptical or perhaps sarcastic attitude on the author's part. I was mistaken: "THIS SPIRITUALISM" is a believer's work.

This believer seems to see the chief value of Spiritualism in the fact that, according to him, it affords us the proof that the Universe "makes sense". "A man", so Mr Seymour supposes, "desires to render service and to be creative. He spends his life fashioning himself into a tool for those ends." And then suddenly, "the instrument into which he has forged himself is—according to the materialists—destroyed." The author thinks such a case "repugnant, an outrage on the intellect, because it is so wasteful, so blundering bad management" (p. 38). Well, Spiritualism reveals to us that the "Creator continues to use us" (p. 39) even after our death. I am not convinced that Mr Seymour's reasoning is a sound one. The Universe, he considers, "MUST make sense". But why, I wonder, should this "sense" agree with our preconceived notions? There may be in the Cosmos a "sense", a meaning altogether different from these notions and to us quite inaccessible. (Here I fancy I hear a cynic muttering: "Or perhaps no meaning at all.") Apart from this, do not events but too real, abound around us, which, from our standpoint, are perfectly non-sensical and for which no hypo-

thesis of a *post-mortem* existence, activity, retribution and what not will atone? How about, *e.g.*, the complete destruction, by accident or otherwise, of a splendid work of art, on which decades of labour had been wasted, or of some new ingenious scientific appliance, perhaps pregnant with countless blessings for mankind, on which infinite labour and skill had been equally lavished? How about the death of an inventor of genius on the eve of the day when he was about to reveal his secret to the world, a secret which is to die with him? Are not such facts also non-sensical? And in what way does Spiritualism, or indeed any other doctrine postulating survival, explain away the seeming absurdity of *such* facts?

Every time, Mr Scymour also thinks, "there had been really thorough investigation for a sufficient period, with a sufficient number of mediums, the [Spiritualistic] phenomena were almost invariably accepted as facts" (p. 22). Such an assertion is much too sweeping—seeing that such investigations have repeatedly taken place—and yet to-day, nearly a century after the "Hydesville knockings", not a single physical phenomenon of Spiritualism enjoys scientific acceptance. Nor is the situation much different so far as such phenomena as telepathy and clairvoyance are concerned. Again and again, we seem to grasp something substantial, only to find ourselves once more before one more disappointment, one more vanished phantasm.

In justice to our author, let us add that his own researches embracing several years and undertaken by him in the beginning in a rather sceptical state of mind seem to have brought about results much more satisfactory—to him. But may not this be due to the fact that he has contented himself with criteria and tests to which to some of us will undoubtedly appear inadequate? He narrates some experiments and some incidents at which he was present (chiefly at private and public sittings with professional clairvoyants and clairvoyantes), and I admit that a few of these look impressive in his account. On the other hand, there must be so many possibilities of fraud and collusion at some of these sittings that one hesitates to arrive at a positive conclusion. But what I wish especially to protest against is attaching any importance to the mention by the mediums of such Christian names as William, John, Mary, etc., without any more precise definition—very likely in the hope that one at least of such names will be sure to "fit". By the way, has it not been repeatedly asserted of late that "spirits" may feel especial difficulty in recollecting names? If so, how are we to reconcile such assertions with the strings of names presented by clairvoyant mediums at public séances? I am afraid "difficulties"

begin here only when names are asked for as *tests*: surely a disconcerting detail.

A special chapter is devoted by the author to "Prophecy and Deduction", and the painful admission is made in it that the so-called "spirit guides" failed egregiously in predicting that there would be no war following on the "trouble" in September 1939. And yet such assertions had been made as confidently then as in 1938, when we had Mr Chamberlain's "flights" and then—Munich. Being obviously of an optimistic turn of mind, Mr Seymour does not apparently reject the invigorating hypothesis that the "erroneous judgments" formed in 1939 "on the other side" may have been not an error but a "design, to weed the movement of its philanthropers and faint-hearts and to save it from its enthusiastic publicity go-getters" (p. 101). For my part I prefer to see in the spirit guides' discomfiture one more proof of the fact—a fact established it seems to me by the whole history of humanity—that whatever be the case with man's alleged other supernormal faculties, he has NOT that of supernormally foreseeing the future. Genuine premonitions in the strict sense of the word do not seem to me to exist at all. Supposing they did, nothing would be easier than to prove their reality beyond all possibility of cavil. This has never been done.<sup>1</sup>

