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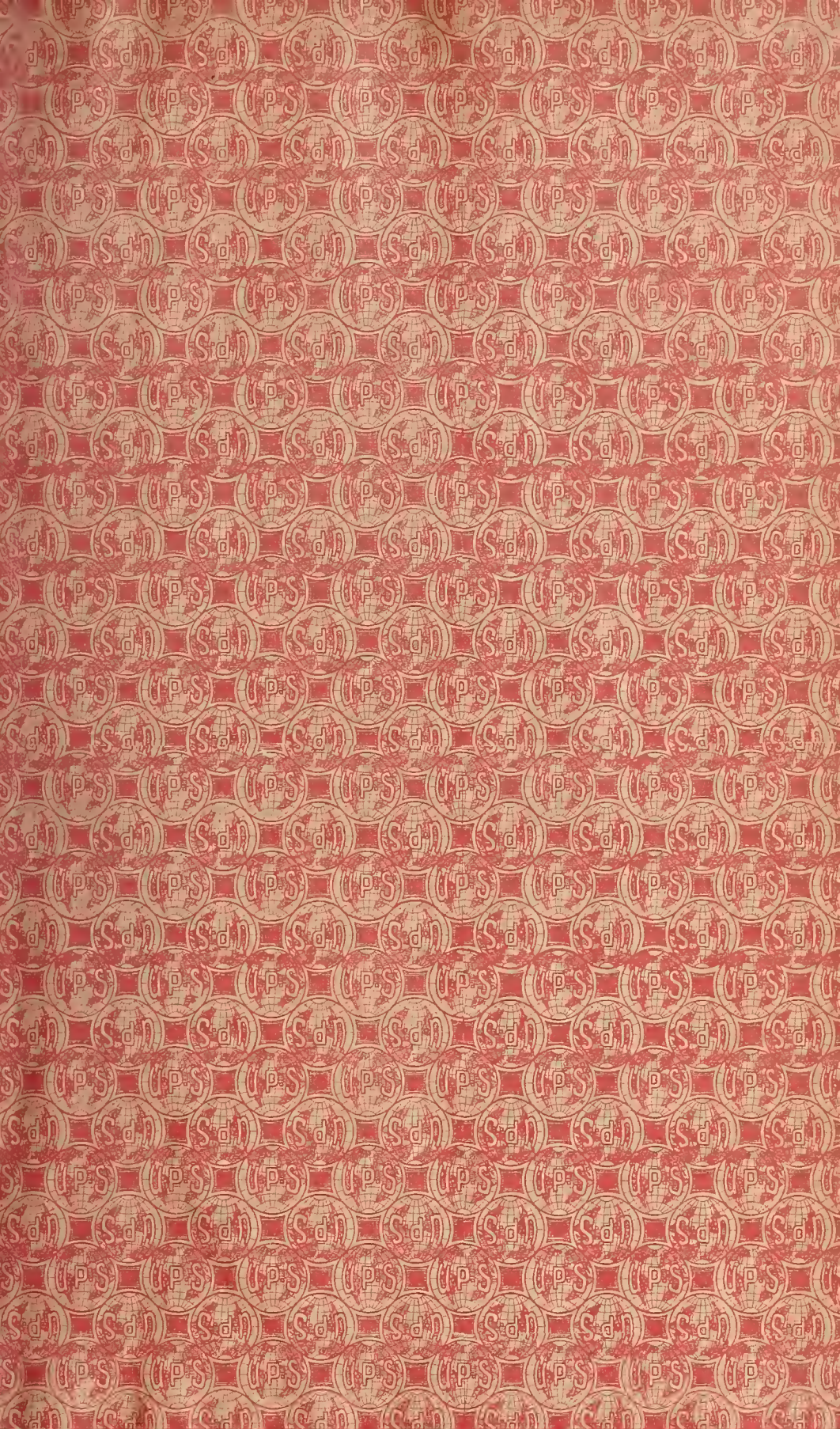
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VOLUME 38

1928-29



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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

VOLUME XXXVIII

(CONTAINING PARTS 105-111)

1928-1929

The responsibility for both the facts and the reasonings in papers published in the Proceedings rests entirely with their authors

PRINTED FOR THE SOCIETY BY

ROBERT MACLEHOSE & COMPANY LIMITED

UNIVERSITY PRESS, GLASGOW

1929

Agents for the sale of publications:

LONDON: FRANCIS EDWARDS, LTD., 83 HIGH STREET, MARLBORNE, W. 1.

GLASGOW: JACKSON, WYLIE & CO., 73 WEST GEORGE STREET

AMERICA: THE F. W. FAXON CO., 83 FRANCIS STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

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ERRATUM.

Page 413, note 1, should read :

I believe the only published account of Mme Kahl's mediumship is a note by her husband, S. Toukholka, "Expériences de clairvoyance avec Mme Olga Kahl," *Revue Métapsychique* (Paris, Novembre-Décembre 1922), pp. 429-433. Dr Osty has carried out a series of experiments with Mme Kahl, which he has discussed since my proofs were passed (see his "Ce que la médecine doit attendre de l'étude expérimentale des propriétés psychiques paranormales de l'homme," *Revue Métapsychique* (Paris, Mars-Avril 1929), pp. 124-136.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

PART 105

THE BROADCASTING EXPERIMENT IN MASS-TELEPATHY.

BY V. J. WOOLLEY.

THE experiment to be described in this paper was originally suggested to me by Mr. E. J. Dingwall. Its object was twofold. The first object was to discover whether any evidence could be obtained of the telepathic transmission of ideas to strangers knowing nothing of the agents except that they were in a certain place at a certain time. In the second place I hoped that, if there should be any evidence of such transmission in a few cases, it might be possible later to conduct more detailed experiments with the successful percipients, and so to gain information regarding telepathic processes and the conditions under which they go on.

The Nature of the Experiment.

The experiment consisted in the production by me to the agents at five-minute intervals of five different objects in succession. At these times Sir Oliver Lodge at the microphone directed the wireless listeners to record any impressions they were able to form of the objects so produced. The agents and I were in the Society's office, with no means of communication with anyone outside it. Sir Oliver Lodge was at 2 Savoy Hill.

The experiment took place on February 16, 1927.

The objects shewn were as follows :

At 11.15 p.m., a 2 of Clubs playing card, cut at the time from an "Arpak" pack in which this suit happens to be printed in green on a black background.

At 11.20 p.m., a Japanese print. (Shown opposite.)

At 11.25 p.m., a bunch of three sprays of white lilac.

At 11.30 p.m., a 9 of Hearts playing card, cut at the time from the same pack as No. 1, this suit being printed in red and also on a black background.

At 11.35 p.m., myself wearing a bowler hat and a grotesque mask.

These objects were chosen entirely by me and their nature was unknown to any other person till they were shewn at the times given above. In choosing them my aim was that each one should be moderately familiar to all listeners, while it also had certain special peculiarities which were unlikely to be guessed by chance. I hoped also to arouse in the agents some feeling or emotion in addition to a purely intellectual perception of the object displayed.

The only information given to Sir Oliver Lodge, and by him passed on to the listeners, was that numbers 1 and 4 were playing cards of unusual design, and that number 2 was a picture. The listeners were also asked to record any emotions felt in connexion with the objects and any sensations other than the visual ones to which it was feared they might limit themselves unless they were specially asked to do more.

For the purpose of the experiment each object was shewn to the agents for 3 minutes, and an interval of 2 minutes was then given in order to separate each test from the next and to minimise the results of small errors in the listeners' watches.

The listeners were asked to post their results to the Society's Office as soon as the experiment concluded, and, if possible, to have the time of posting attested by a witness.

The agents remained on the Society's premises throughout the night, without access to a telephone, until after the morning clearances of the letter-boxes had taken place.

The Choice of Agents.

We know nothing of the conditions or process of Telepathy, and *a priori* there was no reason for choosing one



agent rather than another. We can distinguish, however, between what we generally call "good sitters" and "bad sitters" when we have to deal with the results which different people obtain when they have sittings with mediums. In default of any other criterion it seemed reasonable to choose those as agents whom we knew, from their recorded results, to possess the obscure quality of being "good sitters." By this term I mean people who, when they "sit" with a medium, are usually told rather more than the average amount of verifiable facts which are definitely unknown to the medium. On the assumption that many of such facts are derived from the sitter's mind, there seemed some reason to choose these "good sitters" rather than others as agents in this experiment, and all of the agents fall into this class. They were seven in number in addition to myself.

Statistics of the results.

In all 24,659 answers were received, and it is convenient to deal first with the impressions recorded for the two playing card tests, namely numbers 1 and 4.

The complete tables, shewing how many times each card of the pack was recorded for each test, are given as an appendix to this paper. It is clear from these tables that so far as the card tests go there is no evidence at all of any telepathic transmission. The relevant numbers are as follows :

Test 1.	2 of clubs (correct)	190 records.
	9 of hearts	491 records.
Test 4.	2 of clubs	145 records.
	9 of hearts (correct)	150 records.

Since the 9 of hearts was not cut from the pack till ten minutes after test 1 was over, the 491 records must have been due to pure chance, and the other numbers which are well below this must be attributed to chance also. The numbers of the guesses made of the various cards of the pack are, however, of considerable psychological interest in themselves, and also appear to have an important bearing on the results of most experiments in

telepathy or clairvoyance where playing cards are used as experimental objects. The peculiarities of these guesses appear at once on studying the tables and they may be summarized as follows :

(a) There is a strong tendency to choose an ace, especially the ace of spades.

(b) There is a marked preference for odd-numbered cards as against even-numbered ones.

It follows from these facts that, in an experiment in which cards are used to test some supposed faculty of perception, the chances against naming correctly a particular card cannot be assumed to be 51 to 1. There is a mental preference for aces and odd cards, and the chances will vary according to the card used.

It is this preference which has made it impossible in this experiment to determine the numbers of correct guesses to be expected by chance. If a pack is cut at random the chances against any particular card being cut are 51 to 1. If a person is asked to name a card at random the chances against any particular card being named seem to be indeterminable. Thus we have no definite chance expectation with which to compare the numbers of correct guesses in this experiment other than the numbers of the incorrect guesses which I have quoted above.

Object No. 2 was described to the listeners as a picture, and it is perhaps natural that the thoughts of most of them were directed to well-known paintings or portraits of celebrities. It seems hardly worth while to tabulate these results in detail.

Only five listeners gave "a skull" as the description of the picture, one adding the interesting detail that it represented a skull in a garden, and a sixth noted "human head." It seems, however, of some importance that, of these six records, no less than three gave "flowers" for No. 3, this being in fact the bunch of lilac.

In this test, white lilac was named by only three listeners, one listener choosing mauve lilac.

The favourite choice was some kind of lethal weapon associated with an emotion of fear. The following table gives the numbers of the various impressions recorded :

Lethal weapon - - - - -	1394
Flowers (not named, or named as other than lilac) - - - -	951
White scented flowers - - - -	85
Musical instruments - - - -	920
Skull - - - - -	704

It seems probable from these numbers that a large number of listeners were influenced by the instruction to record emotion, or a sensation in addition to that of sight. The lethal weapon and the skull are guesses at objects calculated to rouse emotions of fear and horror, while the flowers and musical instruments are associated with sensations of smell and sound respectively.

It seems likely, too, that some of the listeners, knowing of my medical qualification, may have guessed that I should probably possess a skull, and might easily employ it as a rather unusual object for the purpose of this test.

For the purpose, however, of this paper, it is important to consider whether this choice of the skull by a number of listeners for object 3 can fairly be believed to have any relation to the picture of a skull which constituted object 2.

In view of the normal reasons which may have accounted for these guesses it is impossible to put forward these figures as a proof of the occurrence of telepathy in our experiment, but it will be convenient to consider its possibility in more detail after dealing with the recorded impressions in test 5.

For this test it will be remembered that the object consisted of myself wearing a grotesque mask and a bowler hat. The purpose of the test was to produce feelings of amusement.

The following are the numbers of listeners who recorded impressions at all related to the object of the test ;

Impressions of me - - - - -	5
of some one present - - - -	146
of some one dressed up or mas- querading - - - - -	236
of masks or faces - - - - -	73
of hats - - - - -	202
Feeling of amusement - - - - -	499

These numbers in themselves appear to me to have little meaning or importance, because there is no definite chance expectation with which to compare them.

It is possible, however, to compare the number of times that a given object is guessed correctly with the number of times that it is guessed incorrectly in relation to another test. In this way test 3 and test 5 should each provide a control experiment for the other, in the same way as do tests 1 and 4 which I have dealt with above, and it is the main purpose of this paper to suggest that such a comparative method of experiment should always be employed in all attempts to test faculties of clairvoyance and telepathy.

The following table, which, unfortunately, involves some repetition, gives the numbers of guesses of given objects or feelings in relation to these two tests. For clearness I have underlined those numbers which may be called successful guesses, which numbers should be compared with the numbers of guesses of the same objects for the other test, and I have also added the numbers of guesses of certain widely chosen objects which had nothing to do with either test.

	III.	V.
	White Lilac.	Myself in mask and hat.
Flowers - - - -	<u>1020</u>	523
Fruit and Vegetables - -	<u>793</u>	447
Perfumes - - - -	<u>463</u>	55
Skulls - - - -	<u>704</u>	166
Skeletons - - - -	116	49
Lethal Weapons - - -	1394	330
Musical Instruments - -	920	145
Hats - - - -	49	<u>202</u>
Grotesque Faces - - -	5	<u>73</u>
Someone present - - -	10	<u>146</u>
Myself - - - -	0	<u>5</u>
Someone masquerading -	0	<u>236</u>
Fear and Horror - - -	988	<u>307</u>
Pleasant Emotions and } Amusement }	609	<u>499</u>

Now these figures to some extent favour the supposition that the listeners' impressions were influenced by the objects shewn to the agents, especially if we can suppose that some of the records of the skull for test 3 were deferred impressions of the "skull" picture of test 2, and the occurrence of such deferred impressions is, I think, maintained by everyone who has carried on telepathic experiments.

It is perhaps also reasonable to suppose that the postponement of the "skull" perception from test 2 to test 3 may have been favoured by the apparent incongruity between the idea of a picture and a telepathic impression of a skull, so that the latter impression might emerge later when an "object" was specified.

On the other hand the results cannot be said to approach a proof. It seems to me to be probable that for object 3 many listeners guessed either a sound or a smell, whence we get the musical instruments and flowers, while for object 5 guesses were much more equally distributed over a large field.

It may, however, be argued that a better estimate of the results could be obtained by noting the numbers of listeners who gave two or more correct records. If the faculty or process is limited to a small number of people, we might expect to find a few sets of records with several successes which would pass unnoticed in dealing with the statistics of each test separately.

The numbers of such double successes were very small: indeed, in the case of the cards I believe that only two listeners gave both correctly and in neither case was any mention made of the colours. In chance guessing one would expect about ten such double successes for the card results.

The most successful set was perhaps as follows:

1. Ace of Clubs.
2. Skull in garden.
3. Flowers.
4. Coloured "Snap" card.
5. Some black object.

In view of the number of listeners who gave the skull for object 3, it may be worth while to quote some of

their comments, which in many cases are so made as to point to a genuine perception rather than to a chance or reasoned guess.

(a) II. A picture of an awful looking skull which I clearly saw and could not get rid of the whole of the time and which seemed to rule all.

(b) III. First impression was of a white ivory ball, immediately succeeded by the impression that the object was a human skull. It was still an ivory ball to my vision, but it seemed borne in on me that it was actually a skull.

(c) III. Skull and fear, and then stronger impression of a flower.

(d) III. Horror due to a skull replaced by pleasure and delight of a beautiful flower.

These quoted records show I think the great difficulty of reaching any definite statistical result in tests of this kind. The tests with the playing cards are the only ones in which such a result is possible, and in these the figures I have given offer no support to the supposition that telepathy is possible under these conditions.

In the other tests the results are much less clear. There is certainly nothing which can be taken as a proof or even as a strong argument, but there does seem an indication of a supernormal faculty on the part of a few of those who took part, though their successes are swamped by the very large mass of failures on the part of others. I am glad to say that some of these successful listeners are now collaborating with Mr. S. G. Soal and myself in a fresh series of similar tests which will form the completion of this experiment, and may possibly furnish more definite results than this preliminary and widespread attempt was able to do.

In conclusion, I have to express my very hearty thanks to all those whose co-operation made the experiment possible. Among them I should like specially to include the British Broadcasting Corporation and its officials, Sir Oliver Lodge who acted as announcer, the group of agents who endured a rather comfortless night to obviate any chance of leakage of the results, and all those who helped

in the classification of the answers, especially Mr. S. G. Soal who made a most careful and detailed analysis of many thousand records.

APPENDIX.

TABLE SHOWING NUMBERS OF IMPRESSIONS OF VARIOUS CARDS IN TESTS 1 AND 4 RESPECTIVELY.

CLUB.	<i>Test 1.</i>	<i>Test 4.</i>	SPADE.	<i>Test 1.</i>	<i>Test 4.</i>
Ace - - -	1027	577	Ace - - -	2255	1636
2 - - -	190	145	2 - - -	241	226
3 - - -	356	196	3 - - -	348	156
4 - - -	102	155	4 - - -	133	181
5 - - -	413	190	5 - - -	510	207
6 - - -	124	84	6 - - -	150	97
7 - - -	275	142	7 - - -	349	160
8 - - -	153	100	8 - - -	144	83
9 - - -	441	204	9 - - -	478	183
10 - - -	235	217	10 - - -	212	185
Knave - - -	499	373	Knave - - -	460	365
Queen - - -	254	236	Queen - - -	428	404
King - - -	353	418	King - - -	279	290
DIAMOND.	<i>Test 1.</i>	<i>Test 4.</i>	HEART.	<i>Test 1.</i>	<i>Test 4.</i>
Ace - - -	1600	920	Ace - - -	1821	930
2 - - -	257	200	2 - - -	157	156
3 - - -	512	237	3 - - -	423	171
4 - - -	157	218	4 - - -	105	157
5 - - -	828	329	5 - - -	747	245
6 - - -	224	163	6 - - -	173	86
7 - - -	601	234	7 - - -	347	125
8 - - -	175	100	8 - - -	177	91
9 - - -	864	288	9 - - -	491	150
10 - - -	492	359	10 - - -	210	165
Knave - - -	546	454	Knave - - -	440	337
Queen - - -	328	439	Queen - - -	784	791
King - - -	276	394	King - - -	385	399
The Joker - - -	900	2581			
Cards not of " playing card " } design	230	2785			

REVIEW.

The Bridge: a Case for Survival. Compiled by NEA WALKER, with a Prologue and an Epilogue by SIR OLIVER LODGE. Illustrated. Pp. 314. Cassell & Co., Ltd. 1927. Price 21s.

THIS important book gives an account of attempted communication and its gradual development between a Mrs. White and her deceased husband, with some further experiments after Mrs. White's own death in 1924. The case has already been in part before members of our Society, for Sir Oliver Lodge (whose secretary for psychical matters was and is Miss Walker, the compiler) gave an outline of it, quoting extracts from the evidence at an S.P.R. meeting in November, 1925. It deserves, however, more serious study than an hour's discourse affords opportunity for, and all who are really interested in psychical research will be well advised to read the book carefully, though they will not find profitable study of it altogether easy nor probably get from it sensational thrills.

There are two characteristics of the case to which special attention may be called. The first is that it is in a sense complete. The compiler has not only had before her fragments and episodes of apparent communication from Mr. White; she is cognizant of *all* that Mrs. White experienced in that way or that was obtained on her behalf through mediums, and Miss Walker to a large extent herself directed the experiments. She has very properly not given us in this volume full records of all the sittings and communications, nor even the whole of what has any apparent connexion with Mr. White. To have done so would have drawn it out to inconvenient length and have involved unnecessary repetition and the inclusion of matter of doubtful interpretation and uncertain evidential value. But Miss Walker herself has known it all and has only omitted for the sake of brevity what seemed irrelevant. To make the selection in such a manner as to present the case adequately and fairly and in

as readable a form as possible, with the necessary comments and verifications, was not a very easy task, even with the assistance Mrs. White was able to give, and I should like to congratulate Miss Walker on the success with which she seems to me to have accomplished it. I am to some extent a better judge of this than the ordinary reader, because I have seen a somewhat larger portion of the records than appears in the book.

The second and more important characteristic is that what one may call the backbone of the case, from a research point of view, is a systematic and very successful attempt to get evidence in a form which eliminates the mind of the sitter as a possible source of the knowledge shown by the communicator,—knowledge of things of which the medium and sitter were both ignorant. This was accomplished largely through sittings taken by Miss Walker as proxy for Mrs. White. Miss Walker who, as explained in the book, at first only knew Mrs. White by correspondence and knew nothing of her circumstances and surroundings except that her husband had recently died and that she was very anxious to feel in touch with him, suggested that she (Mrs. White) should ask her husband to communicate with her (Miss Walker), giving evidence of identity which could be subsequently verified. Mrs. White entered into the experiment gladly and with results satisfactory to herself and valuable to all students.

The following (see pp. 227-229) is an instance of the kind of result obtained—in this particular case knowledge shown of Mrs. White's thoughts. It occurred in the course of a sitting taken with Mrs. Leonard by Miss Walker, on behalf of Mrs. White; but Mrs. Leonard was not informed that Mrs. White, who indeed was not known to her by name at all, was concerned in the matter. By the time the sitting in question took place, however, Mrs. White had personally sat anonymously with Mrs. Leonard several times with interesting results, so that it may be supposed that some sort of rapport had been established between them. Feda (Mrs. Leonard's well-known control) speaking for Mr. White said among other things:

“ . . . She wasn't very near the window, but she could see from where she was. She was looking specially at a peculiar formation in the sky. And she wondered if it had any-

thing to do with us. He says, I'll put it this way—if we were there. If that had anything to do with our place [in the other world]. And I tried to impress upon her, that, in a strange and peculiar way, it had to do with us, and that she would not quite understand that till later. . . .”

Mrs. White gives particulars of such an experience which she had one Sunday evening before the sitting, and she had as a matter of fact, before she received the record of the sitting included in a list of impressions, placed for evidential purposes in the hands of a friend, “Thoughts in connexion with a golden cloud—is it where they are?” She was very ill at the time and unable to write more fully. It must be admitted that the corroboration of a friend is not always forthcoming as it is in this case. But of Mrs. White's *bona fides* there is no doubt and I do not think any reader of the book will question it.

A single example such as I have given does not really represent the case, for the effect of the evidence is cumulative. There were numerous instances of apparent supernormal knowledge—not of course all of equal evidential value—shown through various mediums, professional and private, concerning Mrs. White; and after her death, concerning a friend of hers, Mrs. White herself being the ostensible communicator. Mrs. White, moreover, with an ouija-board got some facts concerning Miss Walker and her sisters at a distance.

The attempt was made to obtain from Mr. White evidence of memory of things unknown to any living person. In particular he on one occasion professed to describe a childish recollection which may quite well have been true; confirmation up to a certain point was forthcoming, but no one was found who remembered the actual facts described. It is, of course, a well recognised difficulty in obtaining evidence of this type that if the alleged fact was known only to the deceased communicator, it can seldom be verified.

It may be asked: In seeking evidence of survival, how does elimination of telepathy from the sitter help us if after all the source of information is perhaps telepathy from a distant living person? There are two answers to this. The first is, that it adds to our knowledge of telepathy, which is, I think,

the most promising line of advance in psychical research. We at present know extremely little about it, and if we could discover its *modus operandi*, its conditions and its limits and possibilities, that would in itself greatly contribute to the understanding of questions of survival and communication with the dead. One reason why this book is valuable is that it is a distinct contribution to the study of telepathy.

My second answer is more direct. The communications here recorded do not merely consist of statements of fact which turn out to be true. There is an atmosphere about them. A personality is presented which is like Mr. White, showing thoughts and feelings and associations of ideas like his, possessing his memories apparently, and sometimes using his expressions. Mrs. White gradually became so strongly convinced that this was so that she ceased to doubt that she was really in communication with her husband; and I think any careful reader will feel this atmosphere. Now, though at present we know little of the limits of telepathic power, it certainly would seem, other things being equal, *prima facie* more likely that a vivid and veridical presentation of a personality is derived from the person represented than by telepathy even from the sitter, and still more so if the alternative is telepathy from a distant person. But this argument assumes that communication from the dead is a possible alternative, and rigorous proof of continued memory and affection is not attainable without exclusion of telepathy from the living as a possible source of communications. There are, however, degrees of probability, and accumulation of carefully examined evidence such as this case affords would I think gradually produce practical conviction that the source is the minds of the dead. Nevertheless, we rightly desire scientific proof of so momentous a conclusion and we must not relax our efforts to add to the evidence we already have showing memory and intelligent action clearly independent of minds still in the body; for such evidence, adequate in amount, would furnish the proof required.

I should like to call attention to two curious instances of apparent foreknowledge which occurred casually, as it seemed, in the course of the investigation—though the subject of foreknowledge is rather off the main line of the book. The first occurred at a sitting with Mrs. Leonard taken by Mrs. White

herself anonymously (see pp. 208, 9). The communicator talked about the Quantock Hills in Somerset, where the Whites had spent many holidays. Then after conversation about other matters, Fedá said :

“That place he spoke of—the place you planned to go to again . . . You *have* a sort of picture or description of that place. He’s got such a strange feeling; he feels you’re going to get another picture, sort of picture, quite by accident, you’ll think it’s a sort of coincidence.”

Mrs. White annotates :

“Whilst sitting in the train in the evening at Paddington, just after the sitting, with my friend [who corroborates], and waiting for its departure, two ladies, one in the carriage and the other standing on the platform, began to talk about the Quantocks. The one told the other of a long stay she had had in a village where we had stayed . . . and finally gave a vivid description of the view from the top of the hills, across the Severn sea to Cardiff.”

The second prediction is even more definite and its fulfilment more improbable (pp. 285, 6). The medium was Mrs. Warren Elliott. The sitting took place after Mrs. White’s death with no friends of hers present, but it was understood that communication with Miss Walker was desired. Mr. Elliott, the husband of the medium, kindly took the notes. Both Miss Nea Walker and her sister Damaris (who has psychic powers, and had herself been one of the channels through whom Mr. White had appeared to communicate), were absent from home. Topsy (Mrs. Elliott’s control) said :

“Spirit says . . . Dame (=Damaris) made cake, sort of spotted inside, and the blue fell in.”

When the record was sent to Miss D. Walker for comment, she wrote :

“I made some pastry, but it must have been [some days] later than the date of the sitting. The blue (blue for blueing clothes) did fall into the basin.”

Later she added, in answer to further inquiries :

“It was pastry I was making. . . . I filled the scraps with a mixture of currants and brown sugar. . . . It does give a ‘spotty’ appearance where you bite into it; and I suppose they might be called small pastry cakes.”

There was no conceivable reason why the fall of the blue bag, or even its presence on the shelf from which it fell, should have been anticipated by the persons concerned.