It is curious to note that Mr Seymour is a believer in reincarnation (p. 93). I thought Anglo-Saxon believers in reincarnation *rarae aves*. Another curious feature is that Mr Seymour thinks reincarnation can be *chosen*—surely an attractive prospect—though I do not well see on what grounds he bases his belief.

It is characteristic that in a book dealing *inter alia* with various aspects of the "future life" and "written by a professed Christian", the word "Hell" does not appear once. This I think distinctly illogical on the part of such a Christian, but nevertheless significant, because showing the present discredit of the Gehenna doctrine.

Were I to sum up the impression produced on me by Mr Seymour's little book, I would say that it has been written by a man who is sincere, by no means hypercritical, but not devoid of literary ability, and that some of the theoretical disquisitions it contains are interesting. It contains also a certain number of concrete observations. Of these, however, I am sorry to add, but to few, if not to very few, can any objective importance be attached.

PEROVSKY-PETROVO-SOLOVVO.

<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, if prevision of the future really exists, the most striking instance is surely afforded by the Seventy Weeks' prophecy in Chapter 9 of Daniel. I am quite ready to postulate a fortuitous coincidence, but it is sufficiently remarkable.

# JOURNAL

OF THE

## Society for Psychical Research

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### NEW MEMBER

*Elected 2 December 1940*

**Librarian,** New College, Oxford.

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### A NEW RESEARCH FUND

IN September 1940 Mrs Silvia Blennerhassett, the daughter of F. W. H. Myers, settled a fund, to be known as the Blennerhassett Research Fund, on trusts the nature of which, and the unusual terms in which they are declared, will be of interest to our Members. The Fund is to be at the disposal of the Council of the Society for the purposes of

“Investigation and public or private explanation of the results thereof on any of the subjects dealt with in F. W. H. Myers’s *Human Personality* or any other subject which is in the opinion of the majority of the Council for the time being of the Society closely related thereto such investigation or explanation being conducted ‘without prejudice or prepossession of any kind in the spirit of exact and unimpassioned enquiry’ (to quote the original statement of the objects of the S.P.R. of which F. W. H. Myers was a founder) but not necessarily on orthodox academic lines. It is especially desired by the Settlor (without imposing any trust) that novel lines of enquiry should be opened up and that the conclusion of Prof. H. H. Price’s Presidential Address for 1939-1940 should be borne in mind: ‘We may safely predict that it will be the timidity of our hypotheses and not their extravagance which will provoke the derision of posterity.’ The right to pay the fees and expenses of a lecturer or to subsidise the publication of a book on any of these subjects is intended to be covered by this expression of the purposes of the Settlor.”

In the event of the S.P.R. ceasing to exist the fund is to be transferred to New College, Oxford, for the promotion of psychical research. Although our Members will hope that the contingency on which the transfer is to be made will never be fulfilled, they will be gratified to learn that the College has accepted the trust. The acceptance, coming so soon after the institution of the Perrott Studentship at Trinity College, Cambridge, is welcome as further evidence of the recognition in academic circles of the value of the Society's work.

The Council have decided that the first investigation to be conducted under the Trust should be into Precognition, a subject frequently referred to in *Human Personality*. For this purpose they have appointed a Committee under the Chairmanship of the President.

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### SIR OLIVER LODGE'S BOOKS AND PAPERS

SIR OLIVER LODGE'S family have very generously presented to the Society several valuable books relating to psychical research from his library and also various papers on the same subject.