I must not leave the impression that, successful as the experiments were on the whole, the communications were all that could be desired. As is generally the case with telepathic communications, they are apt to lack the fullness which we should expect in conversations between living persons face to face, and there are not only curious gaps and omissions, but what is said is not always free from error. Even if we may assume that the dead are able to be in complete touch with us spiritually, and to know all our thoughts and actions, experience seems to show that telepathic communication expressed in language is almost always incomplete and often confused. As Fedá puts it on one occasion after Mrs. White's death (p. 273):

“There's some slipping point between us—what she was going to say, and what she tried to say, and found it wasn't given.”

Another difficulty will be felt by some readers. There are in the course of the book attempts to describe things in the other world in terms of the material world we live in—rooms, gardens, etc. *E.g.* on p. 146 Fedá says for Mr. White:

“Tell her that in our house [in the other world] we have everything that she would like, everything. . . . He says, tell her our piano is an Erard, but if she likes I'll change it. That's what it is at present.”

Common sense tells us that such descriptions, if they represent anything beyond the fancy of Fedá or other control, cannot be intended literally. If students kept this in mind, a difficulty in estimating the value of statements through mediums would perhaps be removed. A statement that the emotional effect of music is experienced on the other side would, of course, whether true or not, be in a different category.

Mr. and Mrs. White were both very musical, and Mrs. White was a good pianist. Her playing to him on the pianoforte was an important feature in their married life. That appears clearly in the book, with many other intimate details of their life together. The reader must be prepared for an atmosphere

full of tender sentiment and poetic ideas, in what Mrs. White calls "a true after-death love-story." The book is not merely a dry description of a scientific investigation, though the sentiment has not been allowed in any way to interfere with the carefulness of the investigation or the accuracy of the report. Mrs. White left to Sir Oliver Lodge and Miss Walker all the psychic material, and the right to use it, including her most intimate messages, as they thought best for the widest possible public.

"I would like the White case," she wrote, "to be used to help others to realize that Love *does* conquer all" (p. 12).

We owe a debt of gratitude to Mrs. White for thus allowing her inmost feelings to be revealed, and both to her and to Miss Walker for the trouble they have taken in presenting the evidence in what undoubtedly is, as the title intimates, "a case for survival," and a valuable one.

ELEANOR MILDRED SIDGWICK.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

PART 106

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

BY

SIR LAWRENCE J. JONES, BART.

*(This Address was delivered at a Private Meeting of the Society
on March 14, 1928.)*

WHEN it was first intimated to me that the Council might like me to act as their President during the coming year, I was somewhat perturbed at the thought that this would involve delivering a Presidential Address; but I then remembered that since the passing over of Miss Kate Wingfield last summer, the records of the many sittings which I had with her in the years 1900 and 1901 might with the consent of her family be available as material. That consent was readily given, and I propose now to give a short account of these sittings.

Readers of the *Journal* will be aware that in September 1927 I revealed that Miss Wingfield was the "Miss A" of whom Myers had written so much both in *Proceedings* and in *Human Personality*. I do not propose to repeat any part of what he has said as to Miss Wingfield's wonderful mediumship, but to begin at once at the moment when my wife and I were first admitted to the circle. It was just about the time when Miss Wingfield's clairvoyance and automatic writing, which, assisted by raps and table tilting, had been the means through which communications were received, developed into trance mediumship.

My wife and I had in 1898 lost our eldest boy at the age of fourteen after a short and severe attack of septic pneumonia. And when by a combination of circumstances which did not at the time seem fortuitous we made the acquaintance of Mrs. Wingfield and her family who were then living at Belvedere House, Wimbledon, we were naturally attracted by the thought that some communication might reach us with regard to the one who had passed on.

I should add that at this time I had never sat with any medium, and knew nothing of spirit return beyond what had already appeared in *Proceedings*. I had been an Associate of our Society since 1888.

The sittings were strictly confined to Miss Wingfield's own family and a few intimate friends. Visitors were rarely admitted. Through a common friend whom I shall refer to as E. M. we were admitted to the circle and later became regular members of it. At first the sittings were held in the dark in order that Miss Wingfield (K. as I shall call her) might see clairvoyantly any spirits who might be present.

Raps were an invariable accompaniment of the sitting, and very often a table was tilted. After the sitting automatic writing supplied an explanation of what had been seen and of the messages received through the table. Later on K. used to go into trance and the communicator would speak through her. This was a far more rapid and satisfactory means of communication, no laborious spelling out word by word through raps or table tilting; but the point to be noted is that it was a development of what had already existed for many years.

It was through E. M. that the development of this particular form of communication was made possible, as she formed a strong protection against the invasion of undesirable spirits.

The records of these sittings were made as follows:

K.'s sister M. had learnt to write in the dark and when I was present I also took notes, using a slate with wires across it. We compared notes the next morning

and wrote out a fair copy in a MS. book. These books have been preserved and have been the source of my present address.

“*Entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatem*,” is an admirable adage in Psychical Research—the real “*crux*” is where does “*Necessitas*” begin? In the case of K.’s mediumship, I have extracted from the notebooks covering the period May 1900 to November 1901 a list of 30 different “*Guides*” and 108 “*Communicators*,” total 138 separate entities. To attribute all these to K.’s powers of dramatic characterization is beyond my wildest flight of fancy.

At E. M.’s first sitting for table tilting in March 1900, K. became clairvoyant and described a man in blue clothes with a peaked cap, standing by E. M.; the table tilted out “*Herbert*.” E. M. remembered a much older brother Herbert who had died away from home when she was a child, and who had been in the Navy.

“Can you be my brother Herbert?” The figure nodded and seemed pleased. On a later occasion. “How did you find me?” “Your prayers had helped me and brought me in touch with you.”

Later Herbert took charge of the Circle. A marked masculine personality, with his own kindly and humorous comments on the various communicators and on our mistakes in dealing with them.

You ask what I feel about Herbert? If you had had over sixty conversations with someone behind a screen, and had always heard the same cheery manly voice and listened to the same kindly humorous judgments of men and things—coupled it may be with an occasional readiness to answer fools according to their folly—you would, I think, fully expect when the screen was withdrawn to find a friend ready to welcome you. So I have no doubt at all that when the time comes Herbert will prove as good as his word.

A striking contrast between K. and other mediums lay in the fact that she had no “*familiar spirit*”—no Phinuit or Nellie or Feda—no one to act as intermediary between the communicator and the sitters. Herbert

was merely "Master of Ceremonies." The sitting invariably began with his three quick raps, the sign that he was present.

When trance came on he would say a few words, and again at the close, but he never interfered in the conversations.

If we consider the space that has been devoted to the study of these trance controls in the various volumes of *Proceedings*, we shall realize what an enormous gain it is to the communicators and to the sitters when this "third party" can be eliminated.

This partly accounts for the very large number of communicators quoted above. We have had as many as ten at a single sitting.

Herbert's function was to regulate their entrances and exits and to see that K. was not physically affected by them.

K.'s principal link with the outer world was through her doctor Guide Semirus. He was supposed to have been a doctor in ancient Egypt, but I do not know what was the authority for this. He had a most peculiar script, writing diagonally across the page beginning at the top left-hand corner and running all his words in together, so that it was not easy to decipher. At first sight he might have been supposed to be a secondary personality of K., but an incident which was related to me by the family makes it impossible to hold that belief. On one occasion a sitter came down to Wimbledon to get some information from Semirus, but when K. sat down and called him there was no response. She tried again after an interval and again a third time, but still no response. The sitter went away and K. was much discouraged, thinking that for some reason the power had left her. Later in the day her hand was controlled and there was Semirus. He explained that he had heard her call, but was unable to come because he was assisting in an operation at X—Hospital. The operation was a new one that had not been performed before, and was quite successful. A letter of enquiry to the Hospital was answered to the effect that such an operation was

indeed in progress during the time of Semirus's absence and that the result was successful.

Another rather quaint incident strongly suggests an independent personality. An old friend came down one day to Wimbledon to ask for a report on the health of his aunt who lived in London. He gave the aunt's address, and in a few moments Semirus was back saying that the aunt was dead. Greatly surprised the sitter hurried back to find his aunt in her usual health. But as he waited on the door-step after ringing the bell, he realized that by inadvertence he had given Semirus the wrong number; let us say 28 instead of 29. A day or two later a funeral took place from the house to which he had wrongly directed Semirus.

The striking thing about Semirus to my mind is not the value of the diagnoses or advice that he gave, but in the incredible rapidity with which he was able to discover and report on a patient at a great distance.

My own personal experience of Semirus began on March 11, 1900, the occasion of our first visit to the Wingfield family at Wimbledon. Having been offered by K. that Semirus should write for us, we asked him to go and look at our Eton boy who we had heard was "staying out" (in ordinary parlance "staying in").

We gave him the boy's name and address and, after a pause, Semirus wrote, "Yes, I have found the boy. He is a tall well-grown boy. I find he has had a slight chill on his liver, but nothing much; but he will be all right again soon and is nearly so now. He wants a good tonic." After that we got some advice about our youngest child who was out at Valescure in the South of France.

A more important communication came from Semirus on June 2 of the same year. We were then at the Bagni di Lucca intending to spend the summer in the Appennines. Our third boy was at a Preparatory School for the Navy, near Maidenhead. The Headmaster very wisely had down Sir James Dick the former Director-General of the Medical Department of the Navy. He had inspected all the boys who would be candidates

for the Navy, and had rejected Bertram at once on account of his feet. On hearing this unwelcome report from the Headmaster I wrote to Sir James Dick to ask whether anything could be done. Here is his reply :

64 WELBECK STREET, W.,
CAVENDISH SQUARE,
May 29, 1900.

DEAR SIR,

In reply to your letter, I am of opinion that your son would not be accepted as a Cadet. His feet are not well-formed, and there is a contraction of short muscles of the sole and *Planta-fascia*, more especially of the right foot, impairing his activity. Remedial measures might improve them but not sufficiently I think to enable him to pass into the Navy. . . .

On the whole I should advise you to give up the idea of the Navy for him, and to select some career in Civil life for which he is physically quite fit.

Yours truly,

JAMES DICK.

Before acquiescing in this advice we decided to consult Semirus, and wrote home to Wimbledon for his advice. The message we received ran thus :

I have been twice to see the boy. I cannot think that it is incurable, it appears to me to be a contraction of the tendons that govern the muscles and I believe that some really good surgeon can set it right. Of course I know it might be a six months' job for the feet would have to be massaged and rubbed and strengthened after the tendon was stretched. It seems to me that such a little thing would do it if the Doctor could be persuaded to. I see no reason he should not be quite ready for the Navy in nine months' time.

In consequence of this advice the boy was taken to Mr. Noble Smith who undertook to operate and straighten out the feet, but as the operation was a very delicate one, only on condition that the parents came over to England and gave their personal sanction. We conse-

quently changed all our plans, came over to England, saw Noble Smith, authorized him to carry out the operation, which was entirely successful, and the boy passed into the Navy with no difficulty the following March.

A critical examination of Semirus's words suggests that this was really only a happy guess on his part. He uses the words "Surgeon and Doctor" indiscriminately, and one cannot tell whether he really understood what could be done by up-to-date surgery. However, his advice to consult a surgeon was perfectly sound, and enabled the boy to enter his profession.

After that Semirus became for a year or two what may be called our family doctor for the minor ailments of a large family. I do not see any trace of deep knowledge of either surgery or medicine; he is rather of the type of an old-fashioned country doctor using homely remedies. Here is his remedy for a cold in the head:

"What you had better do is to steam your head over hot water and ammonia and then put a flannel right over your head, and go to sleep, and take a really big glass of hot water, lemon and whisky, and do not be sparing of the spirit." I have a note to this. "Tried and found quite successful and the following day we had a picnic up at the Malpey."

Here is an occasion when Semirus's advice was of practical use to us. In the summer of 1901 a house had been taken for us for a few weeks in a small country town near the East Coast. We had been there two or three weeks when K. and E. M. came down to stay. They were not very happy about the drainage, and the morning after they arrived Semirus was consulted. He wrote:

I strongly advise you not to remain in this house any length of time. I do not like the situation in regard to health. All the ground under the house is saturated with sewage, it will get into the system and come out in many ways. My strong advice is not to remain longer than is necessary, I do not consider it sanitary. Open doors and windows are no use, as the evil comes from below under the house. It is most unwholesome,

most. My disinterested advice is do not stay longer than you can help. Children brought up in the house do not take any harm, as their blood is saturated with the atoms; but fresh persons with good blood coming in are much more liable to be affected. You can draw no argument from the health of the residents.

In consequence of this advice we went the next morning to a sea-side town a few miles off, took a house there for the following day, and as soon as we had moved sent over a sanitary expert who pronounced the drainage system as bad as it could be; all joints leaking and the house full of sewer gas.

Semirus wrote for K. all through her life, and more than one doctor consulted him again and again so that his diagnoses in obscure cases must have been of value.

Semirus never would give a prescription to be made up at a chemist's, on the ground that he was not a qualified Medical Practitioner.

In the case of a skin affection he once excused himself for failure to make a satisfactory diagnosis, on the ground that he could not *touch* the affected part. The only question he would ask before starting on his journey was what limb or organ was to be inspected.

The script was always handed over to the sitter, and K. knew nothing of its content, except when she was asked to help to decipher it.

To return to our sittings. I should here explain that the purpose of these sittings was a most serious one. Mainly to obtain light and teaching on the mysteries of life and religious problems; but also at the instigation of some of the controls to afford a meeting place for those who having passed over had not yet succeeded in meeting each other. This sounds very strange but it is the only intelligible explanation of the number of dramatic situations which unrolled themselves as the sittings went on.

As assistance to those in darkness and isolation was the purpose and not identification or corroboration of their stories, it is rare that proof can be offered of the reality of what took place; but on one occasion identity

was, so to speak, forced upon us and of this I propose to speak in some detail.

On September 8, 1900, in the course of the afternoon K. felt an impulse to write, and taking some sheets of paper drew on successive sheets five rough drawings. The first was of an arm and hand holding what might be a toy pistol which was being fired off. The next, three figures walking together and the end of the pistol pointing to one of them. Next a figure of a woman just falling over, bleeding in the head; below a policeman blowing his whistle, and a stretcher. Next a man's figure hiding something in his pocket. Then a female figure with a man beyond her with his arm round her, and another man shaking his fists at them. Then writing. "Sarah. Jack killed Sarah. Sarah. Sarah Willet. Jack Parr. August 2 days ago."

In the evening a sitting was held and Sarah Willet communicated the following.

(K.) She says it was her fault not his, you mustn't let him be killed for it. If he is, she shall never forgive herself, never rise, never move. He makes her come to him, he calls her all day long. She wants you to stop him, and tell him she's forgiven him, but she can't go to him. He shot her. There is a great deal going on about it now. She can't move from the place, she walks up and down, up and down—she wants help.

(Sarah Willet herself.) He'd been following me all the time. I told him I wouldn't see him. I knew he was hurt. It was all because I went out with Charlie Higgins. I told him if he followed me any longer I'd have a bobby after him. I turned to pretend to call one, and he shot me. I *can't* get away. (Where did you live?) 7 Sydney Street. (Where did he live?) John Parr? I think it was in Green Street. I never went to his rooms, he always met me outside. (What was his work?) He rubbed. (A masseur?) No, in a furniture shop. (What did you do?) I worked. (In a shop?) No, I helped Mother. I brought it home. I didn't work for a shop, but for anybody; all kinds of work. I can't pray. I'm

walking up and down. I wasn't ready to go. It was cruel to send me like that. I should have gone back in a day or two. He's glad he did it, because he was angry. He says he will make her suffer. If I could get to him! Don't let him come over here; stop them from sending him! I've paid for it, it was my sin.

Sept. 11, 1900.

Have you found Jack? I'm not so cold as I was. I was walking along, and he was there behind me. Mary Wilson was with me. I told her to pay no attention. It was cruel of me. I said, "I shall call a bobby." He took a pistol—in a moment it was done! I didn't get out for half an hour, then I suffered tortures. I didn't care for my body, I knew it was my fault. Two people have been to me, they tried to get me away. I went with one, a good man. The other was a woman, she had suffered too, she was very good to me. I think if I can get to where she is I shan't remember so much.

(Dark sitting, Sept. 30, 1900. Sarah Willet speaking.)

Jack! Jack! Jack! He's calling me. I had got away. "It's your fault!" he says, "your fault!" all the time. If he does not call me I can get up.

Oct. 2, 3 p.m. (Sarah Willet writing through K. and E. M.)
"Do not let my death be avenged."

About 9 p.m. the same evening as K. was walking downstairs she felt two strong hands seize her by the shoulders and shake her violently. On asking Herbert about it he wrote, "It is poor Sarah gone mad. He (John Parr) is after her. He has come over.

Later in the evening at a dark sitting K. said she saw Sarah Willet, also a figure with a black thing like a sack tied over his head and shoulders. He came close to one of the circle, and seemed to envelop him, thus giving the feeling of being strangled. (By raps) "John Parr hanged to-day."

Not much attention was paid to the earlier of these communications which were interspersed with others of a similar nature, but on September 14, 1900, to our surprise we read of the trial at the Old Bailey of John Parr, aged

eighteen, French Polisher, charged with the murder of Sarah Willet the younger, on August 27.

I have recently ascertained that reports of the murder and inquest had appeared in the *Morning Post* of August 29 and September 1, but these had not been seen by any member of the circle. Otherwise the names would have been recognized.

Here is the extract from *The Times*, September 14, 1900.

JOHN PARR, 19, French Polisher, was indicted for and charged on the Coroner's inquisition with the wilful murder of SARAH WILLETT the younger.

Mr. Horace Avory, Mr. R. D. Muir and Mr. Guy Stephenson conducted the prosecution; Mr. Biron, at the request of Mr. Justice Bucknill, defended.

The prisoner had been keeping company with the deceased, who was 19 years of age. Some weeks before August 27th—the day on which the prisoner killed her—the woman had broken off the engagement. It was stated on the part of the prosecution that on August 25 the prisoner was drinking in a public-house with three young women, and in the course of conversation with them alluded to his quarrel with Willett, and said he intended to do for her and himself too, adding, "Instead of hearing of a marriage you will hear of a burial." He produced a revolver and fired it into the street to show that it was loaded, and gave cartridges to two of the young women as a present. On August 27 the deceased and a girl friend were in the Foresters' Music-hall in the East-end of London. The prisoner came to the Music-hall and asked Willett to treat him to some drink, but she refused, whereupon he took up her glass of stout and drank it. The girl and her friend left the Music-hall. The prisoner followed them. When opposite the police-station in the Bethnal Green Road, Willett said to him, "What do you intend to do?" The prisoner made a reply to the effect that he intended that she should continue to keep company with him. The deceased said, "I don't want you. All I want is an honest, hard-working fellow—not one who robs others." The prisoner thereupon drew a revolver and fired a shot at Willett. The bullet entered her temple. She screamed and fell. A police-officer rushed out of the police-station and found the prisoner

with the revolver in his hand. The prisoner exclaimed, "I have done it. I have done it." He was searched, and on him was found a piece of paper on which was written, "It is all her own fault, and she deserves it. Goodbye pals, one and all." The injured woman died the same evening.

Dr. Scott, Medical Officer of Holloway, said that while the prisoner had been in Holloway upon the charge he had been kept under close observation to ascertain the condition of his mind. He thought that the prisoner's intellect was of a somewhat low order. The prisoner was vain and bombastic. He was informed that there was a case of alleged insanity on each side of the prisoner's family, and he was told that the prisoner had had a severe fall at a gymnasium some years ago. He had seen nothing about the prisoner which, in his opinion, indicated insanity.

Evidence was given for the defence. It was stated that the prisoner had seemed strange in his manner for some time before August 28. He spoke of going to Australia. There was insanity in his family. Some years ago he had had a severe fall on his head at a gymnasium. He had complained of pains in his head.

Mr. Biron submitted that there was no motive for the prisoner to murder the deceased. The revolver was little more than a toy. There was no evidence that the prisoner took out the revolver and aimed it at Willett. The first thing that was seen was the flash of the revolver going off. It might very well be that it went off by accident. The prisoner's mind at the time was distraught and unhinged.

The jury retired to consider their verdict, and after an absence of nearly three-quarters of an hour they returned into Court finding the prisoner GUILTY, but strongly recommending him to mercy on the ground of his youth.

Mr. JUSTICE BUCKNILL said that the recommendation to mercy would be at once forwarded to the proper quarter. He sentenced the prisoner to death.

Morning Post. Oct. 3, 1900.

EXECUTION AT NEWGATE—JOHN PARR, 19, French Polisher, who was sentenced to death at the Central Criminal Court for the murder of Sarah Willett, aged nineteen, by shooting her

with a revolver in Bethnal-green, was hanged within Newgate Gaol yesterday morning. Death was instantaneous.

John Parr made his first appearance at the evening sitting on October 2, the day of his execution. He was in a great rage, calling for Sarah. He had been told he would find Sarah here. E. M. explained that he would not be allowed to see Sarah until he had forgiven her ; that they were now both dead, so that it was no use keeping up enmity.

He came again on October 3 and 4, and gradually came to see reason. On October 22, he announced that he had forgiven Sarah and had met her, but did not intend to have anything more to do with her. After that he was constantly popping in to say a few words.

Unfortunately the MS. book with the verbatim reports of these sittings is missing, and we have only the summary. But on October 28 he came and said, in reference to a cabinet which he had noticed as needing a polish :

I have come to tell you how I am getting on, and to thank you for helping me ; and I will give you the polish what was given me, I was not to tell anybody. Beeswax, honey, vinegar, whiting, and linseed oil. Mix linseed and vinegar and honey together, dab linseed and vinegar with a very little honey and do not forget the whiting. Sprinkle a very little in with the other, then get your beeswax, and leave it to soak in ; and when it is soft drain off all that will run and keep the thick. Get a piece of wadding and tie it up tight in a piece of soft muslin. Put it in the polish. Work with the grain of the wood, and never stop till you have rubbed every drop in. Then take a piece of clean flannel, dip it in linseed oil and rub in with the grain, this time round and round ; then polish with a wash-leather pad.

This was done, and next time John Parr came, he expressed himself very well satisfied with the result.

But, you will say, and rightly, why go so fully into this case ? Is there anything special about it ?

Now the latest serious study of our literature is by Dr. Broad, the eminent Cambridge logician and philo-

sopher, in his book *The Mind and its Place in Nature* published in 1925. Dr. Broad has read our literature and has attended some sittings, and his conclusion is that the known facts support the theory of "the persistence of some factor which was a constituent of a human mind," but not the survival of that mind integrally. His words are, page 539 :

We are not justified in saying that the mind of John Jones has survived the death of his body unless we have reason to believe that there is still a continuous stream of mental states which may be said to be "Further experiences of John Jones." We must suppose that this contains conations as well as cognitions, that it puts ends before itself and tries to realise them, and that it feels elation, or disappointment, according to its success or failure in doing so.

Now strangely enough it is this case of Sarah Willett and John Parr which seems to contain the very elements which Dr. Broad misses in his alleged communications from the dead. Sarah was terrified at the thought of John's revenge. John arrived in hot haste after hanging, in search of revenge, had to be made to see that revenge was useless, and finally forgave Sarah and became a reasonable being with a future of progress before him.

Here we have conations, attempts to realise ends, and disappointment, and in a mild form, almost elation.

I conclude then that survival fits the facts and that more than "temporary mindkins" (Dr. Broad's phrase) may be revealed through trance mediumship.

Another communication that has been verified is that of John Mitchell who controlled on December 22, 1900, when Myers was present. My note is :

John Mitchell looking for Richard Goss, both drowned together at Devonport three weeks ago.

Then on February 11, 1901, K. was crystal gazing and saw two men rowing hard in a boat in a rough sea, with land on either side ; then the boat capsized and the taller of the two men, with a black beard, was drowned. Then came letters of the alphabet, each word spelt backwards...

“Dick Goss, Saltmarsh, Plymouth. He was drowned and his body was not found; he has been before to you when your friend Myers was here. He wants help very much. He wants his body found, it lies off Plymouth Sound.” No mention of this accident appeared in the *London Standard*, the only newspaper that was taken at Le Chalet at that time. Later on I wrote to the Editor of the *Western Morning News* and obtained from him a short notice of the inquest on the body of John Mitchell who had been drowned about December 10, 1900. He was a Plymouth longshore man. The body of his companion Richard Goss had not been recovered. I gave this cutting with a copy of the communications to Miss Johnson in case she could find room for it in the *Journal*, but on enquiry at the office I find that it has disappeared, probably during the move from Hanover Square.

On July 8, 1900, at Wimbledon the following message was rapped out from Herbert. “There is a man here who wishes me to tell you his name is Arthur Trefusis Jones.” I vaguely remembered a cousin of that name who had died many years before. I said, “Are you a son of Sir Harry?” “Yes,” was rapped out. Then “Will you ask for help for Kumasi?” After this I wrote to my mother if she could tell me anything. She replied, “You ask if I can tell you anything of Sir Harry’s son Arthur, poor fellow. He and I were just like brother and sister all the time Sir Harry was at Chatham. He was intended for the Army Medical Service, but at the time of the Crimean War got a commission and then was sent out to the Gold Coast and died there in June or July 1861.” Kumasi was invested by the Ashantis on April 25, 1900. The garrison was relieved on July 15, only just in time to prevent their being starved into surrender.

On a later occasion I asked Herbert how this cousin had found me out. His reply was, “In the first place time has nothing to do with it and, secondly, association of relationship makes a link from one to the other—though it makes no difference as to being with each other. Your Guides have met his Guide and there is a

chain that way. Knowing that there was a possibility of communicating he came; though it is quite certain he would not have come so easily to any other circle. And again your Guide knows your father's Guide. He would know the Guides of other members of his family; and so links are easily formed with what seem to you past generations.

On May 1, 1901, Victor Bailiff, a sailor on the *Lorton* communicated. He said that he had passed over eleven weeks ago stabbed by Giovanni. "It was my fault not his; I forgive him." The *Lorton* was at Falmouth with a cargo of nitrate. Again on May 5, the same communicator, "Do not let it be visited on him, I provoked him, I think he is in prison at Truro." In the *Daily Mail* for June 27, 1901, there was a paragraph headed "On Behalf of a Murderer" (from our special correspondent) Rome. Sunday. June 23rd.

The Italian Government has made representations to the British Authorities with reference to Giovanni Valeiri, an Italian sailor who was condemned to death at Bodmin for murder. It seems that Valeiri had been several times confined in a Lunatic Asylum, and has always been weak mentally.

Giovanni Valeiri was sentenced to death at Bodmin Assizes on June 17 for "the murder on the High Seas of Victor Bailiff a native of Jersey." The motive was supposed to be one of revenge.

It would almost seem sometimes as if identification so much desired by us here is for some reason not liked by those on the other side. I had a striking example of this when, in the year 1902, passing through Paris, I made the acquaintance of Monsieur Fernand Desmoulin, a well-known French portrait painter, who had recently developed automatic drawing. He had been told by automatic writing to buy a box of pastels and suitable canvasses, and when I visited him his studio was filled with weird landscapes, drawn with great vigour, but utterly unlike any earthly scene. He had also drawn human figures in mediæval costumes and head-dresses.

He was ordered to avert his eyes until the drawing was completed ; if he looked his hand stopped and wrote "tu regarde" on the paper beside the canvas. These drawings were signed "Ton vieux maitre" or "Stromboli." On one occasion Stromboli had drawn a series of profiles on one canvas, one within the other, and being in a communicative mood had stated that they were portraits of his family. He had on different occasions given a little information about himself—that he had been an Englishman ; that he had been dead so many years, and some other facts about his life which should make identification fairly easy. As I was returning to England Desmoulin asked me to try and find out if there had been an English artist whom the facts fitted.

On arriving in London I called on the editor of an illustrated paper, and in a short time ascertained that there had been an English artist whose life exactly fitted the statements of Stromboli. The editor very kindly gave me a copy of a back number of the paper containing the portrait of this artist which had appeared at the time of his death. I at once wrote to Desmoulin and suggested that next time Stromboli controlled he should get him to draw his own portrait. I said I considered that if it resembled the portrait in the newspaper it would be highly interesting and somewhat evidential. I waited some weeks for a reply, and then heard that from the day my letter was received Stromboli had never controlled again. It would seem that for some reason or other he did not wish his identity to become known.

In the late autumn of 1900 after the death of Mrs. Wingfield, K. and her two sisters came out to Valescure to stay with E. M. at her villa. We were in our own villa not far off and a large number of trance sittings took place, under what I venture to think were ideal conditions. What are ideal conditions ? A small circle of intimate friends with one of themselves as medium, sitting regularly in a quiet spot under good climatic conditions.

The purpose of these sittings was, as before, a serious one, either for instruction or for help to those who may be brought to the circle.

What in the year 1900 was the presupposition of trance sittings? Myers' book was not yet published, though part of it had appeared in *Proceedings*. But there was no general knowledge of the unconscious, the sub-conscious or subliminal. The tripartite division of Man as body, soul and spirit was the only one known. The soul left the body during sleep or in trance.

As an illustration of this, on four different occasions, my youngest girl, aged nine, purported to control during her sleep, speaking with great animation and very characteristically. In the first instance, she was at Ripley, some fifteen miles from Wimbledon where K. was staying. Later at Valescure she was asleep either in the same house or in the neighbouring villa.

On the first occasion the child was asked, after some conversation, "What about the sailor frock?" The answer came, "We went to a shop. Mummie just said, 'You get those things out. That is her tallness.' And they got them; nothing else to be done, no altering. They just sent them home. That's what I like." This was a correct version of what had happened that afternoon. The child had been taken by her mother to London but none of us had been at Wimbledon that day, so K. and the other members of the circle only knew that there was a plan to buy a sailor frock.

Here is Herbert's comment :

In many cases a spirit on our side is quite unable to tell if a person is dead, or unconscious, or merely sleeping, if the spirit is outside; for after death for some little time the cord hangs loosely before it is absorbed into the soul-body, and often in sleep the slackness of the cord presents the same appearance.

This may be compared with the "Beard" case in *Journal XXIII*, pp. 130-132, where Mr. Beard was described as having quite recently passed over at a sitting held some eight hours before his actual decease.

We sat three and four days a week, generally for about an hour and a half, without the slightest effect on K.'s health. After her return to England in 1901 it was

decided by her family that it was undesirable that she should become known as a trance medium, and the sittings became occasional only and were finally abandoned.

It may be of interest here to say something about the trance. It was induced by a tap on the temple by E. M. and the order "Go to sleep." A similar tap with the order "Wake up," restored K. to consciousness. There was no waking stage as in Mrs. Piper's trance. Complete amnesia of what had happened either in the séance room or to herself was the general rule.

But on two or three occasions she was told to remember whom she met on the other side and what they had told her. Once when she had been working a cushion cover in silks and was puzzled as to what was the right stitch for completing a tulip, she was asked to find out on the other side from a friend who had often communicated and who in life had done beautiful embroidery. On waking up K. said that she had been to the "garden" and met Marguerite and had consulted her about the tulip. Marguerite had then "made" a tulip, also canvas and silks and needle, and had shown K. exactly what stitch to use. Certainly the tulip was successfully completed and the cushion cover long remained a valued possession.

Other curious occasions were when K. seemed to stand outside her body and control it from outside just like any other control. At these times she always spoke of her body as a "Me," and her soul as an "I"... "There is an 'I' here who hasn't got a 'Me,'" speaking of my boy who was waiting his turn to control.

It was during K.'s stay at Valescure that the cross correspondences with Mrs. Thompson took place described by Mr. Piddington in *Proceedings*, Vol. XVIII., pp. 205, 267, 294. As the previous pseudonym "Miss A." had been used by others, I was asked to suggest a second, and decided on "Miss Rawson." Further mention by Sir Oliver Lodge occurs in *Proceedings*, Vol. XXIII., pp. 212, 219. Also in *Journal*, Vol. XI., p. 167.

In addition to raps and table tilting we occasionally got what is now called telekinesis, movements of objects

without contact. Here is my note of a sitting at Le Chalet, Valescure (E. M.'s villa), on January 29, 1901.

As soon as K. was entranced she got up and moved across the room in the dark in search of a small round heavy table, which she placed in front of the sofa on which she sat. It was then forcibly raised in the air until almost out of reach. E. M. seized the leg and brought it down to the floor again.

The room was not pitch dark, there was a fairy lamp out of direct sight, and the remains of a fire on the hearth. The table was plainly visible in the air. Herbert then spoke and said that this physical manifestation was in answer to what E. J. (my wife) had been mentally asking for. Then a second time K. went in search of the table which had been moved away and, having got it, collected my hand and E. J.'s and put them with her own and E. M.'s on the top of the table. It was then forcibly lifted up from underneath and when about three feet from the ground fell with a crash that broke part of the ornamental carving. Then Herbert spoke to E. J.

You wanted this not as a test but as it were an illustration to a book, to help you to realize physical phenomena. I had to have some particular spirits who came, who were material, to do it. To get active power you must get spirits on the earth plane, not bad ones, to help. I asked for someone to give you that demonstration. Materialized hands were pushing the table up, most of the power to do this came from K. and E. M. (E. M. became very hot during the levitation.) I did not tell any of you beforehand that I intended to do this, so that it was not only a manifestation of spirit force but of the power of spirits' knowledge of your own mind.

Then comes a note in my wife's handwriting.

The last sentence was in answer to a mental wish I had formed during that afternoon while reading, that I might one day witness some striking physical phenomena. I had not confided my wish to anyone.

Again on March 28, at a house in London.

We sat round a small table. K. not in trance. The table was violently shaken and finally lifted into the air twice and then let down with a crash. The small armchair on which K. was sitting was moved under her, and after she had got up and no one was touching it, was again slowly moved round and away. Then a screen was slightly moved without contact with any sitter. Afterwards K. went into trance and Herbert said he had got help from some Elementals (or forces) to produce these movements. They had tried to get passage of matter through matter, but there was not enough force in the circle. We were all tired after a long day in London.

Here are the Notes on Apports. Ned Carter was a little Cockney boy who often came to the circle.

September 25th. Herbert rapped: "I have told Ned to try and bring you something to-night. K. was then entranced, and said, "They are trying so hard to bring something from the next room"—presently she said, "They've done it," and after a little Ned Carter came and spoke. "I've brought you a flower—a red one—aren't you going to take it? (Where is it?) In that 'ere red thing. I brought it out of the next room, through the wall." (After the sitting we found a red sweet-pea had been put in the little tray on the table we were sitting round but not touching, broken off rather short. Herbert told us when he came, that it was out of one of the vases on the dining-room table, so we looked and found the other half of the stalk in one of the vases, exactly fitting the one which had been brought by Ned. We had been sitting in the drawing-room with all the doors and windows locked, and there were *no* sweet peas in the house except the four vases in the dining-room—which was also locked up for the night.)

On October 17, 1900, at Wimbledon, K. was entranced rather suddenly and seemed to be going through some very great exertion, panting and groaning and pushing her hands together, then holding them above her head,

and then putting them on the table. She kept saying, "Three, three," but we could not make out what it referred to. At last she said, "He has gone—the Indian. There is something on the table—you must not lose it." We felt about and found three very small hard objects like beads and, on examining them afterwards with a light, we found they were three tiny unset turquoises.

It had taken a great deal of power out of both K. and E. M. and when Herbert came to speak later he could hardly produce any voice at all, the power was so weak.

With so much writing we naturally enquired as to the methods used. Here is a reply.

There are two ways we influence the writing control; one through the hand automatically, the other by moving the brain and impressing the words we want to put on paper.

1. *Automatic.* When we write automatically, or without influencing the medium, we get into the aura of the person we are writing through, and direct a strong magnetic current on the hand and pencil which we control from a point not very far away.

When this is the case the hand moves in answer to the direction from the other side: we do not actually move it with our hands, but we speak and the words are taken through this aura and guide the hand to write.

It is difficult to explain and sounds impossible, but it is because your laws do not control on our side that we are able to do it.

2. *The Brain.* The other way is when we influence the brain. We generally do that first, before we get entire control of the hand; for the first thing is to get the brain entirely under control—and you see we want it equally under control when we write through the hand only, but in another way.

Then we have to keep the brain perfectly quiet, to take away all power of control from mind to hand, to leave the muscles and hand perfectly free and uncontrolled. But when we influence the brain, we do it word by word, not sentence by sentence; there is no connection between

the beginning and end of a paragraph in the medium's mind: he simply hears a few words and puts them down, and the words we put into the brain by speaking them spiritually into the inner consciousness.

So you see you need not think it is yourself because you know the words.

Here is an explanation of "raps."

When you make a circle for the purpose of communicating with those on the other side, you generally join hands and that makes a circle both in the atmospheric conditions and also in the material magnetism; and inside that circle you are able to bring a kind of rarefied atmosphere that enables spirits to come close. You cannot get these conditions without making a circle for it. When you have done this and waited a little, then gradually you find that the raps come—and the raps, you must remember, are not the actual hands of the spirits themselves, but the force that you are storing, utilized by them to make sound with; and as you are storing it in the table, it is in the table the raps are heard. It is the very greatest pleasure to those on the other side to come when you are sitting, for it makes a kind of bond of intelligence between the two worlds, and makes it easy for them to speak to you.

Many of those who meet a violent death do not realize that space is annihilated for them as it is for all spirits; they think that they are obliged to stay where they are and that they cannot get out of the place where their spirits left the body.

And then they see a light, and that light is because you are sitting in a circle and are willing to help and they find they can walk towards the light, which attracts them as a candle attracts a moth, and they come and find you can hear them speak, and they feel that you are in the flesh and they tell you their story and ask you to help them to get away, and then you pray for them. And they can meet us too when they are with you and so gradually they get to understand where they are and to know that they can advance and rise and

get beyond the material. When you have begun the work by teaching them this, we can carry it on until we have got them quite clear of their bodies.

I must now come to the teachings received by K., and here I am tempted to quote from Professor Richet, *Thirty Years of Psychical Research*, page 80. He says :

The characteristics of the literature of the unconscious are distinctive enough to be recognised without difficulty. There is in the first place a marked tendency to vague and mystical phrases on the destiny of the Soul and its imperishable powers. These divagations of the subconscious are always markedly religious, as if their purpose was to lay down the rites and doctrines of a new religion. They are pervaded by a love for humanity which would be touching if it were not expressed as a rhetorical and cloudy philanthropy. Automatic writings abhor precision, and shun precise indications, favouring very ordinary commonplaces.

They would seem to be the work of poets ignorant of prosody, of philosophers who know no philosophy, of priests ignorant of theology; all of whom make laudable efforts to give us counsel on philosophy and precepts on religion in poetic and nebulous language.

Professor Richet is obviously writing from a study of such communications in the French language, and it is curious that in the two countries a similar level seems to have been reached. I may note here that one communicator who gave the name of *John the Forerunner* may possibly be identified with *Jean le Précurseur*, whose message is printed in a volume called *La Survie*, edited by Madame Rufina Noeggerath, published in Paris, 1897.

English automatic messages also reach what I may call a high level of mediocrity which is very rarely overpassed. I venture to think that some of the best are in the two little books, *Guidance from Beyond* and *More Guidance from Beyond*, given through K. Wingfield, published in 1923 and 1925 by Philip Allan.

Professor Richet's conclusion that these messages come from the subconsciousness of the medium involves an

assumption that all writing mediums are alike, as regards their subconscious faculties.

Granting the possibility of communication, it is easier to believe that, varied as mediums are in their intellectual and moral level, they come in contact with a plane on which are many intelligences of mediocre attainment, eager to communicate what they have learnt, and too ready to offer partial solutions of problems which are as much beyond their ken as beyond ours.

It is the communicator who honestly says, "I don't know," in reply to some question of free will, or high theology, whom one would respect and wish to hear more from.

In regard to my own experience: having been present when a good number of these messages were received, and noting the varied handwritings which were characteristic of the communicators, it is impossible to me to believe that these are all traceable to the unconscious mind of a single medium.

At the same time the high claims made by the communicators themselves, as to the lofty origin of their teachings, make us anxious to form some theory of their provenance.

Can the explanation be that these messages come from intelligences who have not lived on earth, who know our joys and sorrows by hearsay only, and are too ready to offer consolation in general terms.

The toad beneath the harrow knows
Exactly where each sharp prong goes ;
The butterfly upon the road,
Preaches contentment to the toad.

There would seem to be many butterflies hovering round the automatist.

One thing is certain. There is no revelation in the sense of something unthought of or beyond the grasp of human imagination.

On the contrary, no messages have attained the spiritual vision of a St. François de Sales, or the profundity of our great philosophers and poets, just as in science, where

verification is possible, there has been no revelation reaching beyond the discoveries of the day.

There have been many descriptions of life on Mars. We ourselves had an example of them, written, I must allow, as a contribution to a domestic magazine. But until the telescope revealed the two small satellites and astronomers calculated their orbits and revolutions, the only hint of their existence was made by Dean Swift in *Gulliver's Travels*. No description of Martian landscape mentioned these striking objects hurrying across the sky.

The same is true of Jupiter's moons; automatists only know of the number already discovered at the date of writing.

In addition to the general "Guides" we each had our own personal Guide, whose names were given. Mine was "Dominie," a quite appropriate name, as I was then teaching my own children. My wife's was "Rayda" and each child had one or more Guides; who were, we were told, liable to be changed as life went on.

I cannot say that Dominie's guidance, as expressed in his words and messages, amounted to more than vague predictions of good news to come and encouragement to continue my investigations.

The statement made by Herbert in writing, "that there is no human being born into the world without a guide being appointed to look after that soul," seems quite incredible. When one thinks of 1,500 million people, including such varying types as a Chinese coolie, an Andaman islander, a Tennessee Fundamentalist and a Bolshevik executioner; the idea of each having a Guide immobilized beside him, without the slightest power of influencing his reason or his pity, seems a waste of force hardly to be expected even in an illimitable universe.

When Stead was preparing a second series of his letters from Julia, he wrote to me and asked if there were any subjects on which I wanted information. I replied "Guides." But when the book came out there was nothing about Guides.

So I have no confirmation of the real existence of Dominie and Rayda. And yet at one time we were

spoken of as "Dominie's and Rayda's man and woman"; implying that they were, if anything, more real than we were. I believe the conditions to be infinitely more complex than we have any idea of, and that, what with thought forms, dream forms, elementals *et hoc genus omne*, the Control is not always able to distinguish between what is there and what we are asking for; and, in the case of a double personality we should not ourselves know what we are asking for.

In December, 1900, Myers came to Valescure on his way to Rome and had some sittings with us. Edmund Gurney and Henry Sidgwick and others who had come through Mrs. Thompson communicated, and Myers was greatly cheered by the corroboration he received of messages already given through Mrs. Thompson.

Myers was already seriously ill with an advanced form of heart disease. And here I should like to interpolate a warning against taking too seriously the predictions of mediums. I well remember on this occasion going for a walk with Myers and the turn of the road at which he stopped and said to me: "I have four hundred and fourteen days to live." I gazed at him in astonishment. "Yes," he said, "my death has been definitely predicted to me for a day in February 1902. I have made all my arrangements on this basis. I have divided up the work that still remains to do on my book into twelve parts, and I am going to do one part each month. I shall then finish the book and have a few weeks before my time comes."

As a fact, Myers died at Rome on January 17, 1901, within a month of our conversation. His book, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, was not finished. The Epilogue, with its splendid eloquence, hangs as it were in the air, with but few corroborative facts to support it. The reason for this is that Myers had intended to print in *Proceedings* a full report of his sittings with Mrs. Thompson, together with a comment on Hodgson's unfavourable report on the same medium. An epitome of this would no doubt have appeared in the book. But his premature death prevented this, and his

literary executors Richard Hodgson and Miss Alice Johnson had to print the unfinished book with the lamentable omission of most of the evidence on which Myers had based his enthusiastic belief in Survival.

Strangely enough Hodgson himself seems also to have been misled by some general predictions received through Mrs. Piper, which have been printed by Mrs. Sidgwick in Vol. XVIII. of *Proceedings*. The records show that a continued and prosperous life was prophesied for Hodgson himself. Part 2 of his Paper on Mrs. Piper never saw the light, and it is probable that the prophecies had encouraged him to postpone writing until he had the whole of the evidence before him. As you will remember, he died suddenly in 1905. So in two important instances the literature of Psychical Research has suffered through undue reliance on prophecy.

Another false prophecy, happily not misleading, has been handed to me by Mrs. Sidgwick.

On March 11, 1894, at Boston, Mass., Richard Hodgson notes that "the statement was made to me in so called automatic writing by Mrs. Piper during trance, that Professor Henry Sidgwick of Cambridge, England, would die soon of heart failure." "Soon" was interpreted as meaning "months." Professor Sidgwick lived for six years longer, and did not die of "heart failure."

A few words on predictions in general may be allowed here. It is not infrequent that a sensitive gives remarkably accurate delineations of a sitter's past and present surroundings.

If she goes on to predict the future, the sitter is apt to give too much heed, forgetting that he himself is the source whence all the information has been obtained. His future may be visible, but too often it is his unexpressed or even subconscious hopes and fears which colour the prediction.

If a second sensitive is consulted and the same prediction made, the sitter is more and more impressed. But in reality there is but little true corroboration; the sitter brings with him his recollection of the first prediction and this naturally colours the second. So that those

who expect such things as an inheritance or marriage or the birth of a child on the ground that two or more sensitives have concurred in their predictions, are building on the sand.

Readers of Osty's *Supernormal Faculties in Man* will remember his lucid analysis of "fabulations" and their origin in the latent mental content of the sitter.

Soon after Myers' death we had various messages from him. They contained nothing evidential. Then came communicators with high sounding names, such as Benjamin Disraeli, who criticized the then Conservative leaders much in the style of a retired colonel at the Carlton Club.

Then various Biblical characters with a plentiful supply of texts and nothing to say of any importance. Then Edward Maitland, the mystic, and biographer of Anna Kingsford. He had been a friend of the Wingfield family and in his old age used to visit them when his hands were doubled up with arthritis. At his first appearance in the circle, K. rose up, doubled up her fist and solemnly shook hands all round. My wife and I were introduced and formally shook hands. I mention this because some years later at my only sitting with Mrs. Thompson, at Lady Battersea's house, while we three were sitting chatting before the fire, Mrs. Thompson suddenly went into trance, turned to me and in her usual voice said: "You know Edward." I had known various Edwards, so replied "Yes," rather doubtfully: on this Mrs. Thompson doubled up her fist and presented it to me to shake in precisely the same manner as K. had done some years before. I called out "Edward Maitland!" But he had nothing to say of any interest.

And lastly I come to communications from our own boy. From the first we got messages about him, and later from him. Gradually he learnt how to communicate through K. entranced, and at last there was hardly a sitting in which he did not say a few words.

Looking over my notes I find but little of general interest or in any way evidential. He is interested in our daily life, and in the doings of his brother, especially on the river at Eton. But on February 19, 1901, I

suddenly thought of a question. "Can you explain what you said in your last illness?" The last few days of his life he was delirious and talked much to himself. But once when I was sitting by him, he suddenly sat up in bed and said, in a loud voice and with much emphasis: "The truth shall be established in thee." An unlikely saying for a boy of fourteen. I had not the least idea of what it could mean but had always remembered it.

On this occasion I asked him if he could explain it and he replied: "I heard this said to me." "Yes?" I said, and he went on, "Well Dada, and so it has been; for I have been the link to teach you the Truth. I was ready to go then though I didn't know it, and it was best for you that I should go. My going has brought truth close."

The more I reflect on this prophecy uttered through the lips of a boy—his pure and noble soul hovering on the brink of departure—and so strangely fulfilled within three years through the lips of another, the thinner grows the barrier between "here" and "there," and the more I am filled with wonder and thankfulness.

It might be thought that, after my long series of sittings with K., I should continue my investigations with other mediums. I did not do so except to a very slight extent. My reason was that I felt like the housekeeper in a great house which was to be let for the first time to some *nouveaux-riches*. The housekeeper was asked by a friend of mine whether she intended to stay on under the new conditions. Her reply was: "No indeed! It is not likely that anyone as 'as spent 'er 'ole life with the Hupper Ten would condescend to the Lower Five!"

I am afraid I felt that certainly most professional mediums might be classed as the Lower Five. I did, as a fact, visit some half dozen of the mediums who advertised in *Light* to see whether they could show any powers of reading my hand, or seeing anything about me in the crystal. But I have learnt how to draw myself into myself, and, further, not to give any indication during the sitting as to whether their guesses were **right**

or wrong. The sittings were uniformly negative and more pitiable specimens of fishing and floundering it is hard to imagine. I have had the same experience with amateurs, and it would really seem as though I were refractory to psychic penetration. Be that as it may, my conclusion is distinctly against professional mediumship as a means of obtaining genuine communications from the Other Side.

Investigations such as those carried on through Mrs. Leonard and other mediums with whom our Society is in touch, are in a different category, and I do not include them in my criticism.

Since these days we have had Mrs. Sidgwick's exhaustive and, if I may say so, devastating enquiry into the independent existence of the Piper Controls.

Volume XXVIII. of *Proceedings* containing her paper on the *Psychology of Mrs. Piper's Trance Phenomena*, should be studied by all who are minded to investigate trance mediumship. This should be followed by Mr. Soal's paper in *Proceedings*, Vol. XXXV., on *Communications through Mrs. Blanche Cooper*, where, among other strange happenings, a fictitious communicator invented by the sitter appears to have an independent life of his own.

Add to this, the very real risk of "personation," especially where repeated sittings take place. The original communicator who may well have been genuine can, it would seem, be replaced by some intelligence who has overheard the names and amuses himself by repeating them. Hence the common complaint that nothing fresh comes through, only the same names and a vague word or two being obtained.

When once assurance of Survival has been obtained, and this may come in various ways, I would deprecate resort to mediums.

It is better to face life, fortified by the happy assurance that death is no final parting, than to try to repeat what may have been intended to be given once for all.

May I conclude with a personal avowal. I cannot pretend that to live so constantly and continuously in communication with the Other Side, as I did for several

months, does not involve severe strain; I think it produces a sort of glamour, the viewing of all things that here befall in their supposed spiritual as well as in their earthly significance.

While the glamour lasts there is grave risk of unwisdom in earthly affairs, of a loss of the critical faculty, of a too ready confidence in other men, especially if they too speak the same language and testify to the same experiences.

Still, looking back over a quarter of a century, I am deeply grateful for the assurance of survival and the hopeful interpretation of the Universe which goes with it. This has upheld me through many bereavements, and enlarged my sympathy with struggling humanity.

There are many roads to faith in a spiritual Universe; this one is reprobated by many who have not experimented with it, and, I must add, by some who have. One thing is to me certain. It is better to pass on with no fixed ideas as to what we shall find or with whom we shall consort.

For the Universe is "infinite in an infinite number of ways" and the wider and deeper our apprehension of it, the grander will be its reaction upon us. It will be the little child within us, always with open eyes wondering at the pageant of life who will lead us at last into the Kingdom of Heaven.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

PART 107

THE *MODUS OPERANDI* OF TRANCE COMMUNICATION ACCORDING TO DESCRIPTIONS RECEIVED THROUGH MRS. OSBORNE LEONARD.

BY C. DRAYTON THOMAS.

EDITORIAL NOTE.—*Most of our papers concerned with mediumistic communications deal mainly with the question of the sources of such of the impressions received by mediums and automatists as appear to be beyond their reach in the normal state. The modus operandi now under discussion has no direct bearing on this question. Indirectly, however, it may throw much light on it, and in any case it is obviously a line of enquiry which those interested in psychical research are bound to pursue.*

Mr. Drayton Thomas's paper deals mainly with the relations between the different intelligences or strata of consciousness concerned: with their influence upon each other, how they appear to each other, and how they communicate with each other.¹ It is hoped that this paper may be followed by

¹It may be useful briefly to remind the reader that in the case of Mrs. Leonard and probably most mediums who have to do with many different sitters, these consciousnesses are as a rule of four kinds. There is, first, the sitter, who is certainly more than a mere passive recipient of broadcasted messages, since in a good sitting these messages are specially appropriate to him. Secondly, there is the medium's normal consciousness, which is apparently in abeyance during the trance. Thirdly, there is the control (exemplified by Feda in Mrs. Leonard's case) who carries on communication with the sitter by means of the medium's organism, and acts as intermediary between the communicator and the sitter. And, lastly, there are one or more communicators usually claiming to be deceased friends of the sitter. Communicators sometimes dispense with an intermediary and act as controls themselves.

contributions from others who have had opportunities of studying either Mrs. Leonard or other mediums, or who may have critical observations to make tending to elucidate the subject.

It may be noted that a good deal bearing on the subject in the cases of Mrs. Piper and Mrs. Thompson has already been said in our Proceedings. See especially Vol. XXVIII. on Mrs. Piper by Mrs. Henry Sidgwick and Vol. XVIII. pp. 104 ff. on Mrs. Thompson by Mr. J. G. Piddington. Papers on the modus operandi in mediumistic trance by (Una) Lady Troubridge have also appeared in Proceedings, Vol. XXXII. pp. 344 ff. and Vol. XXXIV. pp. 298 ff.

ANY contribution towards the understanding of trance methods should be of interest, not only to those who share my conclusion that we can by this means, when employing a highly developed sensitive, enter into communication with the discarnate, but also to those who incline towards alternative views. For whatever may be the origin of the messages, it may be confidently assumed that they are produced in conformity with law, which is observable in their characteristic imperfections, and frequent failure to make plain that which they obscurely hint, as well as in their correct statements about matters unknown to the sitter.

The following observations, based upon some years of study with Mrs. Osborne Leonard, are supported by quotations. In these we have an explanation, given by the messages themselves, of their origin and method of transmission.

The passages selected purport to originate with my father and my sister Etta. In each case I have indicated the alleged speaker. Some were given through Fedá, Mrs. Leonard's control, while others came when she seemed to have relinquished control in favour of my father or Etta.

It is not my present purpose to produce the evidence which, as I consider, justifies me in assuming the identity of the communicators and the distinct individuality of

Feda, but rather to show how these different mentalities contribute to an interpretation of the processes which result in the spoken message.