On learning the acceptance by New College, Oxford, of the Blennerhassett Trust, they presented his complete set of S.P.R. *Proceedings* and *Journal* to the College Library, which is, we are informed, the first College Library at Oxford to possess a set. The Librarian of the College has now become a member, so that future issues will find a place on the Library shelves.

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### PERROTT STUDENTSHIP IN PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

MR W. WHATELY CARINGTON has been appointed by Trinity College, Cambridge, to the Perrott Studentship in Psychological Research. Particulars of this foundation were given in the Part of *Proceedings* published last March (Vol. XLIV, p. 23). Mr Whately Carington has already commenced his duties. The selectors and Mr Carington are alike to be congratulated.

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### PARANORMAL COGNITION

#### SOME COMMENTS ON MR CARINGTON'S AND MR SOAL'S RECENT EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

IT is seldom wise to leap from experimental facts to speculations, before the meaning of the facts has been fully established, and their validity confirmed by further experiment if this is possible. But

some speculation is usually needed in trying to interpret the facts ; and some construction and hypothesis is advisable in order to see what kind of interpretation should be put to the test of further experiment. The facts elicited by Mr Carington and Mr Soal, in applying the same method of investigation to the results of two quite different experiments in paranormal cognition,<sup>1</sup> appear to have a meaning which concerns the way we perceive events in relation to time. It may be useful to explore this question briefly, and as simply as possible, with the idea of seeing what behaviour of the human mind we have to take into account, and to encourage by well-adapted conditions, if we are to consolidate and extend this experimental field.

The facts with which we are concerned are that subjects in Mr Carington's and Mr Soal's experiments showed apparent ability to perceive drawings or patterns not within reach of their normal senses, and to perceive them not at the time when they were presented (if one may speak of the "presentation" of an object when it is not displayed to the known senses), but at times before or after their presentation. With Mr Carington's subjects, a drawing "displayed" in a locked and empty room on, say, a Wednesday, appears to have been paranormally perceived on the Tuesday or the Thursday. With two of Mr Soal's subjects the unseen card-pattern presented at 2.45 appears to have been paranormally perceived at, say, 2.44 or 2.46. In both cases the perception was registered at a time when another drawing or card was the expected object of paranormal attention.

There are two wide differences between Mr Carington's experiments and Mr Soal's, and one notable difference between their results. The interval of time between the presentations is of the order of twenty-four hours in the first case and of a minute or less in the second. Also, Mr Carington's subjects were encouraged to try for impressions, and to record them by drawing, in conditions of isolation and quiet. Mr Soal's technique required the presence and the activities of an experimenter and a recorder. One subject of his, criticising the technique in discussion after a Private Meeting of the Society, reported that she had had a strong feeling of distraction through these activities, especially from the use of the rubber stamp ; and others, if less conscious of distraction, will presumably not have been immune from its effects.

Both these differences in the conditions, the much longer time-interval between attempts at perception and the absence of particular distractions in Mr Carington's experiment as compared with Mr

<sup>1</sup> *Proc.* Vol. XLVI, p. 34 *et seq.* (Part 162, June 1940).

Soal's, could have contributed to the one main difference in the results—that the paranormal effect appears to occur with Mr Carington's subjects in general, but with only two of Mr Soal's subjects. These two may be "white blackbirds", in Professor Broad's phrase, in respect of paranormal cognition; or their perceptive-cognitive faculty may be less easily knocked off its focus around a particular point in time than is the case with Mr Soal's other subjects. The results cannot show whether these others had a paranormal faculty which was completely unfocused and diffused in the given conditions, or whether they should be classed as black blackbirds.