Each speaker preserves intact throughout all the sittings his or her characteristics of manner and phraseology. This is not so clearly seen in my records, because they are not always strictly verbatim. I make no attempt, for example, to reproduce Feda's peculiarities of speech. But this preservation of individuality is a marked feature of the sittings, as also of the messages. There is no suspicion of intermingling; each of the three makes upon my mind as distinct an impression as would any other person of my acquaintance.

At the commencement of Mrs. Leonard's trance it seems as if her individuality changes into that of another person, namely that of Feda the control. Feda talks to me about my communicators who are said to be somewhere in front of the medium. Feda (as I must now term the medium) then begins to tell me what they say, and from time to time bends forward in the attitude of attentive listening. She often seems puzzled as to the communicator's meaning, and will question the invisible presence before completing a sentence. There have been times when a fragmentary message contained definite evidence that my father was aware of facts which he failed to convey to Feda in consecutive and accurate form. On some of these occasions I could easily guess what it was he wished to tell me, and it seemed clear that he knew more than he could make Feda understand. When he persisted in trying to explain, Feda made a long circumlocution; and if, for sake of experiment, I put leading questions, they only brought further proof that Feda could not understand something which was clear to my father and to me.

Feda frequently gives a statement in fragments, with repetitions and pauses, exactly as if transmitting something imperfectly heard. When names are introduced there is usually a difficulty in pronouncing them aright, although the initial letter is given with ease. When Feda first alluded to my father it was as follows, "There is an elderly man with a beard"; then came a description,

and later in the sitting she added, "The initial J comes with him." I naturally asked myself why this was not abbreviated into the simple statement that John D. Thomas was present? During the second sitting, while my father's study was being described, one item was given as follows:

Near the bureau, but above it, and easily seen when sitting at it, is the picture of a man, elderly, with fine face, a splendid character.

This could have been simply stated thus: A picture of Wesley is above the door. Why this roundabout description and avoidance of names? On many occasions names have been correctly given without the least observable difficulty. Yet at other times Fedra will write the name in the air, using the medium's finger to trace the letters. Sometimes after ineffectual efforts to pronounce a name, the first syllable is given, and Fedra will then complain that she cannot see the remaining letters, but that they look to be, say, six in number. One forms the impression that the giving of a name, or indeed of any specific word for which there is no alternative, involves the overcoming of some obstacle.

It is a noteworthy fact that for a period, rarely more than twenty minutes in any one sitting, Fedra will speak as if she were receiving from dictation. I can often at these times catch each softly whispered sentence before hearing it repeated in the clear Fedra voice. This dictation method always reaches a high degree of accuracy, and I realise that I am receiving, not merely the communicator's thoughts, but also the characteristic diction. When, however, Fedra relapses into what appears to be her own phrasing of the message the precision and accuracy become markedly less.

Turning to the messages themselves for explanation of these features we find it stated that the communicators convey their meaning to Fedra in the form of thought, and that this thought of theirs may emerge in Fedra's consciousness either as hearing, as sight, or as an impression. If this be so, it explains at once why the "heard"

messages are given with so much more crispness and accuracy than those which are only "felt."

It will be convenient to examine the details of the asserted process under the following heads:

I. THE FIRST PART OF THE PROCESS: FROM COMMUNICATOR TO CONTROL

- A. Communicators' idea of how they convey messages to Fedá.
- B. Fedá's idea of how messages reach her.
- C. Difficulties encountered.
 - (a) Difficulties due to Fedá.
 - (b) Difficulties due to the communicators.
 - (c) Difficulties connected with the communicator's memory.
 - (d) Material prepared beforehand by communicator.
 - (e) Messages may be mutilated in transmission.
 - (f) Omissions sometimes confuse the sense of messages.
 - (g) Mixed messages.
 - (h) General ideas more easily received by Fedá than specific words.
- D. "The power," or mediumistic emanation.

II. THE SECOND PART OF THE PROCESS: FROM CONTROL TO SITTER.

- (a) Transmission through the medium's organism, her mind and brain.
- (b) Direct control by communicator.
- (c) Influence of the sitter.
- (d) Miscellaneous.

I

A. COMMUNICATORS' IDEA OF HOW THEY CONVEY MESSAGES TO FEDÁ.

Father controlling.

October 14th, 1921.

When I come to speak, Fedá is frequently puzzled as to my meaning and fails to catch it either quickly or accurately. That is when I am unable to make my meaning reach her in the form of

words. If I then project a thought of some concrete object, Fedra may remark "I see so-and-so," but though she may *seem* to be seeing the object, it is really *my thought* of it which has reached her.

Etta controlling.

December 20th, 1921.

C. D. T. How do you give your messages to Fedra ?

ETTA. As a rule when I give Fedra a message it goes by thought in blocks. Say that I wish to give "I have been in a garden at home lately." I should not give it in bits, but in a complete thought first of all. Suppose she then asks me to give it again; the first attempt is already imprinted on her mind, but not necessarily penetrating through to that part which is working upon the medium's brain. It is not lost, but she may take time in getting the thought through; so I help by splitting up the sentence thus: "I have been in a garden . . . at home . . . lately." This permits her to get clearly any part which she had missed. Fedra's mind usually follows what I give, and while getting the first and second parts of a thought she would be mentally asking, "When? Long ago? Lately?" and that prepares the way for me to give the other portion of it.

Suppose I wish to say "I have seen a rose in your study." I should show a rose, giving the mental impression of a rose.

C. D. T. Why change the method ?

ETTA. It depends upon conditions. At one part of a sitting, or perhaps during one whole sitting, Fedra sees rather than hears. Experienced communicators find out early in the sitting which would be the best method for the occasion.

C. D. T. Why is dumb-show sometimes employed and at other times symbols ?

ETTA. The reason is that we can give our ideas best so in one sitting, and yet in another it may prove easier to give them in words. With some mediums it

may be necessary to give everything in symbols ; other mediums receive it all by impression, and this notwithstanding the fact that it is being spoken to them. Others think they are seeing clairvoyantly when they are not seeing, but are being told. You will notice that Fedra says of someone, "He has thick hair." But if, when you inquire about the moustache, she cannot see it, you may infer that she is not really seeing, but is being told about it, and yet is not able to explain through the medium's mind or brain what the actual method at the moment is. Fedra understands more than she can say, and she can get our messages in different ways.

It is not easy to play upon two senses at once. When passing from sight to hearing there is usually a little gap between. For example, I might show Fedra a shilling thus ; first the head, then the date. But she might not be sure what it was ; so I would then make her feel hardness, from which she could gather that it was not a picture. Next I should give her the feeling of hardness and coldness but might not be able to do both simultaneously. That explains why she hesitates between fact and fact.

C. D. T. There would seem to be a considerable gulf between you and Fedra while she is controlling.

ETTA. Her conscious part is then within the medium, and limited by the medium, because it works through the medium's brain, a brain which is only responsive to a certain class of consciousness, feeling and sensation.

Father controlling.

January 6th, 1922.

The message is first given in block form, but if Fedra does not absorb it, or if she gets only a part of it, then the rest is given in separate portions.

C. D. T. I find it difficult to picture a thought given in block.

FATHER. Quite so, you have the habit of speaking or writing in words, but we are accustomed to think in whole. At least this is true of experienced communicators, although newcomers would give their message in words. Suppose someone were coming from Africa to see you, I might show Fedra a ship and then the kind of land the ship started from. That is an illustration of *not* giving the thought in block form.

Father through Fedra.

November 24th, 1922.

Fedra may not always know by what method an idea reaches her consciousness. For example she will say, "I hear the name Lily," when actually a lily has been pictured to her, or the idea of a lily impressed on her mind. She says, "I hear," because she has given herself the suggestion of hearing, and fails to realise that she has not actually heard it. Expecting to perceive ideas as sound, she thinks they come that way, even when they are coming by sight.

Etta controlling.

November 23rd, 1923.

C. D. T. Do the persons described really stand before Fedra and look as she depicts them, or is it that they throw thought-pictures of themselves to her?

ETTA. Sometimes one and sometimes the other. She can see and describe, but at other times she only gets the idea. She cannot see or hear all the time—part of one and part of the other. She sees and hears or she receives impressions. It seems to her sometimes as if she actually heard our voices. Fedra is attuned more to us than you are.

Etta controlling.

October 3rd, 1924.

C. D. T. When you speak to Fedra what is it that she hears?

ETTA. It is a thought-vibration of my words, an idea of the words. You know that on earth people can telepath the idea of an object, say a ring, without using words. Yet the word "ring" is caught. So do we use telepathy: with us it is more than

speech, and as a rule it is more correct. Sending actual words to Fedra is more difficult than sending ideas, but sometimes Fedra gets our telepathy as *sound*.

Etta controlling.

February 20th, 1925.

C. D. T. How do you give Fedra such impressions as coldness, hardness ?

ETTA. We have to appeal to her etheric sense of touch. She would not feel it through the medium's physical body. She can feel sad or happy, different states of mind, but this is another sense, touch.

C. D. T. Have you to feel it strongly yourself ?

ETTA. Yes, concentrating strongly on the sensation myself ; often a communicator fails because not able to transmit the feeling through lack of this. Father has good rapport with Fedra.

Father through Fedra.

April 17th, 1925.

If I send *the thought* of the letter "H" to Fedra and she fails to recognise it, I then fall back upon another form of communication, I project with all my power *the form* of the letter "H." That cannot always be done. As a rule it is easier to give Fedra the idea of the letter. I can show Fedra a mental picture. It is much as when hypnotisers project a mental picture which the patient sees, as if outside himself, as a solid object. You have heard of the Indian juggler's rope trick, a boy climbing up an unsupported rope. The boy is not there, but is a created picture, just as I create the letter "H" for Fedra to see. Most mind-pictures are in the brain, but there are a few people who can exteriorise that which is usually in the head. It is not a myth that that can be done, and what can be done on your plane can be done with much greater facility on ours.

Etta controlling.

May 5th, 1925.

Feda often takes some unimportant thought from a communicator without his desire and she will use it to fill up and keep things moving; for a long spell of silence would make Feda lose hold of the medium. This accounts for trivial matters being brought in disconnectedly at times.

Father through Feda.

May 15th, 1925.

C. D. T. In creating a thought what is the thing resulting? Is it actual movement in ether, or a semi-permanent shape which can travel through space?

FATHER. It might be either, sometimes one, then sometimes the other. Feda knows that I have shown her a definite picture, not only a thought, and shown the picture so that she could see its colour. It is not always necessary for my thought to travel to her; it is possible for her to see a picture which I think of; she would reach my mind for that, instead of my mind reaching her.

You know what symbolism is. We have a greater power of symbolising thought automatically than you have. With us, ideas can be symbolised.

C. D. T. Like a shorthand or algebra for thought!

FATHER. I should more quickly express the idea of sacrifice by showing a cross.

As a rule Feda gets thought as a series of thought-waves which culminate in an expressed thought in her mind. Compare wireless transmission and receiver. If one were to intercept a message from the broadcasting it would not be translated without the appropriate machine.

It is suggested in the above quotation that Feda's mind can sometimes reach to, or merge with, that of the communicator. Perhaps if we understood the telepathic process we might better realise what this implies. Certain hypnotic experiments furnish examples of what appears to be a unity of sensation between experimenter and subject.

Father through Feda.

August 7th, 1925.

C. D. T. When Feda hears your voice are you using your vocal organs? and do you similarly speak with your lips when Feda only catches your ideas?

FATHER. I see your point. I am sometimes speaking with lips when Feda thinks she gets it impressionally.

C. D. T. But your lips make no vibration of sound that I can hear.

FATHER. No particular advantage of one method over another, *i.e.* giving it to Feda with or without lip-movement. But I try one method when I feel that at the moment it will be the best method. Many of us get into the habit of using that method, or trying to use it, because we did so at our first sitting, when trying to make ourselves known to you. So many little identifications can be made when Feda can hear the tone of voice, with facial expressions, lip-movement, etc. So, at first, we all try to speak in our accustomed way, so that little points of identification may be given. If Feda only got things impressionally she might miss many little points which help to convince you.

(Here Feda interjected her remark :) I think that is right because many people make faces when they talk.

Your Father says, they get into habits and keep to them. We use one method in preference to another, not always because the power is strong or weak, but more because of the type of power or condition, which is effected by the medium.

It is not necessary to move the lips when speaking to Feda.

Your father thinks that many sittings, especially with normal mediums, are only helped through impressions.

C. D. T. I should think that a less sure method.

FATHER. You may see what they are driving at, getting near to, but they would express it differently if they were able to hear. They only sense for it and grope.

C. D. T. When I hear your remarks given in a faint whisper and then Fedá immediately repeats the words with the medium's voice, is it that the medium's brain automatically repeats what it catches from you? Does Fedá get your voice, or thoughts, from the medium's brain, and also get them herself direct from you?

FEDA. Fedá often gets a sentence and says it over so that communicators may have a chance of correcting it, and so as not to lose it before repeating it to you. Fedá thinks the medium's brain might get any strong or worrying thought from the sitter, but that would make the brain hard for Fedá to work. Fedá thinks the medium's brain, by itself in this condition, is not active enough to catch thoughts from your Father: thinks it all depends on Fedá throwing thoughts on the medium's brain. An appropriate thought might pop up in the medium's brain.

B. FEDA'S IDEA OF HOW MESSAGES REACH HER.

I now add remarks made by Fedá in which she describes, from her own point of view, how the messages come to her.

December 22nd, 1922.

FEDA. They try any way, feeling, seeing or hearing, but Fedá finds feeling the easiest. They can suggest hot or cold, if the object they think of is metal. Much is done by suggestion. They can make Fedá feel a thing is cold or hot, exactly as if she felt it with her fingers. You know how hypnotised people can be made to feel like that.

January 19th, 1923.

FEDA. Fedá used to make bad mistakes when they showed symbols, because she did not understand them. Suppose they showed her a cross, she would know now that they meant trouble. Until they explained what their symbols meant Fedá used to get wrong over them. It is still difficult when new spirits

show them, but experienced spirits often come with them to help and show what symbols to use. They use them when it is too much trouble to explain their meaning in words; for there are times when Feda can see better than she can hear them.

Feda. *December 7th, 1923.*

C. D. T. I asked Feda how she came to give the name "Salisbury" so easily a few sittings back. Had she met the name at any previous sitting?

FEDA. Feda has not had that name here before. When not trying at all Feda may get strange names easily. When you ask for the name it makes it difficult. Sometimes Feda can see and also hear it, at other times only hear or else only see. But other times when things are poor Feda can only feel—sensing. One communicator who had been burned came here and was not able to tell Feda that. Yet made Feda smell burning and feel heat, but when the idea had got through in that way, it opened other ways for communication. Your Father says it is something like finding all windows and doors locked except one; on entering the house through that one others can be unlocked from within. They may have to walk round and round trying one place and another first; it is that which gives people occasion to conclude that they are fishing, fumbling at it.

Through Feda. *November 14th, 1924.*

FEDA. Your Father says there are times when Feda cannot see him, but only hears him. He wants to point out that when Feda cannot see him but only hears she must have some way of locating him. Is it not, he asks, by a light or misty substance? Quite right, when Feda cannot see him Feda can see something like a light near the sitter or going away. Feda has had two or three sittings with a person before seeing the communicator although getting messages by feeling or hearing.

C. D. T. Do you prefer to see as well as hear and feel?

FEDA. Yes, and can do so with your Father and Etta.

C. D. T. But not all at once?

FEDA. Only sometimes, not often and only with experienced communicators whom Feda knows very well. Your Father says that possibly it is the *mediums* on the other side whom Feda can best see.

Feda.

June 10th, 1925.

—What? . . . Wait. . . . Cannot hear you. . . . It is a nuisance. I was hearing him very well just then, but there is a vibration of voices coming now which mixes it all up. Can you shut the window?

(This break came in the midst of an interesting passage which flowed with ease and accuracy. I then noticed, for the first time, a sound of voices in conversation outside the room where we were sitting. Two persons were talking on the lawn outside. I asked them to speak more softly and closing the window, returned to my place. Feda then said:)

It does not matter while your father talks mentally, but when he speaks in voice it does matter. Although you cannot hear his voice, it sounds like a real voice to Feda while in the medium, and it is more like your voice, because Feda listens to both of them from inside the medium. When controlling Feda hears both the sitter's and the communicator's voices; not always equally well, but sometimes so.

Your father says that this is because Feda has a double set of instruments to work with, her own and the medium's. He thinks these machines are occasionally interchangeable. He asks, Is it the medium's etheric brain or Feda's brain which is used? Either can be used, and the same process does not hold good even throughout one sitting.

C. DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED.

Having now obtained a general idea of the asserted processes by which Fedra is made aware of the communicator's message, we turn to consider allusions to the difficulties encountered.

(a) DIFFICULTIES DUE TO FEDRA.

Father controlling.

November 21st, 1919.

I could not make Fedra understand anything further than the few particulars given through her just before I came into control to-day.

C. D. T. Can you tell her everything after the sitting?

FATHER. Yes, easily, but not while she is in the medium's brain. Then it is like throwing a magic-lantern picture on a sheet which one cannot see, possibly even the sheet is not there at all.

Father through Fedra.

March 5th, 1926.

(Immediately after a fluent description came the following remarks.)

FATHER. It is a curious thing that I have known about this for some time, but was unable to broach it until now. Something which Etta has been saying to-day made, as it were, an opening for this, the one subject leading to the other. This difficulty is due entirely to seance conditions. There is difficulty in introducing an entirely new topic, introducing it to the medium's brain and to Fedra. I frequently prepare the ground by using words which lead up to my subject, something akin to it, in whatever I am talking about previously. The difficulty lies in this intermediate condition, and the association of ideas is all-important. However, I am frequently able to broach an entirely new subject and probably I find fewer difficulties than do most communicators.

(b) DIFFICULTIES DUE TO THE COMMUNICATORS.

*Father controlling.**August 20th, 1920.*

I am not always aware what Fedra says when in control. I am mentally following up what I am giving and so am not always noticing what she says. Thus I am not clear as to whether she has given my thoughts rightly or wrongly. As when telephoning, if a slip is made you may not realise how it has been understood at the other end, and not knowing that an error has occurred you cannot rectify it.

*Father through Fedra.**April 14th, 1927.*

(My father had been alluding to sittings for direct voice and difficulty with memory there.)

FATHER. Even here is not quite my own condition. I am not as when I am on my own plane, not by any means.

C. D. T. Could you not come straight here and throw your thoughts to Fedra without changing?

FATHER. I could do my part, but there would be no result from it. I must make myself, for the duration of the sitting, a part of the particular condition. It is a slowing down to something. I am not at my best, even when conditions are at their best. It is a question of vibration and tuning-in. As said before, when I find myself in the vicinity of the power,¹ *i.e.* in a sitting, it has what I would call a slightly muffling, even a deadening effect on my memory and faculties. I do not see, remember, and feel with the same lucidity, as I do when not communicating. I am tuning down too much.

Etta says, "It is knowing and feeling this that makes some people feel that it is bad for us, some idea of limitations imposed; and they assume therefore it must be bad. Father says, They

¹ By "the power" my communicator means that semi-physical emanation from the medium which is said to be indispensable to trance communication. See section D on the subject, pp. 72-78.

forget that in life we do much good work when we do not appear at our best, we submerge many qualities in order to concentrate on what we do at the moment."

(c) DIFFICULTIES CONNECTED WITH THE COMMUNICATOR'S
MEMORY.

It is stated that supreme among the embarrassments of a sitting are those connected with memory. My communicators agree that while they are in their usual condition, away from the medium's environment, they recollect with ease whatever they wish; but that during a sitting it is frequently impossible to recall even such things as they had especially intended to tell me.

Father through Feda.

March 26th, 1920.

I feel that I am not complete during a sitting. I have not my whole mental power of memory and consciousness, when returning to the spirit world I feel like a man waking from partial sleep. You know that if you are lying down you may be aware of doors shutting and voices speaking, and yet not be sufficiently conscious to notice the details of a conversation, or to know why the people are talking and moving about, then you suddenly wake up to it all. That is what I feel like; it is as if one is half asleep here. One can be perfectly comfortable when half asleep, but I have not the full and perfect consciousness which is mine in my own sphere.

C. D. T. You once said, "When I come here I feel as if I had left the best part of my mind behind." Can you explain that further?

FATHER. I do not leave anything behind. I was wrong in expressing it so. It is that my mind will not function clearly in these conditions, it will not operate so well. The same thing applies to you if you try to enter our sphere while in the body. A medium who can see us and our surroundings does so in an imperfect way, an incomplete way, and

is unable to bring full powers of observation to bear. It results from functioning in a condition that is not one's own.

Compare it with a lamp; take a fifty candle-power lamp into a clear atmosphere and it shines a certain distance. Then take it into a fog and it shines a less distance. It is the same light although it may look to be only a fifteen candle-power lamp in the fog. I am like that; I depend upon conditions here for the effect I can produce.

Father through Fedra.

January 7th, 1921.

(Certain details of a test message having been successfully given, I inquired whether my father could give any further particulars about it.)

FATHER. When away from here I know more about it.

C. D. T. Could you remember anything further if we spent five minutes waiting for it?

FATHER. I might or might not; for I am now in the "under sea" condition. Etta has, on occasion, gone away to get remembrance of what we required, but on returning forgot again before she could tell me. The different conditions are baffling, but I can remember now better than when I first commenced communicating.

Father through Fedra.

June 10th, 1925.

FEDRA. Your father wished to say something about your work, but cannot quite place it now. He thinks you will learn later.

C. D. T. Does he know definitely what it was?

FEDRA. He says, I know when away and in my own conditions.

C. D. T. Then he does not remember now?

FEDRA. No, but has the uncomfortable feeling that he ought to know. This forgetfulness would worry some people; he thinks that it puzzles many communicators.

Father and Etta through Fedra.

August 20th, 1927.

C. D. T. Your mind is to some extent blurred and limited while here ?

FATHER. I do not think that my conscious mind during a sitting changes in itself, but that this condition in which I find myself alters its range of activity.

ETTA. Etta says, Well, suppose you have a bell, and you ring it in an empty room. The result is beautifully clear. Contrast that with what would happen when you rang it in a room that was padded, cushioned and had a good deal of upholstery. Yet the bell would be the same instrument, and its striking would be just the same ; but the result would be different because of the different condition in which you made it sound.

FATHER. Your father says that he can think of no other sense in which he is limited except in memory, which of course is closely allied to consciousness. He says, I do not feel in any sense a spiritual depreciation. He wishes to make that very definite.

This difficulty with memory is further explained in the extracts dealing with experiences of personal control. They are given in the section II. (b) (see below, p. 84).

(d) MATERIAL PREPARED BEFOREHAND BY COMMUNICATOR.

My communicators say that, in view of their tendency to forget, they make a practice of preparing a certain amount of material beforehand. I have noticed many indications pointing to such preparation.

Etta through Fedra.

November 12th, 1920.

I have recollected two different occasions of which to tell you, and you shall choose which I give to-day. Shall it be an experience soon after arriving in the next world—call it a day's round there—or one more recent ?

(I asked for the more recent experience. Etta then said :) I will not forget the earlier one and can give it later on.

(One was then given, and the other followed some months later.)

Father controlling.

March 31st, 1922.

(My father when concluding this sitting announced the subject on which he wished to speak next time. He then added :) I cannot say whether it will be possible to tell you then, for we sometimes cannot give what we have prepared.

Father controlling.

December 7th, 1923.

When I decide to bring evidence from others which you can verify by questioning their friends on earth, I ask them for a few things which will serve to prove identity. They may give me several and yet I may be able to get through only one of them. I come prepared, but if what I give does not go, I drop it.

Father controlling.

February 1st, 1924.

I might succeed at one time, yet fail at another. My plan is to prepare a good amount of matter before coming here, and then I try to fit it in. If one thing does not fit, I go on quickly to another, and I continue with that which works until it is finished.

(e) MESSAGES MAY BE MUTILATED IN TRANSMISSION.

Often while listening to Feda one notices that she seems unable to catch some idea in its entirety. She will say, "Wait... Feda did not get that... What?... Wait a minute." Many of the messages contain internal evidence that some portion has been omitted, or mutilated in transmission.

Here are some of Feda's remarks about this :

August 4th, 1922.

FEDA.

(Referring to my father.) I think he wants Feda to understand something which he knows but cannot quite get through to Feda.

C. D. T. Can he not tell you plainly in words?

FEDA. He could tell Fedá, but Fedá cannot hear.

C. D. T. How is that?

FEDA. Fedá can hear part, and part not, is able to hear some of it to-day but not all of it.

He used to refrain from trying a thing if it were difficult to get through, but now he tries because it is interesting. People often wonder why there seem to be such extraordinary gaps in a sitting, -not natural sequences. A communicator has to break off and leave out something which he knows it would be hopeless, -or risky, to try and get through. So that often a sitting seems disjointed, fragmentary. He now feels the risk less and so risks it when he comes to such a point.

September 19th, 1924.

FEDA. (After a somewhat confused sentence.) Fedá thinks she has not got his idea quite right, she heard some of his words as he spoke them, but could not get the impression quite. When he gives words, and follows them up with an impression, then Fedá knows it is right.

June 10th, 1925.

FEDA. (Addressing the communicator.) I cannot get that . . . try again . . . (turning to me). Do you know there are times when I really hear him, and yet get only muddled sounds, not properly formed sounds. He says it again, and if it does not get clearer he has to show it, or get it through in some other way. He does not always know when he has failed to make Fedá hear, and goes on with it. Then, if asked to repeat, he may not know what part Fedá has not heard, and then there is a muddle of mistakes. He says there is a good deal to learn about it still.

(f) OMISSIONS SOMETIMES CONFUSE THE SENSE OF
MESSAGES.

The omission of important parts of a message easily reduces it to confusion. Fedá is aware of gaps in her

transmission, although she does not always mention them at the time. It is particularly unfortunate when she fails to notice that a fresh topic has been begun; for, by running on with the new subject as if it continued the previous one, she risks making the whole appear untrue. I recall how, during my first sitting, facts which correctly related to a second person were given as if applying to one who had just before been described. The result was that, at the time, I regarded this section of the sitting as inaccurate, and only on examining it afterwards did the merging of two distinct descriptions, both of them minutely correct, become apparent.

December 6th, 1917.

FEDA. Fedra cannot hear all he says all the time. Isn't it a nuisance? Have to catch parts, like when many things are thrown at you and you catch what you can. Fedra rarely hears all that is said.

August 21st, 1925.

FEDA. Your father says that he may be unable to continue the present topic next time.

C. D. T. But cannot he plainly tell you it is coming?

FEDA. He might plainly tell me, but I might not catch it. At nearly every sitting there is something which Fedra knows she has not caught. It is like losing something and not being able to pick it up again. Communicators seem unable to repeat, or else it is that Fedra can't catch the repetition.

(g) MIXED MESSAGES.

In the following extract Fedra refers to a further possible cause of confusion.

November 14th, 1924.

FEDA. After a sitting is over Fedra sometimes finds that there has been someone present who did not get into the power,¹ although they had tried to do so. But although they did not get in themselves, some of their thoughts became mixed up with those of the communicator. This often happens when more

¹ For explanation of "the power," see pp. 72-78.

than one spirit person is present and when the communicator is not well known to Feda. It is not always easy to know who is giving the messages. There is not, however, much fear of confusing what your father says with anything said by someone who is outside the circle of power.

(h) GENERAL IDEAS MORE EASILY RECEIVED BY FEDA THAN SPECIFIC WORDS.

It would appear that Feda easily receives from the communicator anything in the nature of a general idea, but that specific words or names present a difficulty with which she often fails to deal satisfactorily.

Father through Feda.

May 7th, 1920.

(My father had made numerous allusions to his father, but had failed to state either the name or the relationship. I remarked that we both understood clearly who was being spoken of, but that I should like him to say definitely whom he had in mind.)

FATHER. To put anything in a specific form is most difficult of all.

C. D. T. Why so?

FATHER. I have to dodge a machine. You see there is the medium's brain, and Feda manipulating that brain, and I have to dodge both. I find I get things through most easily when I take Feda off her guard, when she is not looking for a word or name. You remember how easily names have suddenly come through. When there is a great effort and Feda is aware that I am trying, she holds the brain in a strained condition. Suppose you are about to play a game, or something of that kind, say to shoot at a target; if you know you must hit the bull's-eye or not make the attempt, you will have less chance of success than if you think it does not matter whether you do it or not. Anyone anxiously waiting to see you hit the bull's-eye makes for you a slightly strained

condition, this strained condition is not with me, but with Fedá.

Feda.

October 15th, 1920.

(Something is in course of being described, but Fedá stumbles and is in difficulty over it.)

FEDA. Fedá sees and feels it, but does not hear.

C. D. T. Cannot they make their words plain to you?

FEDA. When they concentrate on one thing, and one thing only, it becomes hard. While talk flows it is easy, but when it comes to one thing, or one word, and no other will do then we stick fast. When speaking fails they show something, or try to make Fedá feel.

Father controlling.

September 3rd, 1920.

(During the early part of this sitting Fedá had been unsuccessful in giving the name of my father's old colleague, Benjamin Browne, although I had clearly recognised that he was the person alluded to, both from the description and the name, Benjamin, which came through. We spent some time over it, and I even went so far as to ask Fedá whether the name required was not that of a colour, but Fedá was unable to put it through. When my father was controlling he remarked :)

FATHER. You must wonder what is doing when you ask for a simple name like Browne and I cannot give it.

C. D. T. Was Browne the name you wanted Fedá to say earlier in the sitting?

FATHER. Yes, and so I got it here. I dropped the attempt till I could introduce it myself.

Father controlling.

September 1st, 1922.

There are times during my speaking through Fedá when I could not tell you that something had happened "to-day," nor should I be able to say the word "yesterday."

D. "THE POWER," OR MEDIUMISTIC EMANATION.

It is a feature of these sittings that the class of material which is at one time given quite easily, at

another time seems to present an obstacle to effective transmission. It would seem that the medium's receptivity is variable, that her brain and mind are not always equally responsive. One asserted cause of this is frequently mentioned; Fedá terms it "the power." There is some evidence for the existence of this, and it would seem to be an emanation which plays an important part in heightening the sensitivity of the medium's brain. It is to variations in the amount, consistency, or other condition of this emanation that my communicators attribute much of their difficulty in communicating.

Rightly or wrongly Fedá and my communicators regard "the power" as something existing in space. I will briefly record their view by summarising statements given in reply to my requests for information. Thus:

Medium and sitter are surrounded by a cloud of this power. Anything within this area is visible to Fedá; but should a communicator remain outside it he would be invisible to her, and she could only with some difficulty obtain information from him by "sensing." Upon his entering the zone or sphere of influence, Fedá would be able to see and hear him.

This quasi-physical cloud emanates from the medium, and the sitter may contribute some small amount. Although usually visible to both control and communicator, the latter can, by passing out of it and then re-entering, feel its influence as a slight tingling.

Its presence or absence is inferred by results:

If no medium were present we should feel a lack of something after a few moments' attempt to control; that is how we do feel with a poor medium.

The cloud of emanation is kept fresh and living by a continued flow from the source. When this flow ceases, a sitting automatically ends. Nothing then remains to be re-absorbed by the medium.

During a sitting this cloud of emanation will become dissipated if allowed to grow inert. Activity is essential. A long silence, or a pronounced lack of sympathy in the sitter, would act detrimentally upon it and induce evaporation.

When the emanation is ebbing, it may be made to flow freely again by the discreet introduction of a mental incentive. A sitter should try to combine with his mental passivity an alertness which can throw living interest into the sitting at appropriate moments, thus keeping the tide of emanation fresh and full until it has been used to the end.

The emanation varies in quality even with the same medium, and still more so between different trance-mediums; while that produced by mediums in sittings for physical phenomena is of a denser kind. All people possess it, but with the great majority it is not available: mediumship is the condition which frees this emanation for use. It is sometimes set free by emotional shock, but more often by a course of psychical development.

In physical mediumship, where the output of emanation is considerable, any disturbance which causes a sudden indrawing of this etheric matter may have injurious effects upon the medium.

So far my communicators.

On one occasion a scientifically-minded acquaintance spoke with me a few months after his passing. He remarked with interest upon something which he described as smoke curling around my wife who sat between the medium and the window. Fedra once spoke of being able to just see a bar of light coming to her from the communicators, and moving from one to the other as they took turn in speaking to her. I can only assume that these two descriptions were founded upon a partial glimpse of something upon the border-line of visibility.

Assuming the existence of this emanation, one asks what function it fulfils? My communicators say that, *inter alia*, it heightens the sensitivity of the medium's brain, and thus renders it better able to receive the thoughts which are to be transmitted.

Sometimes a new and unpractised communicator is described as wandering out of the sphere of this emanation and thereby checking communication. When I took a widower anonymously to a Leonard sitting, he sat some distance away from the medium. Fedra presently remarked

that his wife, who had begun to speak, had gone to him and was now too far away for Fedra to keep in easy touch with her. Communication from that distance seemed to be checked. I have noticed that with new communicators Fedra begs them to come nearer to her.

Fedra's memory is, as a rule, remarkably retentive, yet it becomes so weakened at the close of a sitting that she cannot recall details of a subject discussed at the beginning of the same sitting, and she complains that there is not sufficient power to enable her to "think back."

I once asked Fedra to tell me by whom this loss of power was felt at the end of a sitting. She replied that not only did she feel it herself, but that the communicator would feel that there was nothing linking him to her, or enabling him to know if she were catching his thoughts.

When, at the end of his twelfth attempt at personally controlling the medium, my father remarked that the power was failing, I persisted in questioning him for another ten minutes. Although he continued to reply the voice became rapidly weaker, finally ending in a faint whisper. On another such occasion he concluded, "It is no use trying further, I cannot keep it up...power gone." Etta ended her first attempt at personal control by remarking, "I cannot explain further now, there is no more power." Both have repeatedly described their feelings at this stage of a sitting. The following are selections from their remarks:

1. "It is as if the brain were tired out and it is no use struggling with it."
2. "I can neither think nor remember so well now as earlier."
3. "My thoughts wander and I have no grasp."
4. "I cannot think well now, it seems more effort, as when one is sleepy and trying to remember something. It is a very strange sensation."
5. "I cannot collect my thoughts so well. There are many things I want to talk about. I almost forget . . . it seems to me that I have forgotten."

6. "As the power goes I feel as if sinking down lower into the medium, a curious feeling."
7. "I know, but am not going to reply to that question now. I know, but fear the right reply will be rejected. It is like having a small keyboard when you have to play a note beyond its compass. I am not so afraid at the start of controlling, but now there comes a stupid feeling, one cannot quite concentrate; it is like when one is a little tired, but without the tired feeling."
8. "I must stop now, or I shall say something silly."
9. "The power is going fast. When I lose power I begin to feel sleepy and thoughts only come stupidly and drowsily."

Having experienced the effects of lessening power, not only as communicators, but also as controls, my father and sister became able to understand Feda's difficulties more clearly than would have been otherwise possible. Apropos of this one of them remarked:

April 28th, 1922.

I feel my thoughts wandering. We notice this when the power goes while we control. When we were speaking through Feda, and it happened, we thought that she was getting stupid. Now we know what it is. There seems to begin a real waking of the medium's mind, an independent movement, and so we get mixed up with things in her mind. The two being mingled it distorts my messages.

They both agree that it is unsafe to start topics of importance at the end of a sitting. Occasionally, after my father has intimated failure of power, his attention has been attracted by Etta; he has then succeeded in ascertaining her meaning, yet failed to get it spoken in anything stronger than the faintest whispers. At one such time he wished to say, as I was perfectly aware, the letter "P," but he could only speak thus:

May 11th, 1923.

The letter is not one at the beginning of the alphabet, but far on, one easily mistaken for the letter

“B,” which was given in error. I must ask Etta, who can only give me signs; for I cannot hear her now at this lapse of power. . . . It is the lower part of that “B” that is wrong. That sounds absurd, I know, but we have to get it in one way when we cannot in another.

Etta says :

October 3rd, 1924.

When we are within this Sphere of Influence we are not in our own condition, but in a fog, mentally as well as physically, and cannot remember so well. While I am within it I might not be able to see father though he were standing only two feet outside it. The emanation fluctuates like wind on windy days, when you may hear a rush and it dies down again, before gathering force and blowing up once more. Our trouble is that we cannot tell when it is ebbing, and so waste time trying to get something on when it is ebbing which could only be done when its tide is full.

My communicators insist that sitters should refrain from holding in mind any dominant thought, or persistently demanding some particular name, for such mental tension on the part of a sitter is said to attract the emanation towards himself and away from both communicator and control, thus rendering their task more difficult.

My father says :

March 20th, 1925.

I have noticed occasionally, when some question has been put by the sitter, that a communicator has receded and appeared to lose grasp, yet a little later he returns suddenly and is able, in some instances, to supply the correct answer to the question. What has happened is that he has withdrawn himself from within the emanation in order to try and remember the fact asked for, and yet it would appear as if the control were still obtaining information from him.

(Here Feda interposed with the remark :) Feda knows that sometimes, though she cannot com-

municate well with people outside it, yet she is able to get easy things from them.

January 10th, 1919.

FEDA. At times he can get through a difficult thing, while at other times, even an easy one is impossible. He has to throw words to Fedra, while she throws them magic-lantern fashion upon the medium's mind. Then, too, if he wakes Fedra's curiosity she holds the brain tight, and that fixes him. We can get through one minute what we cannot do at another time. The power lying over the brain is never still, all is changing.

II. FROM CONTROL TO SITTER.

(a) TRANSMISSION THROUGH THE MEDIUM'S ORGANISM, HER MIND AND BRAIN.

We now pass to the next step in the process of transmitting a message. It would appear that, on becoming aware of the thought to be transmitted, Fedra operates upon the medium's brain. One says "brain" for short, but I think it certain that the medium's mind is still to some degree alert. It is upon this brain and mind that Fedra works, impressing it to action by her thought and will. Fedra tells me that it is not always easy to exert this influence successfully; that it is essential to ensure that the message is "taken," otherwise it may, to use her own phrase, "drop out of the medium" instead of being voiced.

January 7th, 1921.

(While transmitting details of a newspaper test, Fedra said :)

FEDA. Very close to that is a name "E," it looks like Edward, yes, I am sure it is Edward, but I said "E" because of not being sure that I could get the name Edward through correctly.

Here it would seem that Fedra had received the name from the communicator (and subsequently verification proved its correctness), but doubted her ability to get it expressed by the medium's lips. Fedra frequently mentions

only the initial letter of names, yet it by no means follows that she has failed to catch the complete name correctly. To ensure its being spoken is a real difficulty.

Etta controlling.

February 3rd, 1922.

Is it not strange that I cannot say my husband's name? I can feel it but cannot say it; that is, I cannot get it spoken. I get it on the surface but cannot get it into the medium's mind. I am aware of it myself without being able to get it spoken.

February 9th, 1923.

FEDA. Feda pictures something and wills it and that sets the medium's mind going. Suppose I wished to give the picture of an apple, it would be necessary to think strongly of an apple, make a picture of it and put it on her mind. Feda tries to jump on the right part of the medium's brain, but often fumbles, it is like touching the wrong string.

(Here I asked Feda how she found the right spot on the brain. She replied:)

FEDA. When Feda has got a picture of the apple it feels like holding it up above the medium's brain. Feda feels it as if it were being drawn to a right place, attracted to a right part, but it has to be held till it is attracted there. Feda wriggles it about until she feels that it connects, that it is taken up; but all that is done with the mind, not with hands. Feda thinks of the brain as something alive with sense in it. It is a little like a game in the dark when someone has to catch what you are holding. Feda pushes it towards one part, then towards another part, until it is taken.

(My sister interposed at this point to explain that this shifting-process did not necessarily mean movement from place to place, but a changing of the idea of the apple. Feda then continued:)

At last it feels like something sucking it in, like taking in a breath. All that does not take as long as it sounds in describing. Whole sentences

can be done quickly sometimes. The best flow of words is when long ideas are being worked out; that kind of talk is much easier than giving some specific thing like apple or orange. It would be more difficult to say "An apple on your plate this morning," than to give a long philosophical disquisition, or analysis of character.

May 11th, 1923.

FEDA. (While transmitting for my father :) A picture of your Mother suddenly jumped in this. I did not wait to ask your father what he meant by it, lest what I wished to say should drop out of the medium. Things sort of spill over if I do not keep them fixed on her brain. If I wait to ask anything, then what I am holding there may run out.

Here I add further remarks on this subject, in which my communicators try to explain the process. Having themselves controlled the medium they speak from experience.

Father through Feda.

November 11th, 1921.

FEDA. Your father says that he refrains from saying many things which he wishes to give lest they should come through in a distorted form. Feda feels that also; for she does not always make the medium's voice speak as intended. Feda touches something which wakes the medium's mind and then it goes off on its own account.

C. D. T. Feda, can you hear the words spoken by the medium?

FEDA. Yes, but cannot stop her speaking if what she says is wrong. Often Feda cannot get the power to check the words.

Your father says that over-pressure taps the sub-conscious mind of the medium and then something escapes before Feda can stop it. Even after hearing those escapes and inaccuracies, Feda cannot always so control the medium's mind as to put things right. As each thought is given it is fixed on *the co-operative mind* which is created partly by the

medium and partly by Fedá. Once it is registered there a counter-suggestion is not easily put through. Your father says that Fedá thinks she works directly upon the medium's brain, but he does not consider that this is entirely accurate. He says that Fedá really works upon the medium's mind-essence which, in its turn, works the brain. This mind-essence belongs to the medium's organism. To take a simile; Fedá puts a match to the gas, this gas is not Fedá's, but its light might be termed hers, and she can regulate it. Fedá has produced a quite wonderful manifestation which draws its supply from the medium. That may explain why Fedá is occasionally less brilliant than at other times; if it were Fedá's own gas it would always be equal, but being the medium's, it varies. Yes, your father is sure that Fedá is wrong in thinking that she works the medium's brain. *It is the mind in the brain which Fedá works.* In the case of a trance or controlled medium, that part of the mind which is quiescent is not so likely to reproduce impressions itself as is the mind of a normal medium.

Fedá gives to the medium's mind and that mind then works the brain. Fedá telepaths on to the medium's mind, much as the communicators telepath to Fedá, but the operation is so instantaneous that Fedá can scarcely realise in detail what is happening.

C. D. T. Fedá, did you find the medium's brain respond to your efforts as easily when you first learnt to control, as it does now?

FEDÁ. No, it was dreadfully difficult then. Your father says, That bears out my assertion; for Fedá was then working upon the medium's mind, and found it difficult work owing to lack of practice and experience. But had Fedá been working *direct* upon the brain, the trouble caused by the confused mental conditions of an undeveloped medium would not have arisen.

Etta controlling.

April 27th, 1923.

C. D. T. Do you remember a birthday ?

ETTA. I spoke of it at a recent sitting.

C. D. T. Can you say whose it is ?

ETTA. I remember, but cannot say it, cannot get it spoken. The more I try to think it on, the less I can get it on. I am expressing myself in a particular way, and it is the medium's power of expression which I cannot control. One can get a word in the mind and yet not be able to express it.

C. D. T. Does her brain automatically express the thought put into it ?

ETTA. Because it is in the mind it does not follow that her brain will take it. Unless the things in mind are tapped on to the actual brain one cannot express them. Like a typewriter, when you think your words, but unless you tap the right key, you will not get the letters. You can put your finger on the right key, but unless you tap it there is no expression. The brain takes, or does not take, from the mind. The brain is like a keyboard, automatically responsive to us, but often responding in a wrong way; we wish to press keys and put expression through, but if we try too much for a certain word, the keys get stiff with—apprehension. When in painting you stiffen muscles which you should not, then anxiety makes it still worse—and so with words. When I cannot get them I pretend to forget and thus relieve the tension and the “key” then relapses into its ordinary condition. Sometimes, a little while afterwards it will come out, just as when Father first spoke to you of me.

One might not be able to say one's own name.

C. D. T. Can you say yours now ?

ETTA. Etta, but possibly if a sitter here with you were to ask it I might not get it that time, but might say “Raw.”¹ Strange, but it is the human instrument which makes it so difficult. If only a

¹ Raw was her married name.

mechanical one could be made! But mind is the bridge between the spirit and the physical.

Etta controlling.

August 31st, 1923.

C. D. T. Are you aware what words are spoken by the medium's lips while in control?

ETTA. I know what the words are afterwards, but they slip through before I realise. I know after, but cannot pull them back if wrong.

C. D. T. Does the medium's brain colour the expression of her thoughts to an appreciable extent?

ETTA. Yes, if it is more natural for a medium to put them in a certain way, then, although I might give them in my way, yet they would go through in hers. If she were fond of the word "extraordinary" and I of "extremely" hers would be given, rather than mine; that does not always matter. I think I feel that less than most people would, that it happens less often. I knew so much more about this when here than did many communicators.

In passing through it might be moulded into something with almost a different meaning. Not so with me, for I feel what things might be coloured and so refrain from giving them in a way which affords the chance of being coloured. We have to contend with Feda's mind and personality as well as the medium's. Owing to Feda's practice in helping things through the medium, it is easier to get things through; she can manipulate the medium's mind better than we can, and yet she herself is a difficulty. If I wish to speak to you of two things, one very pretty and the other uninteresting to Feda, it would be more difficult to get the latter owing to her preference for the former.

Father through Feda.

April 17th, 1925.

C. D. T. Does Feda ever find that your thought has reached the medium's mind direct? Or must it always go to Feda first?

FATHER. Feda might find a thought in the medium's brain and understand that I have thrown it there; she would then cause it to be spoken. But Feda usually knows what I send to her own mind, and she then impresses it on the medium's brain. I think Feda succeeds in doing it either way.

C. D. T. But would not the medium's brain automatically cause the thought to be spoken if catching it before it reached Feda?

FATHER. No, consider how, during sleep, your mind holds pictures, images, thoughts. Does your tongue therefore speak them? Certainly not, although the images may be as vivid as a waking experience. Feda can manage it either way. She often catches what I say before she puts it through; but the whole operation is either instantaneous, or nearly so. She would scarcely be able to say which came first.

(Feda here added, on her own account, that while controlling she does not actually know whether she gets the thoughts from the communicator, or from the medium's brain. But what she does know most certainly is that she often fails to get something which she ought to get.)

(b) DIRECT CONTROL BY COMMUNICATOR.

Up to this point we have examined Feda's control. Let us now see what is said to happen when my father or my sister, taking Feda's place, transmit their thoughts direct to the medium.

It seems that forgetfulness is still a limitation; much knowledge which they are aware of possessing is no longer within reach. They say, "One of our greatest difficulties when controlling is our divided memory." Their condition would seem to correspond to that, so familiar to ourselves, when we fail to recall a name. We are aware that we know it, and that we would recognise it if we heard it spoken. We may even succeed in recalling it by some line of association, but all direct efforts are futile.

It is said that during personal control there are several matters demanding simultaneous attention; there is the care of the medium's organism, and the necessity of observing what will "take" and what fails to take. The controller must also endeavour to mark what is actually spoken, and to avoid starting a flow of words which would misrepresent his meaning. When such a flow is once started it may be difficult to check, and practically impossible to follow it up with a contradiction or explanation.

My sister says that she does not know the exact moment at which she gains effective control of the medium's organism. This probably explains why one hears Feda whispering in apparent conversation with the communicators before the sitting actually begins.

It has been my fortunate experience to watch the progress of two controls, namely my father and my sister, from the day when they first became such by dispensing with Feda's help and spoke to me directly through Mrs. Leonard's lips.

Father controlling.

June 14th, 1920.

(When commencing his control the voice was much fainter than usual. He began thus:)

FATHER. Feda has not left me much power to-day. She stayed a long time. I have lost my bearings coming like this. There is something I wished to say. I have forgotten it while getting into control, but had it in my mind previously. When I control a portion of my mind is left outside. I am using the medium's brain by throwing my thoughts upon it, throwing thoughts one by one on to it, and am unable to think quickly of one thing after another as I normally do.

Father controlling.

August 13th, 1920.

C. D. T. When controlling do you will your thought in the same way as we in the physical body do, when we will to speak and our brain does the rest?

FATHER. Remember that my will and this good woman's brain are not connected; the method is the same

but with a difference in the willing. Sometimes I throw a thought on her brain and it remains inactive, so I leave it there while speaking of other subjects. Presently I may notice that the latent thought begins to stimulate her brain into action, and then I at once drop the second subject and revert to the first which can now be carried on. There is some analogy with your trying to remember something which eludes you, and, after you cease to try, it suddenly appears in your mind later and you can take it up and go on with it. It seems as if the less one tries, the more easily does the brain take up the thought. Hence I usually give up trying when failing to get my theme through, however much I may desire it, and do not waste time attempting to force it.

C. D. T. Do you think that you could give, through Fedra, any statement which she or the medium strongly objected to?

FATHER. I do not think it would be difficult to do that.

Etta controlling.

October 1st, 1920.

(On the occasion of this my sister's first control I had no warning that she was about to make the attempt. But I noticed that the change of control was taking a much longer time than usual, and when the voice commenced it was slow and faint.)

ETTA. I am trying . . . not father. I shall do it. I want to. Can you hear better now? I shall speak more distinctly soon. S—S—S—S (the sibilants were clear and prolonged). I cannot manage her breath. I shall soon do it. Yes, now I think it is better . . . when I speak like that. I do not make the whistling sound. I wish to speak clearly, distinctly and well. I am so glad to be able to speak. I shall do it in time.

(Etta continued in control for twenty-nine minutes, and towards the end of that time was speaking somewhat easily. She succeeded in pro-

nouncing several relevant names, although failing to give others for which she was evidently trying.

A few weeks later Etta controlled for the second time. Among other things she said :)

I want to practice names of people. I want to remember the sound of words while controlling and to make the lips sound, to give her brain the names and make her lips say them. But it is difficult to think, I fail to connect up my ideas. Even now I have a strong consciousness of having been often with you, but I find no detailed recollection of the things we have done. Do not tell me anything ; I wish to practice remembering.

(During Etta's fifth time of controlling she succeeded in describing with accuracy a young officer who had recently died, and she transmitted several messages from him for his father. These messages were rich in evidential items and convinced the father of his son's identity.

Etta said that she was doing her best to give as much as possible, but added :)

The extraordinary thing about it is that, although he told me so much, I am now unable to recall it all. But later, when away from here, I shall remember everything.

Father through Fedá.

November 11th, 1921.

FEDA. Your father says he knows the intricacies of controlling, not only by observing Fedá, but through doing it himself. He brings only a part of his intelligence into the medium's mind. All your mind is not in, or acting upon, your brain at one and the same time. You have your conscious and your subconscious mind. His mind also develops a conscious and subconscious section when he comes here, and in controlling he is sure that he works only a small detached part of his mind within the medium's mind. The part left outside the medium's mind forms, for the moment, his

subconscious mind, but he is still in touch with it, just as you are in touch with your subconscious mind.

C. D. T. Is subconscious knowledge available while in control?

FEDA. No, when you wish to recall what your conscious mind has lost you try to obtain it from the subconscious. Very often he tries to do this while controlling, but it is more difficult for him than for you, because a smaller proportion of his mind is operating in the medium. In her brain there is some of her own mind, and also some of his; while in your brain there is only your own mind. In controlling it is, what may be termed, a co-operative mind. You see therefore why he cannot, while controlling, think so clearly, or remember so much, as you can.

Father controlling.

December 9th, 1921.

(During his controlling my father suddenly remarked :)

Something makes me want to cough.

(The medium then coughed and cleared her throat.)

When I think suddenly it gives the organism a jerk and I cannot control the breath properly until I cough.

(Later he was checked in his attempt to explain something further, and proceeded :) I cannot make her say it, although I know quite well what it is I wish to tell you.

Etta controlling.

December 20th, 1921.

You remember how father described the conscious and subconscious division of his mind. The conscious is the lesser, because the brain holds but a small portion of the mind. When we passed over they both united. Now upon coming into control that division resumes, because the mind has once more to work through a finite body. We control with the conscious, the subconscious is not within easy reach meanwhile. We bring in as

much of our mind as we can, but the situation for us is something like having to turn from a full-compass piano to perform for a time upon one having but a single octave of notes.

Father controlling. *January 6th, 1922.*

(On coming to a dead stop in the midst of his remarks, he said :)

I cannot remember. It is extraordinary. Sometimes I cannot *say* the word required but now my difficulty is that I cannot *remember* it.

Etta controlling. *March 17th, 1922.*

(Etta had difficulty in remembering certain details, and I asked, "Is the difficulty with you or the medium?")

ETTA. I know it now, this thing you want. It is as if my mind were in two parts, one part opening into the medium's mind and the other shut off from her. Sometimes I can let a thought from one part pass into the other: at other times I am not aware, while here, that there is a second part. Father has said that at some sittings he could not have given his name if you had asked him.

C. D. T. Would practice obviate the difficulty?

ETTA. I think that always some degree of difficulty must remain.

C. D. T. Does Feda still feel that difficulty?

ETTA. Yes, from many things she has told me. I gather that she knows much more than she can get through.

C. D. T. How does trance compare with other methods of communication?

ETTA. We might be more limited in other ways. The table might give one word containing a clue, but it is much more difficult through the table or other mechanical means, to remember things which are not mentally present in the sitter's mind also. But at these sittings we find it easier to give what is *not* known to you or other sitters. But at a table it is difficult to give what is not known to you.

Now, here, your remembering does not help me because I have another mind to work through, quite independently of yours. Here, your mind does not help me to remember. You know that what you have in your mind might even prevent us speaking of it. At a table there is no mind to prevent us getting a thing from you. It is very much easier for us to get things from you when we are in your condition, than to remember them for ourselves. We can reinforce our memories through yours. It is that which gives rise to a feeling with some people that the table only reflects what one thinks. It is not really that, but results from its being easier to get that which the sitter at the table knows.

C. D. T. You can give unknown things through the table ?

ETTA. Yes, but it is more difficult.

Etta controlling.

October 31st, 1924.

C. D. T. Do you see by the medium's eyes now ?

ETTA. I see nothing.