It is worth while to consider what we mean by a "focus in time". This is a metaphor from optics and from the eyesight, whose focus is a concentration at and around a point in space. But the eyesight, like all the physical senses, has a necessary concentration at and around a moment in time—the changing "now" at which our physical organism reacts with its environment. We must say "at and around" a moment in time, because instantaneous reaction is not thinkable, and experiments in physiology have shown that a stimulus must have a given duration to produce any sensory effect. Mr Saltmarsh has studied this bit of time at and around the apparent moment of sensory reaction, and discussed it under the name of "the specious present".<sup>1</sup> He shows ground for supposing that subliminal perception has, so to say, a wider spread in time than conscious perception, and that this makes sense with the fact that paranormal cognition seems to find its stimuli more "around" and less "at" the percipient's present moment than does ordinary sense-perception. He suggests that at the subliminal levels which are more remote from consciousness this time-spread may become very wide, and that this conception may make sense of the evidence for an emergence into present consciousness of direct cognitions of past and future event. (We can avoid the boggy of a fixed future by remembering that "cognition of an event" is more completely described as the formation of an image which represents the idea of an event. It could equally be called the cognition of a probability.)

If we adopt Mr Saltmarsh's useful way of thinking, Mr Carington's and Mr Soal's results suggest that something interferes with their subjects' aim of getting a correct impression of the drawing or pattern which is "now" presented for paranormal cognition, and makes this impression less likely to emerge than the image of a past or future presentation. The effect might be due simply to distraction. We have noticed that a difference of timing and technique

<sup>1</sup> *Proc.* Vol. XXXIX, pp. 170-172.

makes for more distracting elements in Mr Soal's experiments than in Mr Carington's, and that this difference goes with a difference in the number of subjects who seem to get positive results—for what this observation may be worth. Mr Soal's valuable discovery that when, in the chance distribution of cards, the same pattern is presented both immediately before and immediately after a given "now", the subject making his guess *at* the "now" shows a reinforced tendency to hit the neighbouring mark,<sup>1</sup> is also compatible with the view that the "now" impression is confused by the competition of the more vivid sensory impressions occurring at the same "now".

But there are also sensory impressions of the same vividness to confuse matters at the preceding and the subsequent "now". To explain the effect in terms of distraction, we have to explain how it may be that paracognitive impressions are confused by sensory impressions from the same "now", while a paracognitive impression presumably arising from a "then" can emerge relatively undisturbed by distractions arising in the "now" in which the emergence occurs. We can say that the "then" impression and the "now" sensory distractions, though coming into consciousness together, are mental reports of impacts which in fact occurred with an interval of time to separate them, and that the mind is naturally better able to discriminate between successive than between simultaneous impacts. This might cover the ground; but there seems to be need for such a further hypothesis as Mr Soal's, that a personified subliminal percipient "knows" whether an impression is correctly rendered at the conscious level,<sup>2</sup> and has autonomous reactions of its own which have to be taken into account. There is, of course, plenty of evidence for such autonomous fractions of the personality.

We have observed that in Mr Carington's cases, which first disclosed the preferential emergence of "then" impressions in a "now" context, the time-sequence of presentations is much more leisurely—the "then" much further separated from the "now"—than in Mr Soal's cases. Using Mr Saltmarsh's hypothesis, we can probably infer that in the relative absence of sensory distractions, and having time to burn, Mr Carington's subjects were able to relax their time-focus to a much greater extent, so as to employ fairly consistently a subliminal "specious present" reaching about twenty-four hours in either direction. (Mr Soal's examination of results shows no significant success of "then" impressions separated by more than about a minute from the "now".) It seems natural that conditions of greater mental relaxation should give more

<sup>1</sup> *Proc.* Vol. XLVI, p. 187 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *loc. cit.* p. 193.

chance for average performers among the percipients to bring positive results into consciousness, but should not favour "peak" performances such as those of Mr Soal's two successful subjects. These two can easily be regarded as working under higher tension,<sup>1</sup> imposed by the conditions—a tension which, if successfully maintained, would produce the natural results of keyed-up effort.

It should be worth while, if the experiments prove to be repeatable (our ignorance of what factors constitute "conditions" is such that we never can tell), to try out the effects of different degrees of relaxation on the part of percipients, and of greater or less exclusion of sensory stimuli. The two factors of tension and of sensory distraction appear to be the simplest and the most controllable of those which can be varied within the field of "conditions".

The experimenters themselves, knowing their own ground inch by inch after long and careful working over it, have a far better right than any outside commentator to sit back and speculate; these few and somewhat obvious comments, however, may perhaps be regarded as appreciative and congratulatory rather than intrusive.

K. R.

#### A SCHEME FOR FURTHER EXPERIMENT BY MEMBERS

WE draw the attention of members to the following offer by Mr Carington of further opportunity for experiment in the Paranormal Cognition of Drawings:

The greatest forward step that could be made in this subject would be the devising of a satisfactory form of *repeatable* experiment. I believe I am on the track of this; but unfortunately the effect to be detected is very slight, so that the experimentation necessary to demonstrate it is too extensive and prolonged for a single experimenter to undertake in existing circumstances.

Co-operative effort seems to be indicated, and I have accordingly devised a technique which will, I hope, enable numerous relatively small contributions to be combined together. The procedure, which is very fairly flexible, can be used with one or more percipients (though, naturally, the more the better), but for the best results two separate experiments should be carried out with an interval of two or three weeks between them. Each experiment can be condensed into about an hour's work if desired.

The requisite forms, etc., with full instructions, can be obtained from me at the address given below, and I very much hope that as

<sup>1</sup>Not that they would be likely to show "signs of tension"—which are often signs of failure to maintain a fully co-ordinated effort.

many members as possible will attempt the experiment. In writing, please give the approximate number of percipients it is hoped to employ.

WHATELY CARINGTON

SENNEN COVE,  
CORNWALL.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

### PARANORMAL COGNITION OF DRAWINGS

SIR,—In reply to Mr Besterman's letter in the last issue of the *Journal*, I have no corroboration, other than that of my wife, for my statements that particular drawings were displayed on particular occasions. I did not regard these experiments, and do not propose to regard others of the same kind in future, as tests or demonstrations of my wife's or my own veracity: moreover, to have sought independent corroboration would have opened the door to just that possibility of leakage which I was most anxious to avoid. I can declare with complete assurance that I myself gave no hint as to the nature of the originals used, and with negligibly less that my wife did not; but I should hesitate to say the same of any third party of whose contacts, activities and conversations I might have but little knowledge.

Apart from this, and as a matter of principle, I should not have done anything about it, even if the ingenious method of falsifying the results, which Mr Besterman's letter suggests, had occurred to me. In the absence of any positive antecedent evidence of charlatantry, I fail to see why anyone performing experiments of this character should *ipso facto* be more suspect of dishonesty than any other investigator, and to encourage the supposition that he is, seems to me inimical to the best interests of the subject.

Yours, etc.,

WHATELY CARINGTON.

### “ THIS SPIRITUALISM ”

SIR,—May I respectfully point out that Count Perovski-Petrovo-Solovovo's review seems to miss the point of Mr Seymour's argument? In it he cites the apparent accidents and waste in human life as reasons for rejecting the belief in human survival. Mr Seymour considers that apart from this assurance of survival there is no clue to the meaning of life as we experience it; but he claims that, if survival is a fact, we can accept the poet Keats' conclusion that this

world is a "vale of soul making", the otherwise inexplicable experiences of this mortal life can be viewed as a training for further development of human souls after death; and the principle of evolution which science has shown to be dominant in this world is seen to be a *cosmic* principle, governing not matter only, but mind and personality. Those who recognise this principle as an essential element in the age-long process of the whole Universe, applicable to every smallest part as completely as it is to the great whole, will not let themselves be limited by illusive appearances which seem to truncate the process in human existence. They will boldly apply the principle with the continuity it involves to every fraction of vital organisms and especially to the highest intelligent being known to us—the human.

HELEN ALEX. DALLAS

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## REVIEWS

*Why I do believe in Survival.* By B. ABDY COLLINS, C.I.E. 28 pp.  
1s. net.