C. D. T. Like being in the dark ?

ETTA. Yes, but occasionally in the midst of the darkness I have seen Father, who has made some sign to me, but only occasionally. I cannot see you at all now. I think I am not quite in one condition or the other.

C. D. T. Fedra has alluded to using the medium's sense of sight.

ETTA. I think it may be done, but not to order.

C. D. T. Have you no sight as a rule when controlling ?

ETTA. Just so. I think that if I try to exercise the sense of sight or sound I might lose control.

C. D. T. But you hear me ?

ETTA. Yes, but I mean if I were to use *my* sense to hear Father. To hear you I use the medium's sense of sound, not my own. Should I use my own I should immediately think myself into my own body again completely, and so weaken my control.

C. D. T. Is your body more or less over the medium's ?

ETTA. Yes, just merging into hers.

*Etta controlling.**March 19th, 1926.*

(Etta was endeavouring to give me a message which had been entrusted to her.)

ETTA. I knew it and felt sure of it, and now it is gone from me. I wish it would come back. It is extraordinary. You would not believe one could lose a thought like this.

C. D. T. Is it like forgetting one's dream?

ETTA. Yes, it is; because you do not experience dreams in the body. Similarly I did not hear this message when in the body of the medium, a body which is not mine at all.

(c) INFLUENCE OF THE SITTER.

There are reasons for thinking that the sitter is a factor making for success or failure. In taking notes for several first-time sitters I have been struck by the wide differences in result. I notice that a stolid unresponsiveness militates against success, much as it would check conversation in social life. Feda speaks of "deaf and dumb" sitters! I have occasionally received good evidence from a communicator who was a stranger to me, yet later, when his friends came to share my sitting, the evidence given was inferior. Such instances indicate that differences of result may not depend entirely upon the communicator and medium.

Besides the influence of manner and mental attitude, I think we have to reckon with a psychical difference in sitters. The presence of certain people seems more or less to inhibit communication.

I may also allude to the use and abuse of questions. There is good reason for believing that indiscreet questioning, or the ardent desire for some particular name or subject, interferes seriously with the requisite mental condition of a sitting.

*Etta controlling.**January 19th, 1923.*

It is difficult to explain, but the expectation by you of some particular thing seems to impinge on some

very delicate thought-fabric which we are weaving, and spoils it, so that we cannot gather together its threads in order. They become knotted up. So the advice is, go on keeping passive, and do not think of any particular person or thing; that will prevent your thought impinging on ours. Everything to do with our thought is much more delicate and subtle than yours, therefore our thought should impinge on yours and not vice versa. Father says that it would not be wise to rub canvas upon the paints, it has to be done the other way round.

Etta through Fedra.

December 7th, 1923.

About difficulties in communication; people forget that it is not their plane where all this takes place. The difficulty is in speaking from one plane to another. We can pour down our own material far more easily than we can pour down the particular material you may wish for. If we wish and think of it first, it does not matter about your wishing, but if you wish and question before we have prepared the mould, it is very difficult for us, because we have already prepared a different mould. The book and newspaper tests were comparatively easy to give because you could not mentally influence what we were transmitting.

Father controlling.

February 1st, 1924.

The things we give voluntarily are usually the best. We know what we can give, but when asked to supplement it, in response to questions, we have to conform to your conditions. It is like having to pour our thoughts into moulds which you prepare and which are not our moulds. It is difficult to explain but, as a rule, it is best that you should take what we can give. As you are aware, we can often tell you things far more difficult than those which you ask. In using the term "moulds" I mean a form of words and selection of thoughts.

Some friends of mine had occasionally taken their daughter Joyce to share their sittings with Mrs. Leonard. My sister Etta was interested in Joyce's approaching marriage and had referred to her in a recent sitting. One day (April 11th, 1924), while on my way to Mrs. Leonard's house in Hertfordshire, I saw Joyce in the train and travelled with her. The incident then passed out of my thought until Etta, during Fedá's control, made a very definite statement that I had just seen someone in whom both she and I were interested. She proceeded to elaborate until there needed only the addition of the name Joyce to complete the evidence of her knowledge of our meeting that morning. I therefore pressed for the name, and when Etta said that this was beyond her power, I enquired where the difficulty lay. "Partly in you and partly in Fedá," she answered. "Then if I thought of something else, say the moon," I asked, "would it make a better chance of your giving the name?" Etta said, "Do so, and I'll try later on to give it." So I put it from my mind, and waited to write notes of whatever might come next; and these words were then slowly spoken: "*I hope it will help Joyce.*"

Father controlling.

April 11th, 1924.

It is easier for us to read your mind when away from here than it would be during a sitting. It is supposed by some that a medium reads the mind of a sitter; but one has only to experiment to discover how difficult it is for us to answer questions. We can sail along giving details quite unknown to you; but if you suddenly ask a simple question which comes into your mind, it presents a difficulty to us. Now if we were reading your mind there would not be that difficulty.

During a sitting we are bent on keeping intact the link between ourselves and the control; but if we lost it through giving too much attention to you, it would be difficult to regain. It is as a thread which will stretch a little, but if taken round you as well as the medium it would break.

A question often breaks the thread of our thought and we have to drop the topic. We can often create another, and substitute it for the other quite quickly. We do not mind your asking questions because we know that, if we do not take them up, you will understand that there was a reason. But some sitters would feel distressed and disappointed, which makes it hard for their communicator. Our feeling of absolute ease with you makes it possible for us to do our best. We know you will not be distressed if we cannot do what you ask at some particular moment.

Through Fedra.

February 20th, 1925.

C. D. T. Fedra, how do you distinguish between thoughts coming from the communicator, and those in the sitter's mind?

FEDRA. It is a different feeling altogether, very different. I have trained myself to lean towards the communicator and to shut off the sitter. I do not like sitters to be in front of the medium, but like to have the communicator in front. I concentrate on just that place and so shut off other places. Your father says, "Even that would not prevent Fedra getting a thought and not knowing it was from the sitter, if the latter happened to be willing something very strongly. A sitter might will his thought fifty times and miss, but Fedra might accidentally take it the fifty-first time."

C. D. T. And would not Fedra realise from whom it came?

FATHER. Not unless she were very careful and on the watch for interference.

(Fedra then confided to me an experience which related to a strong-minded lady, who held certain ideas so firmly as to make it impossible for her husband, who was communicating, to state the contrary. He ceased communicating to save unavoidable misunderstandings.

She continued :)

FEDA. Fedra is careful not to start with the sitter's thoughts. Fedra thinks she would know if a sitter's thoughts came in, but your father says, "That is not infallibly so, especially if the sitter has a strong way of forcing thought."

Father controlling.

April 14th, 1927.

We never know when coming here that our prepared material will be available. Some of the best we have given had not been prepared. Conversation with us may fit in and give ground upon which we can base what we can give. Those whom Fedra terms "deaf and dumb sitters" are unlikely to provide good groundwork. Sitters should talk with us in an ordinary manner without giving away information. Such talk helps us. When first I came here I used to give plentiful evidence of identity, you did not give things away, but you use to talk of the pleasure it gave you and so on.

(d) MISCELLANEOUS.

The following passages are of interest although not falling into any of the foregoing divisions of the subject.

January 20th, 1921.

FEDA. Your Father says they have difficulty in remembering when in the mental condition, what they have said when in the physical condition, and vice versa. That accounts for what happens, when at direct voice sittings he tries to say something which he had said here in his mental condition. You have noticed he can scarcely give any indication of it. Trance-speaking necessitates mental condition, a direct voice sitting needs a physical condition. Therefore one will not get the same quality of communication at both. It is so difficult to carry through from one condition to another which is different.

This is a suitable place in which to mention a remarkable physical phenomenon which is occasionally noticed

momentarily during a Leonard sitting. I can only term it "the direct voice," because it exactly resembles the vocalisation heard in direct-voice sittings with mediums who specialise in that phenomenon. At such sittings the voices are sometimes heard at a considerable distance from the medium and do not (as has been repeatedly demonstrated by the use of apparatus) issue directly from the medium's lips. The manner in which those voices are produced is still a matter about which little is known.

Now there are times in Mrs. Leonard's sittings when the communicator, while transmitting messages through Fedra, will suddenly speak a few words in the direct voice. I have frequently heard my father do this. Many of Mrs. Leonard's sitters have noticed the same thing. My father tells me that it seems to him that the speaking of a few words in this manner is made possible by the emanation being, for a brief interval, sufficiently dense to form a covering for the vocal organs of his etheric body. He adds that he is not able to produce this direct voice at will, but only under very favourable conditions; because this emanation with Mrs. Leonard is much less concentrated than that which is present in direct-voice sittings. This explanation bears no resemblance to the tentative hypothesis by which I had been inclined to explain direct-voice phenomena. But it is interesting as suggesting a close relation between the emanation at trance sittings and that which makes possible the various psychical phenomena usually termed physical.

In the above quotation we seem to have an explanation of the fact, so frequently noticed, that it is rare to get good mental phenomena during sittings where there are several physical phenomena. There are exceptions, especially with powerful mediums, but it is the rule that evidential messages are scarce in those direct-voice sittings where lights and levitations are plentiful.

Father through Fedra.

October 27th, 1922.

Etta has been doing a good deal of work in conjunction with a band who are helping circles, and also independent would-be mediums, to free them-

selves from what we can only call "imaginary controls and guides" and to find out their real guides. Etta has found out that many such guides have to masquerade under other names than their own because the mediums have made up their minds that such-and-such a name must be the one. Many work under the assumed name rather than lose opportunity of working at all. That is especially the case when famous names are given and the individuality at the back shows very little of the knowledge which would be possessed by those supposed to be controlling.

Father controlling.

September 14th, 1923.

FATHER. When I talk easily I notice it is in the forehead of the medium, not in the brain, but just above the eyes in front. When I lose sense of being just there, I find it is not so easy to express myself.

C. D. T. Do you try different places ?

FATHER. I would not call it that. I might try in a way but find myself drawn to different parts of the head. To-day I feel I am just here. (Hand touches above the root of the nose, and above the eyes.)

C. D. T. Do you mean at the root of the nose ?

FATHER. That or higher. It seems a sensitive spot.

Feda controlling.

August 22nd, 1924.

(Reference to lavender in room.) Feda can smell it through the medium's nose, and Etta can smell it also, although not controlling. Etta says that she might not be able to smell lavender if you and the medium were not present. (The perfume was quite perceptible in the room, a bunch of lavender having been placed on the piano.)

A Minister slightly known to me was brought to one of my sittings not long after his passing. My father, who had known him well, was said to have invited him to attend. The remarks by this visitor upon the new life were highly interesting. Presently he alluded to the sitting.

*Through Feda.**March 6th, 1925.*

Your father is now doing his best to make me familiar with this condition which I will term the between-state. I see quite clearly at this moment that we are in, what I would like to call, a between-state. We are not, strictly speaking, on either bank, but on a bridge, a bridge which is more of your making than ours. Not that we do not wish to make it, but, unfortunately, in many ways, the bridge must be built from your side. I think that, as you build, and as your side of the bridge reaches closer to our bank, our thoughts help you considerably, but the material is yours, I see that now.

*Through Feda.**April 1st, 1927.*

Etta says, I feel extraordinarily close to you to-day, perhaps because of the day;¹ I remember previous sittings close to the day, yct think I never felt so near to you as yesterday and now.

We have to be rather careful at sittings not to feel too near. I will explain. Sometimes when we come to a sitting we feel so conscious of joy in the contact, such a sense of personal joy and pleasure, that we don't always do as well in the sitting if we yield to it. Because we are inwardly registering sometimes when we should exteriorise and send out to you, making ourselves known to you exteriorly.

(I don't understand that, Mrs. Etta, said Feda.)

You know how inarticulate on earth a keen realisation makes one; so with us when in a sitting sometimes. So we find it best to keep to business, to express ourselves to you; then after the sitting we can be happy, rather than revel in feelings during the sitting itself. Self-control is needed. In some people's sittings with personal control there is much emotion manifested and nothing else.

¹ It was the anniversary of her death in 1920.

Through Fedra.

April 14th, 1927.

FEDA. It is so difficult to carry through their thoughts from one condition to a different condition.

C. D. T. Can you explain the difference between those two conditions?

FATHER. You know the conditions here. Should I wish to materialise for a voice sitting I use a material, one more of your earth than of my own plane, a physical substance. Should I materialise a hand to touch you with, I use a physical substance, a foreign condition, another life for the time being.

I must identify myself with the quality and condition of the material, make myself part of it. It is not my own material, probably the medium's, whoever's mentality is the controlling one, and may become—or I may have to make it become—a part of myself, or I of it, *pro tem*. If conditions are excellent I can use my own mentality to a great extent. Yet even then submerging it to a certain extent to suit the quality of the material. When conditions are bad, despite the power there, then my mentality may be much overweighted by some one else's mentality. And I should have to conform to the habits, qualities, limitations of that mentality. Are there not records of educated men speaking ungrammatically in physical sittings? Or speaking with a foreign accent according to the mentality overshadowing? We know it is so. Often in physical sittings we have had to identify ourselves with, not only a physical condition and physical material, but also to be submerged in others' mentalities.

To a slight extent we feel this in trance sittings. We do not use the coarse substance here, but the mental. To borrow their physical substance one has to borrow also their mentality, it is almost impossible to disentangle the two.

(Fedra here tells of a medium who thought the sitter's brother would have brown eyes like the sitter. That led to their being described as

brown, whereas they should have been called blue. Consequently the sitter was upset.)

FEDA. Your father says, We have to conform to the mentality of the medium in every kind of sitting. She is a between-condition.

To bring memory from a physical sitting to a mental one is difficult. For we have been too much submerged to remember afterwards what we did. It is difficult to bring thoughts from a mental to a physical sitting; we can remember all we require of the mental sitting, yet at the physical sitting the submerging process throws it out again, and then we have to give whatever is suggested to us, what we can recall in that condition.

Although this paper does not touch upon every phenomenon of trance communication, I hope it may at least serve as a contribution towards a working hypothesis of the type of sitting usually obtained with Mrs. Osborne Leonard.

I conclude with my sister's remarks on the general subject :

Through Feda.

November 14th, 1924.

Etta says that it seems to her that no one yet understands the unique character of a sitting. . . . It is a no-man's-land between the two conditions, yours and ours. It is considered that communication concerns earth people and spirit people, whereas there is also the peculiar bridgeway which has to be used and which belongs neither to one nor to the other, yet has some of the characteristics of each. Here lies all the difficulty. Medium and sitter are in part working in a condition which is not entirely theirs, and we work in one which is not entirely ours. It is a pooling of resources which creates the bridge. One gets out of one's depth sometimes on both sides.

REVIEW.

Problems in Psycho-Pathology. By T. W. MITCHELL.

The title of this volume is not well chosen, but that is perhaps the only fault to be found in this excellent little book. For the book is a very clear and simplified exposition of the psychology of Prof. Sigmund Freud, for the general reader the best of all the many that have appeared. But though as an exposition of this very difficult and complicated doctrine for the layman the work is of a very high order, those who esteem Dr. Mitchell as an original thinker and an independent investigator in the field of abnormal psychology will regret that he has not thought fit to give play to his critical faculty in this volume. Such a reader asks himself at many points—Does Dr. Mitchell accept, and endorse all this, as established truth, as working hypothesis, or as interesting and stimulating speculation? And in the end he is left wondering whether Dr. Mitchell must now be reckoned among those who have fallen under the magic spell of Freud and have become uncritical disciples of that great pioneer. It may be hoped that this is not the case and that Dr. Mitchell will follow up the present volume with another addressed to a more professional circle, in which he will undertake the task of examining in an impartial spirit the more serious of the criticisms that have been directed against the Freudian system. None of those who have become whole-hearted disciples of Freud seems capable of undertaking a reasoned reply to criticisms, even in the rôle of declared advocates of the system. They seem to be too impatient, if not contemptuous, of all criticism. Yet if, as they believe, the Freudian psychology is fundamentally sound, it must be capable of withstanding, of rebutting, and even of profiting by honest criticism. The meeting of such criticism in the open, in the scientific rather than in the sectarian spirit, is much needed. For lack of it there is danger that the Freudian system, which, as some of us believe, is an intimate blend of important truth and serious error, may long remain apart, detached from the main stream of scientific advance, in a position comparable to that of various metaphysical and esoteric doctrines, accepted by a select band, but without serious influence upon the main stream of thought of our western civilization.

W. McDOUGALL.

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Society for Psychical Research

PART 108

LIBRARY CATALOGUE

(SUPPLEMENT 1927-1928)

COMPILED BY

THEODORE BESTERMAN

HONORARY LIBRARIAN

PREFACE

THE present first supplementary catalogue describes the books, etc., acquired (principally out of the Carnegie grant) during July 1927-June 1928, together with a good many items omitted for one reason or another from the general catalogue published in December 1927.

Since that date the re-organization has been completed, new bookcases having been installed in the remaining part of the Library. It has thus become possible to give the books permanent press-marks. These are shown in two interleaved copies of the Catalogue kept in the Library, and they are printed in the present Supplement. These press-marks (as: 22 b 6)* consist of the number of the book-case or press (22), the shelf in that case (b), and the number of the book on the shelf (6). A number in brackets after the number of the book, as: 6 i 32 (9), indicates that the item looked for is, in the example given, the ninth one bound up in the volume. The prefix R shows that the book is for Reference in the Library only, on application to the official in charge. The pamphlets in the uniformly bound collection of Tracts (at present consisting of 92 volumes, containing over a thousand items) have the following press-marks, in each case followed by the number of the volume in the series (as: RBi 3):

Alrutz, Sydney - - -	RSA		Psychical Research - - -	RPR
Anthropology, History	RAH		Psychoanalysis - - -	RPA
Apparitions - - -	RA		Psychology - - -	RP
Bibliography - - -	RBi		Reichenbach - - -	RR
Biography - - -	RB		Spiritualism - - -	RS
Crookes, Sir William -	RC		Supernormal Healing -	RSH
Death, Survival - - -	RDS		Swedenborg - - -	RSw
Dowsing - - -	RDo		Telepathy, Clairvoyance	RTC
Dreams - - -	RD		Theosophy - - -	RTh
Hallucinations - - -	RH		Quarto Tracts - - -	RT
Hypnotism - - -	RHy		Folio Tracts - - -	RF
Philosophy - - -	RPh			

This collection of Tracts is bound in the following colours, the same plan being followed for all current binding in the general Library :

Psychical Research	-	-	-	-	-	Green
Hypnotism	-	-	-	-	-	Blue
Psychology, Philosophy	-	-	-	-	-	Red
Spiritualism	-	-	-	-	-	Black
Anthropology, Magic, Mysticism	-	-	-	-	-	Olive
Biography, Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	-	Brown

The books are arranged on the shelves by subject, and within the subjects chronologically, as follows :

Anthropology	-	-	-	-	-	22 d-f
Biography	-	-	-	-	-	8 c-f
Healing, Supernormal	-	-	-	-	-	21 g
Hypnotism	-	-	-	-	-	15-16
Magic and Occultism	-	-	-	-	-	21 a-d
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	-	17
Mysticism	-	-	-	-	-	22 a-b
Occult and kindred movements :						
Andrew Jackson Davis	-	-	-	-	-	7 a-b
Swedenborg	-	-	-	-	-	7 c-d
Theosophy	-	-	-	-	-	7 f-g
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	-	7 e, h
Philosophy	-	-	-	-	-	26
Psychical Research :						
Standard works	-	-	-	-	-	4 d
The S.P.R.	-	-	-	-	-	4 e-g
General	-	-	-	-	-	5 e-e
Hauntings, Apparitions	-	-	-	-	-	5 a
Mediumship and specific mediums	-	-	-	-	-	5 a-b
Mental phenomena	-	-	-	-	-	6 f-g
Physical phenomena	-	-	-	-	-	5 f-g
Survival	-	-	-	-	-	6 d-e
Psychology :						
General	-	-	-	-	-	9
Abnormal and therapeutic	-	-	-	-	-	10 c-e
Animal psychology	-	-	-	-	-	3 a
Dreams	-	-	-	-	-	3 c-d
Hallucinations, Illusions	-	-	-	-	-	3 a
Mind-body problems	-	-	-	-	-	3 b
Multiple personality	-	-	-	-	-	1 g
Psychoanalysis	-	-	-	-	-	10 f-h
Subconsciousness	-	-	-	-	-	1 g
Spiritualism	-	-	-	-	-	23-24
Tracts, old and other works for Reference only						
	-	-	-	-	-	R11-12, R19-20, R21 h-i, R22 h-l
Witchcraft	-	-	-	-	-	21 e-f

PART I
PERIODICAL, SERIAL, SOCIETY
AND
OFFICIAL PUBLICATIONS

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- zu Schimpff | Kurtzweil | löblicher und lustiger Übung | und zu Nutz gebrauehen | und damit die Zeit vertreiben kan : Beneben Erzehlung vieler wunderlichen Dingen | so hin und wieder in der Welt gefunden werden. Allen Kunstbegierigen | und Liebhabern solcher geheimbten Künsten | in sonderlichen Gefallen : aus vieler alter und newer Ertzte | berühmter und bewehrter Naturkündiger Bucher und eigener Erfahrung colligirt, zusammen getragen | und in vier unterschiedliche Bücher abgetheilet | jetzo mit vielen geheimbten Kunst-stücklein welche bey den vorigen Exemplarien nicht zufinden | und gantz new in Druck gegeben. 4to, ff. [vii]. 49. [iv] + [i]. 53. [ii]. + [i]. 36. [iii]. + [i]. 27. [iv], 4 vols. Erfurd 1664. [R 12 bb 2]
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EVOCATION OF THE DEAD AND KINDRED PHENOMENA AMONG THE NATIVES OF MADAGASCAR.¹

By THEODORE BESTERMAN.

I.

I WILL not, as did an early pamphleteer, maintain the natives of Madagascar "to be the happiest people in the World," nor seek, like him, "to prefer this poor, naked, and simple ignorant people, before the rich, gallant, understanding men of *Europe*."² Yet, without going so far, it is easy enough to understand, in studying the Malagasy, that the fervid paradox of this precursor of Rousseau was not altogether groundless. For the Malagasy inhabit an island, the third largest in the world, which, though in the tropical zone, possesses, by reason of its separation from the mainland of Africa by the deep Mozambique Channel and because of its mountainous character, a climate that is only semi-tropical. This climate, together with the heavy rainfall, tends to make fever endemic. But this is largely compensated by one of the most luxuriant vegetations of the globe. Tropical forests cover the northern half of the island and line the whole coast; wide savannas sweep over the southern plateaux; though cereals are restricted in their distribution, cotton and hemp, potatoes, rice and sugar-cane, coffee and tobacco, grow abundantly; and palms, orchids, acacias and baobabs, the coco-nut, the orange and the mulberry are characteristic

¹ This paper was read at a Private Meeting of the Society on June 6, 1928.

² "A Paradox: Proving the Inhabitants of the Island, called *Madagascar*, or *St. Laurence* (in Things temporal) to be the happiest People in the World," *The Harleian Miscellany* (London 1744), i. 256.

of this vegetation. In its fauna Madagascar is equally happy, possessing none of the larger quadrupeds, and having a large civet, the *cryptoprocia ferox*, as practically its sole representative of the ferocious carnivores; the avi-fauna is very rich; and although crocodiles are unfortunately very numerous, the country has no deadly serpent. All these advantages have joined to make the natives of Madagascar a kind, friendly, extremely hospitable, freedom-loving people. Their culture has unpleasant aspects no doubt, such as the poison-ordeals (now forbidden), the savage punishments meted out by native justice for seemingly trivial offences, and the repugnant customs associated with Betsileo burials; but these practices cannot be judged apart from their premisses in native idology, to which they appear right and seemly.

Ethnologically, the Malagasy are a very interesting people. Although they comprise a possibly aboriginal stock, by far the largest part of the population of three millions consists of Malayo-Indonesian, Melanesian and African, with a smaller proportion of Arab and Indian, descendants. Nevertheless, what is practically only one language is spoken, and the customs and beliefs in the several parts of the island present no fundamental variations.

Although the religion of the Malagasy is comparatively simple it would take us too far afield to consider it to any greater extent than is necessary for an understanding of what follows. They believe in a supreme god, the "creator of all things," Zanahary, who is incapable of evil. The natives naturally interpret evil as that which is contrary to their own welfare, and Zanahary, being thus unable to harm them, is a somewhat otiose divinity, neglected and even regarded, by the bolder spirits, with a little quiet contempt. There are no priests, since there are no temples, but the sorcerers and diviners have great power. The method of divination chiefly used is a kind of geomancy, and this, in conjunction with an elaborate system of taboo (here called *fady*) governs the native's life. They have very elaborate burial customs and beliefs

connected with death,¹ chief among which is the belief that they can get into communication with the spirits of the dead, by whose advice they can, amongst other things, cure disease and foretell the future.² It would be no exaggeration, indeed, to say that the Malagasy look upon the dead as continuously, though invisibly, present among

¹ These customs and beliefs have an important bearing on our subject, but as space forbids a close consideration of them, I merely append a list of the more important discussions of this subject: Ch. Bénévnt, "Conception de la Mort chez les Malagaches," *Revue de Madagascar* (Paris 1901), iii. 631-648; George Bennett, "Funeral Ceremonies at the Burial of Radama I.," *Antananarivo Annual* (Antananarivo 1887), xi. 311-314 (reprinted in J. Sibree, *Madagascar before the Conquest* [London 1896], pp. 305-312); Besson, "Rites funéraires en usage chez les Betsiléos," *L'Anthropologie* (Paris 1894), v. 674-682; W. E. Cousins, *Malagasy Customs: native accounts of the Circumcision, the Tangena, the Fandroana, the Marriage and the Burial Ceremonies* [in Malagasy] (Antananarivo 1896, 2nd edition); *id.* from a native MS., "Betsileo Burial Customs," *Antananarivo Annual* (1900), xxiv. 475-480; L. Denivelle, "Les Funérailles chez les Tanosy," *Bulletin des Missions Luthériennes à Madagascar* (Bar-le-Duc 1902), pp. 183-184; R. P. Finaz, "Les sépultures dans l'ouest et dans le centre de Madagascar," *Les Missions catholiques* (Lyon 1875), pp. 328, 339-340, 350-352; Alfred Grandidier, "Des Rites funéraires chez les Malgaches," *Revue d'Ethnographie* (Paris 1886), v. 213-232 (translated by J. Sibree, "Funeral Ceremonies among the Malagasy," *Antananarivo Annual* [1891], xv. 304-318, who reprinted the translation in his *Madagascar before the Conquest* [London 1896], pp. 286-305); Guillaume Grandidier, "Les Coutumes qui disparaissent: les enterrements à Madagascar," *Le Petit Journal militaire, maritime et colonial* (Paris, 27 March 1904), pp. 248-249; John H. Haile, "'Famadihana,' a Malagasy Burial Custom," *Antananarivo Annual* (1892), xvi. 406-416; Ed. Hocquard, "Les Cérémonies funèbres des Sakalaves," *Le Tour du Monde* (Paris, 17 April 1897); A. Jully, "Funérailles, tombeaux et honneurs rendus aux morts à Madagascar," *L'Anthropologie* (Paris 1894), v. 385-401; Max Leclerc, "Notes sur Madagascar: rites funéraires...", *Revue d'Ethnographie* (Paris 1887), pp. 463-472; J. Pearse, "Customs connected with Death and Burial among the Sihanaka," *Antananarivo Annual* (1882), vi. 51-65; Pochard, "Les Tombeaux à Betafo," *Bulletin des missions Luthériennes à Madagascar* (Bar-le-Duc 1898), pp. 112-114; J. Richardson, "Remarkable Burial Customs among the Betsileo," *Antananarivo Annual* (1875), i. 70-75; James Sibree, "A Curious Burial Custom in North Imerina," *Antananarivo Annual* (1896), xx. 487-498; *id.* from a native MS., "Remarkable Ceremonial at the Decease and Burial of a Betsileo Prince," *Antananarivo Annual* (1893), xxii. 195-208. See also G. Grandidier, *Bibliographie de Madagascar* (Paris 1905-1906), ii. 869-870.