This paper, read to a Private Meeting of the Society on 24 April 1940, has been privately issued by the author, with a Preface criticising the attitude of the Society in rejecting the paper for publication in its *Proceedings* and in remaining unresponsive when Mr Collins "asked to be informed which cases were open to this criticism" (as to evidential quality) "in order that I might either omit them or substitute others, which would be accepted". It may be remarked that the Committee of Reference, to whose members any paper which is offered to *Proceedings* is circulated for their opinion on its suitability for such publication, cannot so easily be expected to collaborate with authors in bringing their work up to its standards; and that the Hon. Secretary came up to London to discuss the paper with its author, and made some suggestions which were not in fact accepted. But we are concerned rather with the undoubted interest of Mr Collins's treatment of the evidence for survival, regarded more as a subject for discussion than as a ground of formulated statement. Some comment, at all events, may be not inappropriate from the one officer of the Society who was free to attend the Private Meeting at which Mr Collins eventually read his paper (his preface records his impression that no officer of the Society was present), and, as it happens, an officer who has known the experience of presenting work to the Society which was discriminatingly adjudged to be suitable for discussion at a Private

Meeting rather than for record in *Proceedings* as a judgment on evidence.

Professor E. R. Dodds, in his paper *Why I do not Believe in Survival*,<sup>1</sup> had given his reasons not so much for rejecting a prevalent human belief as for preferring a presumably more economical hypothesis of telepathy between the living to that of telepathy from the dead—the presumption to be justified being that it is the more economical hypothesis to regard evidence for survival as bringing into play a particularly complex and specially developed form of telepathy between the living. These hypotheses, he has more recently suggested, constitute a “staggering dilemma” presented by the evidence.<sup>2</sup> Mr Collins claims in effect, but really argues the point only in a brief passage near the end of his Appendix, that the hypothesis of survival and communication involves the lesser miracle.

Mr Collins is concerned with evidence of identity. “In sittings with mediums, I don’t want to prove whether the communicator survives. I know he survives. I only want him to prove his identity.” Professor Dodds made a point of the lack of such evidence, in two and a half millennia of man’s recorded history. It could be answered that man had little care for experimental evidence, as we understand it, before the time of Galileo, and none for formal evidence of survival until the beginnings of psychical research in the latter part of the last century. Mr Collins cites a number of incidents reported in bygone days which are evidence of belief in survival and in the identity of apparitions, but that is another matter; he was unwary in accepting Professor Dodds’s ground of objection. And it appears throughout the paper that Professor Dodds’s grounds of argument, where they would most repay discussion and question, are left unregarded, while more and more evidence is thrown into the survivalist scale of a type which the critic finds little difficulty in demolishing piecemeal. The critic may, of course, share Mr Collins’s convictions while feeling that he does not treat evidence scientifically: especially, that he treats it as necessarily pointing to the conclusions which he has assumed.

Apart from cases of communication Mr Collins argues, as is reasonable, from the evidence for paranormal faculties in man to the conclusion that these are not attributes of a creature limited to incarnate existence; but he adds to the presumable properties of man the “etheric body” and its aptitude for travelling in space. This may be a respectable hypothesis, though probably a crude hypothesis, to simplify the problem of apparent action at a distance be-

<sup>1</sup> *Proc.* Vol. XLII., p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> *Proc.* Vol. XLV., p. 295.

tween agent and percipient, but it is a physical hypothesis for which no physical evidence is established, and its adoption as a fact only burdens the desired proof of survival with more material for critical disbelief. It is not merely "the fashion among those engaged in psychical research to ignore" phenomena suggesting a travelling etheric body: the evidence in various fields, including medicine and psychology, shows that the mind fairly readily forms non-factual images and impressions of bodily location. These are easy to induce under hypnosis.

Mr Collins is perhaps on his strongest ground when he subordinates mediumistic and experimental evidence of survival to the fact of very wide and varied human experience suggesting the occasionally-perceived presence and influence of the departed: death-bed visions (by whose implications Professor Richet was much impressed), the visions of children, and other spontaneous phenomena of which the human circumstances favour their credibility. This is, in a sense, arguing from belief to belief, and trying to short-circuit the process of rigorous examination, experiment and reasoning which is demanded by the nature of research. But if these spontaneous experiences of mankind do spring from a soil of pre-established belief, the belief itself is a fact of the situation which needs to be examined, and estimated in respect of its quality. It was from such a ground that psychical research took its inception. The work of F. W. H. Myers was alive with the qualitative estimation of human experience. It is no inept criticism to suggest that the Society may lose sight of this important scale of values by concentrating too exclusively upon work resembling that of the dissecting-room or the physical laboratory. None the less, its research was established to bring scientific method increasingly into the examination of belief. Research cannot suffer from too much science, or from too rigorous (if not too rigid) an application of known scientific principles; though in subjects which involve the processes of human life and mind it may suffer from inappropriate exclusion of human values. Professor Dodds has not failed to argue from such values, where he has found their application valid in a negative sense.

If recourse to what may be termed the dignity of the evidence, as it is apparent in such records as those of death-bed scenes, is of advantage to reasoned belief in survival, we have to admit a counter-acting effect in the unimpressive nature of a great body of mediumistic phenomena. We can say that these are less natural products and that the channel of mediumship is often open to the flow of futile, muddled and misleading material. This may be in part the ground for Mr Collins's relegation of mediumship to a secondary place. But

it is the more curious that he accepts that very strange product of mediumship, materialisation, as convincing evidence of survival. Whether we agree with Richet that seance-room materialisation is "absurd", but true, or consider that the frequent evidence of fraud connected with it makes the apparently genuine cases at least subject to suspicion, the question before us seems to be the occurrence or non-occurrence of a queer psycho-physical fact. Whether or not we believe in ectoplasm, on the evidence, Mr Collins describes no evidence for the identity of forms produced by it, and such evidence does not appear to have been put on record as the result of any reliable investigation.

This question of identity, indeed, is one which Mr Collins ostensibly takes into account and actually leaves untouched by any form of consecutive argument. The whole question of who or what an apparition, an "influence", or a communicator may be, hinges first upon evidence of identity, if evidence of survival is under discussion. It is a fact that evidence of identity is more difficult to establish positively than we usually suppose: it is a more intangible thing, even in everyday life, than is commonly realised. But all the more for that, it needs constructive and consistent handling. It is, perhaps, the lack of this backbone to his case which makes Mr Collins's discussion seem little more than a series of argued assertions, distinguished by consistency of aim rather than cogency of reasoning.

K. R.

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*Proceedings of the American Society for Psychological Research*: Vol. XXIII, June 1940. 33 + iv pp. \$1.00. Editorial Comment by WILLIAM H. BUTTON and JOHN J. O'NEILL. Tests of Extra-Sensory Perception Among A.S.P.R. Members. By DR GARDNER MURPHY and ERNEST TAVES.

The Proceedings of the American Society have not been issued since 1933, and it is a pleasure to see them reappear with so clear-cut and straightforward an account of experimental work as that given by Dr Murphy and Mr Taves.

The experiments were all of the card-guessing type, though several different kinds of card were used. The percipients were interested members of the American S.P.R., working in small groups of from five to eight or nine at a time. The experimental conditions appear to have been unexceptionable; in particular, the test material was always taken to the scene of action in an opaque box and was never opened until after it had been guessed; if ever reshuffling was necessary, as for a further series of guesses, it was done in a separate

room. Careful precautions were taken to eliminate errors of scoring, shuffling and checking.

Much of the work was done on guesses of the 50-50 type, in which the pack contains equal numbers of cards of two sorts only. This gave very curious results. For example, 6975 guesses at Red or White cards gave a *deficiency* of 122.5 successes, which is highly significant both intrinsically ( $P=.0003$ ) and considered as the best of twelve tasks attempted. But it is interesting to note that of the five other tasks involving colour discrimination (Red-Black, Yellow-Blue, Black-White, Red-Yellow) four give a negative result, while of the four similar 50-50 tasks involving other qualities (Circle-Blank, Square-Waves, Circle-Cross, Portraits of Men-Portraits of Women) three give positive results. There is a suggestion here, though no more, that it is the colour rather than the redness or whiteness that is responsible for the negative result. Of the 24 percipients who took part, no fewer than 17 scored below expectation, 6 above, and 1 the exact number expected. This is just significant, with  $P$  a trifle less than .05; so it looks as if the "negativity" with respect to the Red-White situation were fairly widespread.