² The chief authority for all the foregoing is the monumental *Histoire physique, naturelle et politique de Madagascar*, edited by Alfred Grandidier in many quarto volumes.

the living. This sentiment is expressed with picturesque force in one of their proverbial sayings: "The guinea-fowl when flying departs not from the wood, nor, when hiding, from the earth, and the *fanòro* shrub dies on the ground. All the hairs of the head cannot bind death, and tears cannot hold him; therefore give up the dead, for the earth is the forsaking-place of the beloved ones, the dwelling of the living, the home when dead."¹ This belief must be borne in mind in considering what follows, for it is chiefly responsible for the intensity of the Malagasy ancestor-worship. The mere worship of ancestors, as found in many parts of the world, often plays a comparatively unimportant part in the life of the community. But when this worship is found, as in Madagascar, in connection (whether causally or not) with a profound belief in the omnipresence of the ancestors, its influence on the individual and on the community may readily be imagined. One has only to suppose what sort of complexion English civilisation would bear if every inhabitant of the Islands were an ardent spiritualist, convinced that he could get into communication with the spirits of, say, his dead parents, by the simple process of visiting a medium, and if at the same time the religion of the country were a worship of those same ancestors!

But not only do the Malagasy believe in the as-it-were spiritual omnipresence of the dead, and not only do they hold it as an article of faith that they can communicate with them through appropriately gifted individuals, they also tell stories of ghostly apparitions visible to the generality of the people. "In 1906," a missionary, but an accurate and conscientious observer, tells us, "a whole region east of Antananarivo was greatly moved, because, one evening, a man, celebrated in the land, but dead for some ten years, was seen by the window of a hut of which he had been the proprietor. The details were given with precision, the day and time were indicated, and the witnesses cited."² The same writer also records a case in

¹ James Sibree, "The Oratory, Songs, Legends, and Folk-Tales of the Malagasy," *The Folk-Lore Journal* (London 1883), i. 12.

² H. Rusillon, *Un culte dynastique* (Paris 1912), p. 50.

which a young woman, twenty-four hours after her supposed death, returned to give various messages to her family and neighbours and to indicate the exact day and time of her definitive death, which took place as foretold. But this time our informant sceptically puts the facts down to an epidemic of chronic paludism then raging, during which people were buried while in a state of insensibility characteristic of the disease.¹

Nor, we are told, are these two incidents isolated, "for in the evening, around the fire, what extraordinary ghost stories are to be heard! And even more would be heard if the people dared to speak quite freely in the presence of a missionary. One individual comes to tell you quietly that he had a visit from a dead person during the night. A husband talked at length to his wife. She left him instructions for his conduct . . ." ² And so on. The same missionary quotes a letter, that came into his hands by chance, from one native to another. It appears that a man of Ambatolampy, a village in the district of Isoavimbazaha, who died ten years before, being displeased with the behaviour of his descendants, decided to reveal himself to them. He began to throw stones at them, nor could they see whence they came. Then he started breaking the pots and pans. He tired of this also and began to whistle. At last his children cried out, "If you have something good to tell us, say it, but stop frightening us." This went on for some time, and he continued by removing the slates and breaking the thread when weaving was going on. Eventually his voice began to be heard; he made his complaints, expounded the ten commandments, and requested that place should be made for him at table. The food disappeared, but no one saw him eat, though the sound of his jaws was heard. The story got round and on the 7th of August 1909, 400 persons, including the élite of the neighbourhood, such as the governor, the midwife, teachers and evangelists, assembled on the spot saying it was all lies. They went into the house, and, in order to see more clearly, they made a fire, when suddenly a voice was heard saying, "Even if

¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50.

² *Ibid.*, p. 50.

there were great lights, you would not see me, for I am spirit . . . ”¹ What a poltergeist! And what opportunities for a Madagascar S.P.R.!

II.

I am not, of course, concerned in this paper with these beliefs as such, but rather with their manifestations in action, and with any light such action may throw on a possibly veridical basis of these beliefs. I do not propose, therefore, to give any more detailed account of the Malagasy doctrine of the evocation of the dead, but proceed to an account of the recurrent as-it-were spiritualistic epidemics to which this doctrine has led.

The modern history of Madagascar dates from the reign of the enlightened and progressive Radama I., who ruled from 1810 to 1828. On his death at an early age power was seized by one of his wives, who became Ranavolana I., and during whose reign of thirty-three years active reaction was encouraged. On the ascent to the throne in 1861 of Radama II. the country had almost relapsed into complete barbarism, and the new king, although he had the will, lacked the character to undo the evil done by his predecessor. Now followed the events to be noted. My account is based, for the sake of accuracy and impartiality, on the narratives of four eye-witnesses of the most varied points of view: Dr. Andrew Davidson, physician to the Court of Madagascar;² the Rev. William Ellis, chiefly known for his Polynesian researches, who had been sent out by the London Missionary Society to resume the missionary work interrupted by Ranavolana I. for a quarter of century;³ and Fathers Finaz and Boy, French missionaries whose contemporary narratives were incor-

¹ H. Rusillon, *Un culte dynastique* (Paris 1912), pp. 51-54.

² Andrew Davidson, "Choreomania: An Historical Sketch with some Account of an Epidemic in Madagascar," *Edinburgh Medical Journal* (Edinburgh 1868), xiii. 124-136; reprinted in part, with notes by J. Sibree, as "The Ramanenjana or Dancing Mania of Madagascar," *Antananarivo Annual* (Antananarivo 1889), xiii. 19-27.

³ Rev. William Ellis, *Madagascar Revisited* (London 1867), pp. 253 *et seq.*

porated into his books by La Vaissière.¹ The events, then, were as follows :

In February 1863, little more than a year after the accession of Radama II., rumours began to reach the European inhabitants of Antananarivo, the capital of Madagascar, of a very regrettable state of affairs at Ambondrombe, the home of the departed. The queen Ranaivolana I. was very annoyed at the tentative reforms Radama II. was beginning to introduce, and was considering a personal visit to put a stop to them. Radama I., on the contrary, was delighted that his own views were gaining the upper hand again, and did his best to restrain his angry successor. The queen, however, had secretly made her arrangements for departure, and in March of the same year small parties began to arrive at the capital, some actually carrying various articles, others imagining themselves to be loaded with the dead queen's baggage. They were accompanied by musicians, and danced almost continuously. In a few weeks these groups had increased to hundreds, so that it was impossible to go out without meeting some of them. "It spread rapidly," writes Davidson (*loc. cit.*, p. 131), "as by a sort of infection, even to the most remote villages in the central province or *Imerina*, so that, having occasion to visit a distant part of the country in company with an Englishman, we found even in remote hamlets, and, more wonderful still, near solitary cottages, the sound of music, indicating that the mania had spread even there."

Those affected were chiefly of the lower class, and women between the ages of fourteen and twenty-five. They were called, as was the epidemic itself, *ramanenjana*, meaning "that which makes tense (or stiff)," from one of the symptoms felt by the persons afflicted. These symp-

¹ C. de la Vaissière, *Vingt ans à Madagascar* (Paris 1885), pp. 228 *et seq.*; *id.*, *Histoire de Madagascar* (Paris 1884), 392 *et seq.*, 418 *et seq.* See also Gershon Ramisiray, *Pratiques et croyances médicales des Malgaches* (Paris 1901), pp. 91-96; Alfred et Guillaume Grandidier, *Ethnographie de Madagascar* (*Histoire physique, naturelle et politique de Madagascar*, IV.), iii. 490 *et seq.*, 620-622. Most histories of Madagascar have some account of the *ramanenjana*, most of them inaccurate, and nearly all derived from one or other of the above-mentioned sources.

toms are most fully described by Davidson (*loc. cit.*, pp. 132-133). "The patients usually complained of a weight or pain in the praecordia [the region about the heart], and great uneasiness, sometimes a stiffness about the nape of the neck. Others, in addition, had pains in the back and limbs, and in most cases there seems to have been an excited state of the circulation, and occasionally even mild febrile symptoms. One or more of these premonitory symptoms were frequently observed: there were numerous cases where they were absent. After complaining, it may be one, two, or three days, they became restless and nervous, and if excited in any way, more especially if they happened to hear the sound of music or singing, they got perfectly uncontrollable, and, bursting away from all restraint, escaped from their pursuers, and joined the music, when they danced sometimes for hours on end with amazing rapidity. They moved the head from side to side with a monotonous motion, and the hands, in the same way, alternately up and down. The dancers never joined in the singing, but uttered frequently a deep sighing sound. The eyes were wild and the whole countenance assumed an indescribable, abstracted expression, as if their attention was completely taken off what was going on around them. The dancing was regulated very much by the music, which was always the quickest possible—it never seemed to be quick enough. It often became more of a leaping than a dancing. They thus danced to the astonishment of all, as if possessed by some evil spirit, and, with almost superhuman endurance, exhausting the patience of the musicians, who often relieved each other by turns, then [that is, the dancers] fell down suddenly, as if dead; or, as often happened, if the music was interrupted, they would suddenly rush off as if seized by some new impulse, and continue running until they fell down almost, or entirely, insensible. After being completely exhausted in this way, the patients were taken home, the morbid impulse apparently in many cases destroyed. Sometimes the disease, thus stopped, never recurred; but more frequently there was a return. The sight of dancers, or the sound of music, even in the

distance, or anything which, by association, seemed connected with the disease, determined a recurrence of the fit.

“The patients were fond of carrying about with them sugar-canes. They held them in their hands, or carried them over the shoulder while they danced. Frequently, too, they might be seen going through their singular evolutions with a bottle of water upon their heads, which they succeeded wonderfully in balancing. The drum was the favourite instrument, but others were used, and all were acceptable. When there were no musical instruments to be had, the attendants beat time with their hands, or sung a tune which was a favourite amongst the Ramanenjana.”

It is clear that these dancers were simply mediums of the shamanistic type, and it is indeed recorded, even by our authorities, the medical man and the missionaries of a not very enlightened type, that they professed to be in communication with the dead, and particularly, of course, with Ranavolana I. The dancers also seemed to lose, to a large extent, consciousness of their bodies, or felt, according to their own expression, as if a dead body were tied to them.

This epidemic concluded in an insurrection and the murder of Radama II. It broke out again in the following year, but Rasoherina, Radama II.'s widow, who succeeded him, fearing that it might again lead to political complications, put the epidemic down with a strong hand. But there are records of its recurrence in, for instance, 1873,¹ 1895,² 1906 or 1907,³ and 1910,⁴ and no doubt other outbreaks occurred before and since, and, in one or other of its forms, the *ramanenjana* is continuously in manifestation.⁵

For in addition to the manifestations of these spiritualistic

¹ E.g., Raoul Allier, *La Psychologie de la conversion chez les peuples non-civilisés* (Paris 1925), i. 364.

² W. J. Edmonds, “Charms and Superstitions in South-East Imerina,” *Antananarivo Annual* (Antananarivo 1897), xxii. 62-63.

³ Eug. Parisot, “Le Reveil au Valalafotsy,” *Journal des Missions évangéliques* (Paris, June 1907), pp. 427 et seq.

⁴ E. Pechin, “Le ‘Bilo,’” *Journal des missions évangéliques* (Paris, February 1910), pp. 177 et seq.

⁵ We may safely assume for our present purpose that the *ramanenjana*, the *bilo*, (for which see E. Pechin, *loc. cit.*), the *salamanga* (for which see, e.g.,

phenomena as widespread epidemics, they also appear, on a much smaller scale, locally. And it is of these local phenomena that we have the most detailed information, in two papers by Parisot (*loc. cit.*) and Pechin (*loc. cit.*) and particularly in an important book by M. Henry Russillon, an experienced and enlightened missionary.¹

III.

We must now proceed to a more detailed consideration of the ceremony of evocation of the dead in one of these local manifestations. After preliminary ceremonies for the purpose of purifying the sorcerer and for finding a suitable subject, the proceedings began with the burning of incense, the playing of music, and much dancing round the person chosen as the vessel into which the ancestor is asked to enter. The choice is usually made, it appears, of a person who is ill, and who thus hopes to be cured. Indeed, the title given to the man who presides over the ceremony (*fiketrahana*) should, we are told, be strictly translated as "healer" rather than "sorcerer," as is customary.²

Often the subject, whom for clarity I will call the medium, at once goes into trance, or into some kindred abnormal state of consciousness. Sometimes, however, it is necessary to use a circular mirror, apparently bearing white lines, on which the medium is requested to fix his eyes.³

James Sibree, *The Great African Island* [London 1880], pp. 295-296), and the *tromba* (for which see below), are different phases of the same phenomenon. M. Allier, indeed, gives as the full name of this manifestation a phrase which includes two of the above terms, (*loc. cit.*, i. 363). On the other hand, M. G. Mondain (quoted by R. Allier, *Introduction to H. Russillon, Un culte dynastique* [Paris 1912], p. 17n.) states that some Malagasy use the several words in different senses. The information at our disposal is insufficient to permit scientific discrimination between them, and even the distinction made in the text is purely tentative and open to correction.

¹ Henry Russillon, *Un culte dynastique avec évocation des morts chez les Sakalaves de Madagascar: Le "Tromba"* (Paris 1912). This book has a valuable introduction by M. Raoul Allier.

² *Ibid.*, p. 119.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 91, 96; E. Pechin, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

Being thus seemingly hypnotised, the medium begins to shout, and henceforth he is treated in accordance with his new personality. In other words, he is now supposed to be possessed by an ancestor. (It may be noted, parenthetically, that at the same moment, one, two, three, sometimes many, of those present are taken possession of. The ancestors, say the natives, follow the example of one of their number.) The name of the possessing ancestor is as yet unknown, and the assembly disperses, discussing his identity and the hoped-for manifestations at the next stage of the whole ceremony, for now the second stage has ended, the purifications and the like having formed the first stage.

The opening of the third stage (or *séance*, as our authority calls it) is similar, except that now the medium goes more readily into trance. What characterises this stage is that now the spirit begins to speak. But let it not be supposed that the ancestor comes easily. No, it is just as with a European medium, where the sitter is favoured with the conversation of a "control," who conveys the messages of the communicating spirit, the latter making his own voice audible only as a very special privilege. So in Madagascar, the voice first heard is that of a servant, full of protests: "What do you want?" "The master is engaged," "You are disturbing him without cause," and so on. But those present, I mean in the body, can also protest, and they protest violently: it is the ancestor himself they want. The servant is cursed, and sent about his business to fetch his master. In due course the latter comes, and names himself. At once, the audience adjusts its behaviour. If the possessing spirit is that of an ancestor known to have been opposed to Christianity, nothing is to be heard but imprecations against all Christians. If the temporarily reincarnated ancestor is Radama II. they become ardent devotees of all things European; they love the whites; they even speak French: "Koman ça va? ça va bian!" Although their French, in the example given, seems somewhat elementary, M. Rusillon states categorically that on these occasions genuine speaking with tongues or glossolalia

takes place.¹ His explanation (pp. 138-140), if I understand it, is that the words thus spoken of an unknown language or dialect are the automatic reproductions of sounds recorded in the subconsciousness while the subject was in the presence of persons speaking that language.² This seems to be the true normal interpretation, but M. Rusillon certainly gives the impression that the things said, by the medium, at any rate, go beyond the resources of a vocabulary acquired in so haphazard a manner. Under the circumstances I can do no more than state the hypothesis and the difficulty.

But it is not enough for the spirit to name himself: his relations must recognise him. It is greatly to be regretted that we are not told how the spirit compels this recognition, but merely that the spirit's self-identification is questioned and must be agreed to before the affair can progress. At last order is restored, and the assembly gets to work. For the spirit is also a healer, he indicates remedies, he performs cures, and, says our authority (pp. 171 *et seq.*), perfectly genuine cures, chiefly of the fevers which we have seen to be endemic. The spirit is bombarded with questions, for nothing is unknown to him. He indicates what taboos are to be observed, what voyages should be undertaken, how to become rich, and so on. This concludes the third part of the ceremony, and the medium comes to. He knows nothing of what has fallen from his own lips; indeed, he takes beforehand the precaution of entrusting to a friend the task of remembering, and of relating to him, what has taken place.

The fourth and last part of the proceedings consists chiefly of various sacrificial performances, into which I need not enter, designed to complete the cure of the medium himself. I say "chiefly," for at the very end the cured medium goes into a voluntary, presumably a self-

¹H. Rusillon, *Un culte dynastique*, pp. 93, 127, 138. At p. 127, for instance, he writes, "Quant au Tromba [=spirit], il parle la langue de son pays d'origine, sans s'inquiéter de son 'siège.'"

²The most recent writer on this subject (George Barton Cutten, *Speaking with Tongues* [Newhaven 1927], pp. 178 *et seq.*) comes to the same conclusion, though he does not refer to the savage cases.

induced, trance and the spirit demands his rewards. In response the medium is loaded with gifts, and amid libations, cries and games, the proceedings come to an end with general intoxication, one feature, at least, that is not reproduced in a European spiritualistic sitting.

Such is the great Malagasy ceremony of the evocation of the dead, and it only remains to add that fraud, although it has not been actually detected, is possible. A young Hova, converted to Christianity, determined to investigate this point. He went to such a ceremony as I have described and pretended to go into trance and to become possessed by a spirit. He went through the performance usual in such cases, of answering questions "out of his head," to the complete satisfaction of the questioners.¹ This gullibility compels us to maintain a sceptical attitude towards the alleged veridical nature of these phenomena. But one cannot help feeling that the immensely long and troublesome preliminaries a medium has to go through before being recognised as a channel through which supposed spirits of the ancestors are willing to manifest, put deliberate fraud out of court as a general explanation of the phenomena of mediumship among the easy-going Malagasy.

¹ H. Rusillon, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-162.

APPENDIX

LIST OF PREVIOUS ACCOUNTS IN THE SOCIETY'S *PROCEEDINGS* AND *JOURNAL* OF ALLEGED SUPERNORMAL PHENOMENA AMONG UNCIVILISED PEOPLES.

- GENERAL.—Andrew Lang, "The Fire Walk," *Proceedings* (1900-1901), xv. 2-15.
- AUSTRALIA.—K. Langton [*sic*, read Langloh] Parker, "An Australian Witch," *Journal* (May 1899), ix. 69-71.
- TAHITI.—S. P. Langley, "The Fire Walk Ceremony in Tahiti," *Journal* (October 1901), x. 116-121; Andrew Lang, "Mr. Langley on the Fire-Walk," *Journal* (November 1901), x. 132-134.
- MALAY ARCHIPELAGO.—Walter Skeat, "Malay Spiritualism," *Proceedings* (1901-1903), xvii. 290-304.
- ASSAM.—C. P. Mills, "The Were-Tigers of the Assam Hills," *Journal* (November 1922), xx. 381-388.
- INDIA.—W. Henry Henderson, "Indian Conjuring and Hypnotism," *Journal* (January 1892), v. 195-196; Richard Hodgson, "Indian Magic and the Testimony of Conjurers," *Proceedings* (1893-1894), ix. 354-366; Henry K. Beauchamp and others, "Fire-Walking Ceremonies in India," *Journal* (November 1900), x. 312-321; J. A. Sharrock, "Fire Ceremonies in Southern India," *Journal* (November 1902), x. 297-298; Sebastian Thomas Burchett and others, "An Account of the Indian Rope-Climbing Trick," *Journal* (November 1904), xi. 299-308; "An Account of the Indian Rope-climbing Trick," *Journal* (February 1905), xii. 30-31; "The Indian Rope-Trick," *Journal* (November-December 1919), xix. 124-127.
- MAURITIUS.—Mary J. S. Schwabe, "Fire-Walking in Mauritius," *Journal* (December 1901), x. 154-155; [John Piddington], "The Fire-Walk in Mauritius," *Journal* (June 1902), x. 250-253; M. S. Schwabe, "The Fire-Walk in Mauritius," *Journal* (November 1902), x. 296-297.
- WEST AFRICA.—Mary M. Kingsley, "The Forms of Apparitions in West Africa," *Proceedings* (1898-1899), xiv. 331-342; J. Shepley Part, "A Few Notes on Occultism in West Africa," *Proceedings* (1898-1899), xiv. 343-347.
- SOUTH AFRICA.—Theodore Besterman, "Savage Telepathy," *Journal* (January 1926), xxiii. 2-4.
- WEST INDIES.—F. Barrow Matthews, "An Account of an Outbreak of Religious Hallucination in the Bahamas, West Indies, with a brief sketch of some phenomena connected therewith," *Journal* (December 1886), ii. 485-487.

EVIDENCE FOR CLAIRVOYANCE IN CARD-GUESSING.

A REPORT ON SOME RECENT EXPERIMENTS.¹

BY MISS INA JEPHSON

BEFORE I begin my report I should like to express my thanks and my very real gratitude to all those who by their generous gifts of both time and work have made possible an experiment which I venture to think is of considerable suggestive value. First I must name those Members of Council who supported the experiment throughout, especially Dr. Woolley, who was chief adviser, aider and abetter. Next I must mention Miss Newton, for it was the facts observed during the long series of experiments in telepathy carried on by her which led me to undertake the present experiments in clairvoyance. Then especial thanks are due to Dr. R. A. Fisher for devising the scoring system which was used throughout this experiment and which made it possible to arrange such a large number of different elements on a businesslike basis, and also for having many times flung me a life-line when I was nearly submerged by the problems which taxed my limited arithmetic.

Next come a group of names, Miss Wallace, Mr. O'Dell, Mr. Summerson, and Mr. Soal, who collected, scored and analysed a very large number of results at a time when I had, with what seemed like supreme cunning, fallen ill the moment that the work was beginning in earnest.

Mr. Dingwall very kindly agreed to witness on seventeen different occasions some of my own efforts at card-guessing. I felt it was most important to have some witnessed experiments, and was glad to get an expert

¹This paper was read at a Private Meeting of the Society on June 27th, 1928.

witness who could detect at once any incipient leanings towards fraud on my part.

Miss Phillimore and the editor of *Light* most kindly helped by publishing several appeals in the columns of *Light* which produced a considerable number of interesting replies. I have also had help from Germany for which I am most grateful, Herr Studienrat Lambert in particular sending me a number of results; Dr. Tischner, Dr. Luther, Dr. Tartaruga also contributing and taking a most encouraging interest in the experiment. To Herr Leonhard I am indebted for scoring and analysing by Dr. Fisher's system 6000 pairs of cards, a labour which was essential to the value of the experiment, as it was of the first importance to have chance data with which the results of guessing could be compared. In America Dr. Walter Prince collected some results (printed below, p. 258), and subsequently sent me some of his own trials at card-guessing which have been of great interest in corroborating my own inferences and conclusions from this experiment.

Finally I must thank the 300 experimenters themselves who tried their luck at card-guessing and recorded their results. This 300 includes members of the Society, my own friends and victims outside the Society, a selection of those who joined with some success in Dr. Woolley's broadcast telepathy experiment, and a number of the readers of *Light*. I think that the fact of the guessers having belonged to so many different localities and circles adds considerably to its interest and to the value of the data, and I hope that those who co-operated will feel rewarded to some extent by the interesting nature of the results.

I should like to have called this experiment an experiment in card-divining, only unfortunately card-divining suggests usually that the diviner will prophesy a journey across water or urge you to beware of the jealousy of a dark woman. I regret that these experiments will throw no very direct light on such hopes and problems. They were designed in the hope of throwing light on the working of the faculty of clairvoyance, scrying, dowsing or

metagnomy—whichever word be preferred—with playing cards as the objects of perception.

This card-guessing or card-divining has often of course been tried before, as the history of psychic research shows, and considerable if isolated successes have been obtained, but isolated successes, however impressive, do not get the attention they deserve, being classified, quite naturally, as mere coincidences.

The following experiment therefore is an attempt to show that these sporadic successes may not always and only be due to coincidence, but that they may also be due to another factor commonly called “clairvoyance”; and we shall have evidence for this suggestion if the experiment demonstrates that the successes are continued to a remarkable degree during a very large number of trials. The net of coincidence may rightly include an almost infinite number of successes, but there comes a moment when, to common sense, that net is stretched to breaking point, and a fresh hypothesis must be sought to account for this persistent characteristic of success.

These records which I shall show do confirm in my view the possibility of this direct divination of objective facts without the use of our normal senses. They also confirm the natural expectation, which I have already expressed, that firstly, if such a faculty exists at all it would be widespread, and that we can experiment with it as we can with our other senses; and secondly, that it is bound at least by some of the known and recognised psychological habits and laws.

I have been much interested in the course of the experiment by the response given to this proposition, “Do you think it is possible (trickery apart) to know what a playing card is without looking at it?” The answer divides people into two distinct classes: one group is quite willing to try, open-minded as to the possibility of success; the other group, more sceptical by nature, or forced by a scientific training into a wary watchfulness, does not even think experiment worth a trial. This second point of view was brought home to me very forcibly on one occasion.

I had been trying card-divining myself for some months, and had been greatly struck, almost alarmed, by the results. They seemed so very much better than chance should give. I met a doctor of my acquaintance who practised hypnotism and suggestion and who therefore, I hoped, might be open-minded as to the possibility of such a thing as clairvoyance. I admit I made my statement with a little nervousness as I had not then the corroborative evidence I have now. On my telling him that I imagined I knew what a playing card was without looking at it, he gave me a piercing diagnostic glance and said "that was very interesting;—had I any friends in the country who would be willing to have me for a good long rest?" But on second thoughts he either did not think this likely, or perhaps not quite fair on my friends, for he added, he knew a quiet little place in Cornwall where he sometimes sent his patients. Would I like the address? He would be only too pleased to give it me. I think his point of view—the view I mean that such a thing as divining a playing card is an impossibility—is the most "reasonable." His attitude stimulated me to try to give that reasonable view a shake. I felt that as it was the reasonable view it might be altered if the facts for the defence could be presented clearly and reasonably, and that it must be possible so to present these facts that they would compel critical attention, and—more important still—that it would be possible to put the problem on to an experimental basis, so that the critics themselves might find they got similar results had they the energy to try the experiment and the opportunity to follow its method.

I think it will help my readers to see how persuasive the experiment has been to myself if I tell them the history of its development.