The other task which yielded significant results (positive in this case) was with what are known as Rook cards. A pack of these consists of 4 suits of 14 cards each, numbered 1 to 14 in different colours, and the task was to guess the first 14 and last 14 of the pack. There was a slight, though not quite significant, tendency for the percipients generally to score above expectation; but one achieved an excess of 37 successes in 90 runs of 14 calls each, giving  $P$  less than .0001. The only other task reported, in which five cards marked with a dot were shuffled into 45 blanks, gave null results.

Simple experiments of this kind lend themselves well to group working, such as Societies can conveniently undertake, and there is a strong suggestion that frequent variation of the task, such as would relieve the monotony for the participants, promotes the obtaining of worth-while results—compare also Pratt & Woodruff, *Journal of Parapsychology*, Vol. 3, No. 2. It is greatly to be hoped that, under more favourable conditions than those now prevailing, work of this kind may be undertaken by members of our own Society; particularly that of repeating the colour discrimination tests mentioned above.

My only quarrel with an otherwise admirable paper is that the values of  $P$  in Appendix I appear to have been quite gratuitously halved. We cannot have too much of this kind and quality of work.

W. W. C.

*The Physics of the Divining Rod.* By J. CECIL MABY and T. BEDFORD FRANKLIN. London: G. Bell & Sons, Ltd. (1939.) 21s.

The title, "contents", list of 51 illustrations, and clear print and paragraphing of this imposing volume of 452 pages, might be expected to bring some feeling of confidence to the intending reader that he will find, in its text, good solid material for his consideration and subsequent digestion. This feeling might be expected to increase as the curious reader turns the pages, and notes the abundance of technical terms and confident statements of astonishing discoveries made, apparently, with rather simple instrumental means. He will note a large number of "graphs", a few of which show scales of numbers at the bottom and at the left-hand edge. The scales at the bottom are *time scales*, in days, hours, etc., but the other scale, the *ordinate* of the graph, apparently does not refer to the dial or scale reading of any physical instrument, such as a galvanometer, electrometer, wavemeter, etc., taken at the time indicated on the time scale, and acted upon solely by the physical environment. In the reviewer's opinion this is an example of the kind of vagueness which characterises the description of what the authors claim to be physical experiments. This vagueness concerning exact descriptions of the instruments used, their sensitivity, consistency in repeated experiments, etc., is, unfortunately, maintained through the whole book. It will most certainly cause doubts to arise in the mind of the average physicist who reads beyond p. 6 of the introduction, where it is stated: . . . "we think we may claim incontrovertibly to have shown that the causes of the ordinary dowsing reflexes and rod reactions are to be found in certain penetrating, electrically excitator, rays: one class—the more important of the two—consisting of short Hertzian waves of geophysical or cosmic origin, and exhibiting polarisation and electromagnetic phenomena." Such laxity on the part of the authors might indeed be excused in the interest of providing light and easy instruction concerning well-established knowledge (were this true) for those who are scientifically untrained, and it could also be excused if a reference were given to details of the authors' investigations published in any scientific journal of repute. As matters stand it appears that the novelty of their claims in the field of physics is as astonishing as their disregard for all other possible explanations of the variations of the readings of their instruments, upon which these claims are supposedly based. On p. 174 it is stated: "it is evident that the dowser must respond to the high frequency effects, due to Hertzian radiation . . . his muscles acting both as receiving aerial and detector mechanism". Strange that his muscles do not get "jammed" by all the short wave radio now being broadcast! C. C. L. G.

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For the sake of brevity such qualifications as "supposed", "alleged", etc., are omitted from this index. It must, however, be understood that this omission is made solely for brevity, and does not imply any assertion that the subject-matter of any entry is in fact real or genuine.

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