This research grew out of the many experiments in telepathy carried out over a long period of time under Miss Newton's guidance. These experiments have been reported on in the *Journal*.¹ They were undertaken, not

¹ A Report on Experiments in Thought Transference, June 1927, vol. xxiv.

so much to get evidence of telepathy as to try to find the conditions in which it might best appear and work. I am afraid I must go over old ground for a while, but the point I wish to make is an important one and the explanation of our experiments may be a help to those to whom the subject is new.

Many of these experiments were as follows: one person called the agent looks at a diagram, or picture postcard, in the hope of transmitting its image to another person called the percipient who with closed eyes and mind as empty as possible records such impressions as may come to him.

We had enough, if fragmentary, success to impress me greatly. We used to make notes of the frame of mind of the agent, and record his or her intensity of concentration or interest. But as time went on I became more and more puzzled as to why we should always assume that the impression came from the agent's mind and not from the picture or card itself. Several small incidents seemed to point to this last conclusion. On one or two occasions I felt, when I was the receiver or percipient, that the impression of the chosen object came to me before the agent had looked at it, or else, as on one occasion when picture postcards were the objects chosen, that my impression tallied with a neighbouring card unseen by the agent, instead of the one at which the agent had been gazing. It was borne in on me with more and more force that it was quite an unfounded assumption that the agent was necessary at all. I think we are much too apt to put down to telepathy occurrences which are due to clairvoyance alone. I use the term telepathy in its ordinary sense, meaning the transmission of thought from one mind to another without the help of the normal senses, and clairvoyance in its ordinary sense, meaning the divination by one mind alone of some fact or facts without the aid of the normal senses. This problem of telepathy versus clairvoyance has always seemed to me the central problem of psychic research, and these experiments were devised very largely in the hope of emphasising how unnecessary is this hypothesis of "telepathy,"

and of throwing some light on the problem as a whole.

We had, of course, tried experiments sometimes with playing cards, the agent looking at the card and attempting to transmit its image mentally to the percipient. I append the record of our first experiment, in June 1924, when we achieved ten colour successes running, and five suit successes in all. Though these results are not above chance, they are worth noting, especially as similar colour and suit successes were obtained in later experiments. I give the series so that it may be compared to the successes in clairvoyance. I assume for my present argument that though another person was looking at the cards, we may count these also as clairvoyant experiments.

Miss Newton, <i>Agent</i> .	Miss Jephson, <i>Percipient</i> .	<i>Colour Right.</i>	<i>Suit Right.</i>
10 Spades - - -	5 Clubs.	1	-
1 Hearts - - -	Red court card, Jack Hearts.	1	1
King of Hearts -	5 Diamonds.	1	-
4 Spades - - -	9 Spades	1	1
2 Diamonds - - -	3 Hearts.	1	-
9 Spades - - -	Small black Club.	1	-
3 Spades - - -	Low spade, 2 or 3 (3 chosen).	1	1
3 Diamonds - - -	8 Diamonds.	1	1
Queen of Spades -	High Spade.	1	1
9 Hearts - - -	High Club.	-	-
5 Diamonds - - -	10 Hearts.	1	-
8 Clubs - - -	Low Heart, 4.	-	-

By degrees my belief that the results were due to clairvoyance rather than telepathy grew so strong that finally in March 1924 I tried to divine what a playing card was, alone and unaided.

I think I must explain here that I do not lay claim to any special clairvoyant powers. My few spontaneous experiences of that nature have been of a very average type, and in experiment my successes have been mediocre. So from the first I hoped and expected that any successes I might obtain would be achieved equally and better by many other people, and this estimate is

I think borne out by the subsequent experiments; 33 people out of the 240 recorded getting scores of about the same value and the same type of result as myself, and 13 being very definitely better.

But to return to the history of the experiment. I got out a pack of cards one night, in March 1924, and just before I was going to sleep tried my luck, drawing a card from the pack and trying to guess or divine what it was. This was the result:

<i>Guess.</i> ¹	<i>Card.</i> ¹
6 Hearts	4 Hearts.
5 Clubs	5 Clubs.
7 Spades	8 Spades.
9 Spades	3 Diamonds.
A Heart	The Joker.

This is not perhaps very impressive, but still, one right out of five is not too bad, and 7 of Spades for 8 is only one pip out. I was filled with hope and excitement and determined to try again. The next night on which I tried I again got one right out of five, and one nearly right. The third evening still gave me some hope, as in all I got 10 colour right out of 15, 8 suit right out of 15, and 2 cards quite right.

MARCH 11th.		MARCH 13th.		MARCH 16th.	
<i>Guess.</i>	<i>Card.</i>	<i>Guess.</i>	<i>Card.</i>	<i>Guess.</i>	<i>Card.</i>
6H	4H	H	8H	C	8C
5C	5C	7C	7C	7D	7H
7S	8S	8S	8C	8H	1H
9S	3D	9D	5D	9C	8S
H	Joker	8S	9H	7S	5D

I acknowledge that chance might easily achieve this, but it resembles our telepathy experiments very closely in its excess of colour and suit successes, and having experience of the partial and fragmentary nature of clairvoyant vision I did not expect many complete successes. But far more important than the amount of success is a

¹ Those terms are used throughout to indicate (a) the percipient's impression, (b) the card actually drawn.

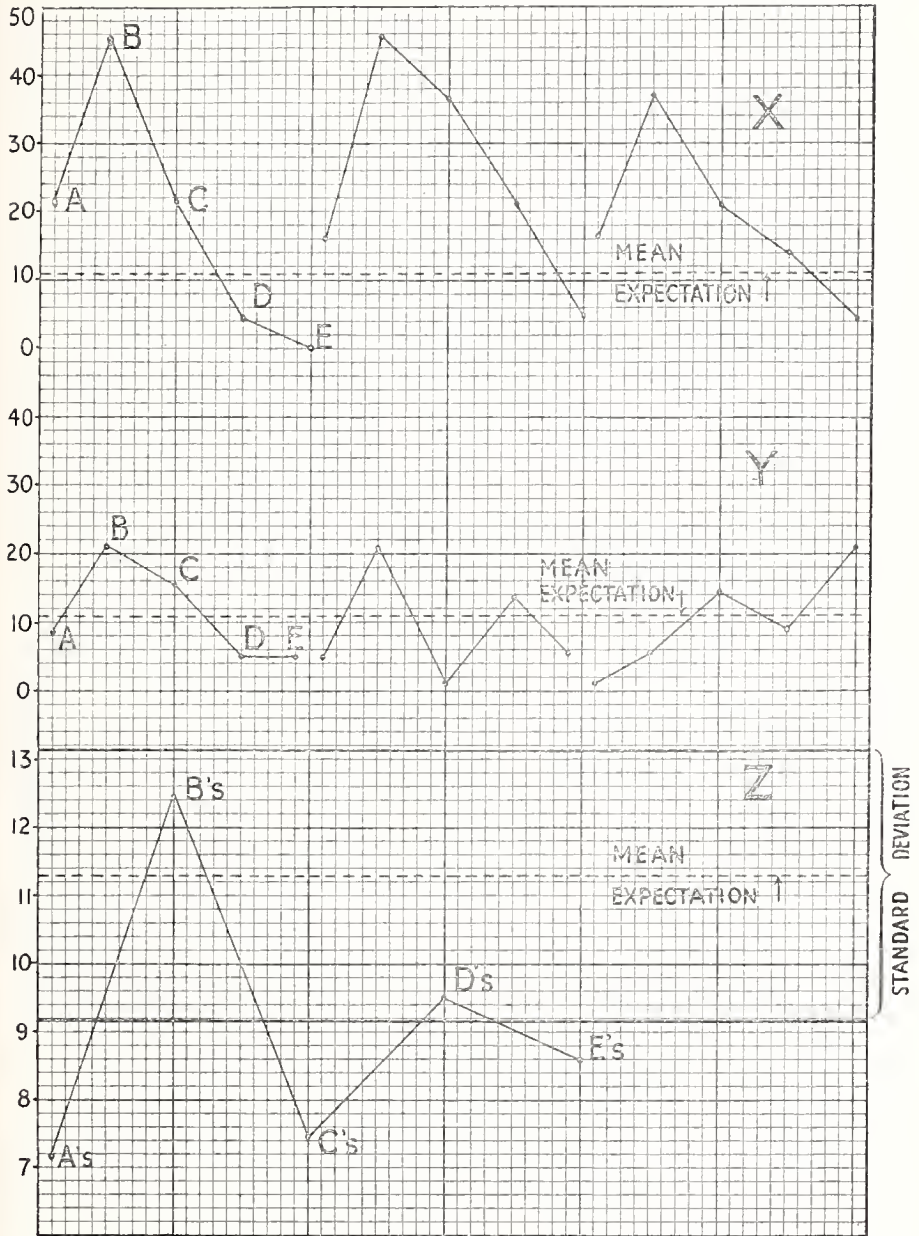
characteristic which shows up when you examine the series carefully, and that characteristic seems to me the most valuable; I mean the highly suggestive fact that there is much more success at the beginning of each trial than at the end, that on each night my second guess or divination was the best and the last the worst. Diagram 1 (*x*) will make this clear; the better the guess the higher it appears on each diagram. The method of scoring, and curves *y* and *z* are explained later.

The significance of this I feel cannot be over-estimated, for if this characteristic of early-success continued and was observable in the efforts of other people also, it would be highly suggestive of some element other than chance at work. It would suggest in fact a faculty which was liable to fatigue or confusion, or to some deterrent element. A second and most valuable service rendered by the detection of this early-guess success is that it may be counted additional evidence of the honesty of the experimenters should they, unknown to themselves, produce the same result. It also makes it possible for the investigator conducting the experiment to allow the maximum of freedom to his diviners, a condition which is essential to the working of the faculty and therefore to the success of the experiment. It seems a most fortunate chance that this early-guess success should have shown up so clearly at the very beginning of the experiment.

I continued guessing at odd moments and keeping a careful record for over a year, getting persistently the same effect of early successes (a diagram later (2) will show the record of all the experiments I did of this consecutive five guess type).

As time went on I became less and less successful, finally getting results only equal to chance. This did not altogether depress me as I hoped it might be further evidence of the presence of a fatiguable faculty. At the end of some months, in April 1924, I asked Mr. Dingwall to witness a series of trials for me, as I was most anxious to see if the faculty worked when under observation. We continued at intervals till July 1924, and both Mr. Dingwall and I myself were so much disappointed at the

extreme lowness of my score that we considered my efforts no better than what chance might have given, and



X REPRESENTS 15 GUESSES ALONE. Y REPRESENTS 15 GUESSES WITNESSED.
 Z . REPRESENTS ALL MY WITNESSED GUESSES

DIAGRAM 1.

it was only the other day when I reluctantly made out a diagram for these guesses, so that I might add it to this

report, that I discovered that in spite of the extreme lowness of score the second-guess-best effect still continued.

During this time also I had been collecting a few experiments by other people, observing with interest their results. My first victim I think, and the first person I asked, was Mr. Saltmarsh, a member of the Society, who guessed five series of five consecutive guesses. I asked him rather hopefully as he had had success as a water-diviner, and if he can divine water, why not cards, I thought optimistically. When he returned his results, to my great delight he had started off well and deteriorated most pleasingly as he continued. I find also that about this time I did a few trials in clairvoyance with Miss Newton, towards the end of her series of telepathic experiments. I give the following table; it is not very striking as regards score, but shows the characteristic early-guess success and is useful as being an example of witnessed experiments:

Miss Jephson.			Miss Jephson.			Miss Newton.		
<i>Guess.</i>	<i>Card.</i>	<i>Score.</i> ¹	<i>Guess.</i>	<i>Card.</i>	<i>Score.</i>	<i>Guess.</i>	<i>Card.</i>	<i>Score.</i>
6C	10C	21·12	2C	2H	29·68	4S	10C	13·09
7S	6S	21·12	6S	7C	13·09	7H	6S	5·07
5D	2D	21·12	10D	2D	21·12	1S	2D	5·07
7H	10S	5·07	4H	6S	5·07	3C	10S	13·09
KC	10S	5·07	5S	10C	13·09	2H	10S	5·07

Then I collected some results from several of the group who had been successful during Miss Newton's telepathic experiments, Miss Boucher-James, Miss Tipping, Miss Swainson, Miss Taylor and others, and they too encouraged my hopes and earned my gratitude by getting their good results early and their poorer ones later.

My expectations by now being so hopefully confirmed, the next step obviously was to get a good scoring system by which results could be compared with chance. The problem was put by Dr. Woolley to Dr. R. A. Fisher of the Rothamsted Experimental Station, and he devised the system which was adopted and used throughout this research. His full description of it is in *Proc. S.P.R.*

¹ The score is explained later.

vol. xxxiv. p. 181, July 1924. I can only give a brief outline here and will quote from his opening paragraph :

The problem of scoring a series of events so as to measure appropriately the degree of success attained in each trial seems to lie on the borderline between the purely deductive region of mathematical probability and the region of arbitrary choice. . . .

If two playing cards are obtained from different packs, the maximum degree of success is clearly obtained if they are corresponding cards of the same suit [say 4 Heart with 4 Hearts], but, short of this we shall have obtained some degree of resemblance if the cards are either corresponding cards of different suits [4 Hearts and 4 Diamonds], or even if they are of the same colour. There are in fact nine possibilities or degrees of success to each of which we can assign an appropriate score.

Having settled these scoring values, Dr. Fisher then gives a figure for the mean average score, and a standard deviation from that score.

In this card-guessing experiment what we need to know is when our scores become sufficiently good to be reasonably considered above what we might expect from chance, so that we may fairly deduce that some factor other than chance is at work. So after we know the mean deviation and mean average score we are given further calculations by which we can know when our scores are exceeding chance, or what we might expect from chance. The following table will show the nine different classes of likeness which one card may have with another.

	<i>Card.</i>	<i>Guess.</i>	<i>Score.</i>
<i>NS</i>	Value and suit - 4 Hearts	4 Hearts - - -	45·73
<i>NC</i>	Value and colour 4 Hearts	4 Diamonds - - -	37·71
<i>ON</i>	Value only - - 4 Hearts	4 Spades or 4 Clubs	29·68
<i>SR</i>	Suit and rank - 4 Hearts	1-10 Hearts - - -	21·12
<i>OS</i>	Suit only - - 4 Hearts	Court card Heart -	16·04
<i>CR</i>	Colour and rank 4 Hearts	1-10 Diamonds - -	13·09
<i>OC</i>	Colour only - 4 Hearts	Court card Diamond	8·02
<i>OR</i>	Rank only - - 4 Hearts	1-10 Spades or Clubs	5·07
<i>OO</i>	Nothing right - 4 Hearts	Black court card -	·00

Chance should give for an infinite number of trials an average score of 11·18. The average score for a number of guesses would be expected to deviate from 11·18 by $\frac{10}{\sqrt{N}}$, that is for 25 guesses, the number done by each person in this research, to deviate from 9·18 to 13·18.

In the series of guesses shown in this experiment a set of 25 guesses should give an average chance score of 279·50. The score may be said to be over chance or beyond what we might expect chance to give when it is 329·50.

If the reader will refer to Diagram 1, he will see an illustration of the scoring system in use :

<i>Guess.</i>	<i>Card.</i>	<i>Score.</i>	<i>Guess.</i>	<i>Card.</i>	<i>Score.</i>	<i>Guess.</i>	<i>Card.</i>	<i>Score.</i>
6H	4H	21·12	H	8H	16·04	C	8C	16·04
5C	5C	45·73	7C	7C	45·73	7D	7H	37·71
7S	8S	21·12	8S	8C	37·71	8H	1H	21·12
9S	3D	5·07	9D	5D	21·12	9C	8S	13·09
H	Joker	·00	8S	9H	5·07	7S	5D	5·07

It will be simpler if I call the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th guesses in each little series of five consecutive guesses the *A*, *B*, *C*, *D*, *E* guesses, and in future I shall always allude to the first guesses as the *A* guesses, the second as the *B* guesses, and so on.

I will ask the reader to turn to Diagram 1, curve *x*, (p. 231). This diagram illustrates the score in use with my first three sets of consecutive guesses. The actual score of each guess appears on each point of the curve. I have called the first guess the *A* guess, and so on, as explained. Curve *y* shows the actual score of my first three sets of consecutive guesses witnessed by Mr. Dingwall at the beginning of each day's sittings. Curve *z* shows the average score for 27 *A* guesses, 27 *B* guesses and so on. The score is admittedly low. At one point it is even below expected standard deviation, but on the other hand there is a very definite continuation of my habit of getting *B* guesses the best.

Diagram 1, Curve z.	Average score for <i>A</i> guesses,	7.29
	„ „ „ <i>B</i> „	12.45
	„ „ „ <i>C</i> „	7.38
	„ „ „ <i>D</i> „	9.52
	„ „ „ <i>E</i> „	8.37

That this habit is a fairly well established one, is also made clear by Diagram 2, where I have compared all my five consecutive guesses which I did alone from March to October to a similar number done with Mr. Dingwall over a year later. (See p. 236.)

Diagram 2, curve *y* represents an average of my score for each *A, B, C, D, E* guess whilst I was guessing alone from March to October 1924. Curve *z* represents an average of my score for the same number of guesses with Mr. Dingwall between April and July 1926. The first point as before has all the *A* guesses, the second all the *B* guesses and so on.

	<i>Alone.</i>	<i>Witnessed by Mr. Dingwall.</i>
19 <i>A</i> - -	17.04	6.20
19 <i>B</i> - -	20.34	14.17
19 <i>C</i> - -	13.83	7.42
19 <i>D</i> - -	12.21	10.09
19 <i>E</i> - -	9.41	7.53

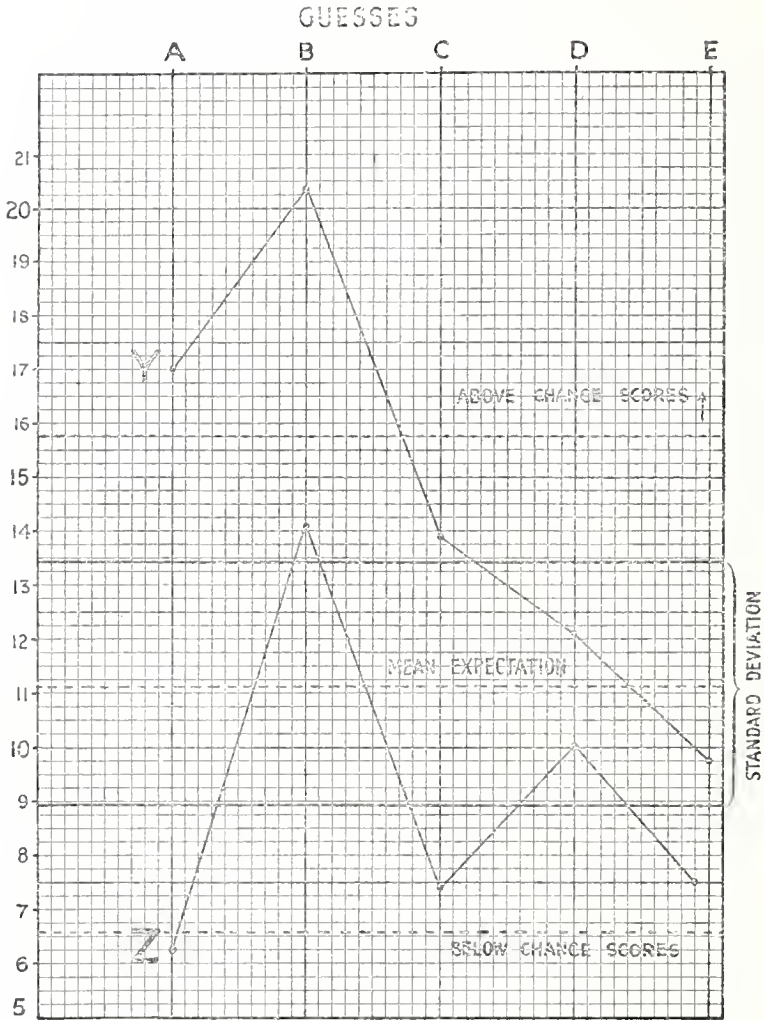
I also found that my first set of five guesses in April with Mr. Dingwall scored 55.32, my last set of five in July scored 47.30, showing the deterioration not only in the short series of five consecutive guesses, but of general deterioration over the whole period. This characteristic is shown very clearly later in other people's results, and I had noticed it in a marked degree in my own trials alone.

Having been provided with a good scoring system it was necessary to make out some simple directions for others trying the experiment. Below are the directions sent to all those who took part.

DIRECTIONS.

1. Take a pack of 52 playing cards.
2. Draw one card face downwards from the pack and try and guess what the card is.

3. Record your guess under "guess card" on the scoring sheet provided. The space under "score" is for official use only.



Y REPRESENTS TOTAL OF MY GUESSES ALONE
 Z REPRESENTS SAME NUMBER OF WITNESSED GUESSES

DIAGRAM 2.

4. Turn up the playing card and write down under "actual card" what the card actually is.
5. Return the card to the pack and shuffle. (The scoring calculations are based on a full 52 card pack.)
6. Then take out another card, record it as before, etc., and do this five times in succession at one sitting.

Before guessing another set of five leave an interval of at least some hours, preferably a day, before guessing again.

7. Do not let another person see the card you have taken from the pack. The possibility of telepathy must be excluded.
8. If possible please do 25 guesses (five sets of five).

All records, however unsuccessful, are useful, and all degrees of success are allowed for in the scoring.

This guessing in five short series of five more or less arranged itself. It seemed long enough to show up the fatigue factor and not so long as to be really boring. I had to allow experimenters a very wide latitude as to when and how to try for results, but as the faculty under observation is obviously a spontaneous one that freedom has its advantages, and we can rely to a certain extent for our evidence on the unexpected *coincidence* of success which shows among other things in this tendency for everyone to give their best guesses in the same part of the series. Several people wrote asking for guidance as to the best method or frame of mind for attempting the experiment, but I was quite unable to give any advice. I simply do not know and so could not enlighten them. I did not ask for the experiments to be witnessed for many and obvious reasons, but I will give in Diagram 3 (as it corroborates very usefully the unwitnessed experiments) a small group of witnessed trials—nine people each guessing five times. Amongst these, five were witnessed by Dr. Schiller, his brother guessing, and the rest by myself, my two sisters, my little niece and friends guessing. (See p. 239.)

The average score for *A* guesses is 23.39.

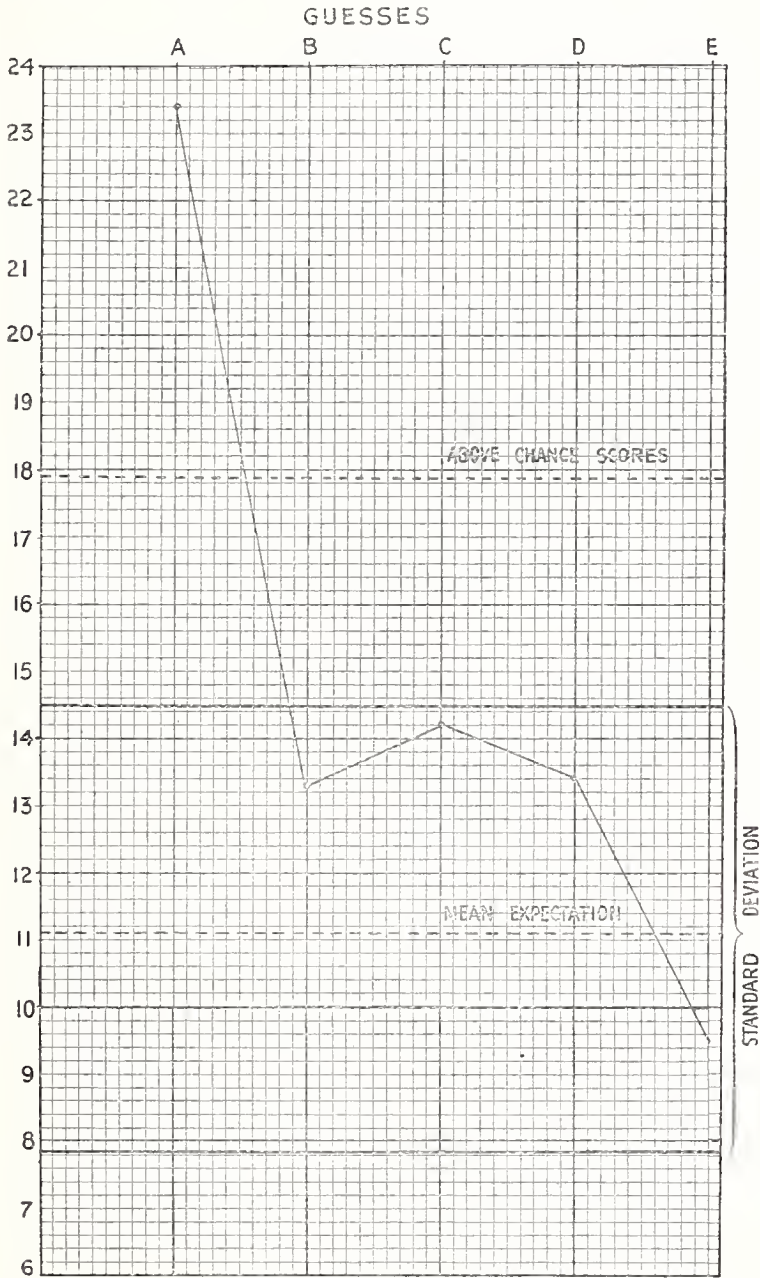
<i>B</i>	„	„	13.26.
<i>C</i>	„	„	14.24.
<i>D</i>	„	„	13.33.
<i>E</i>	„	„	9.52.

I was also lucky enough to witness the twenty-five trials which are shown below. The following will also be

a useful example of a filled-in scoring sheet, and will make clearer the actual working of the experiment.

<i>Date.</i>	<i>Guess.</i>	<i>Card.</i>	<i>Score.</i>		
13.11.27	8H	8D	37·71	A	} Set I.
	7S	6S	21·12	B	
	QS	KS	21·12	C	
	5C	5C	45·73	D	
	7H	9S	5·07	E	
			<u>130·75</u>		
14.11.27	JD	JC	29·68	A	} Set II.
	6S	6D	29·68	B	
	QC	4C	16·04	C	
	6S	KS	16·04	D	
	7C	8S	13·09	E	
			<u>104·53</u>		
15.11.27	QH	2H	16·04	A	} Set III.
	6S	KC	8·02	B	
	5D	5H	37·71	C	
	2H	5C	5·07	D	
	4S	10S	21·12	E	
			<u>87·96</u>		
16.11.27	5H	7H	21·12	A	} Set IV.
	8D	10C	5·07	B	
	QC	2S	8·02	C	
	6D	JC	·00	D	
	5S	2D	5·07	E	
			<u>39·28</u>		
17.11.27	8D	7D	21·12	A	} Set V.
	JD	QD	21·12	B	
	JD	6C	·00	C	
	5H	4S	5·07	D	
	4H	9H	21·12	E	
			<u>68·43</u>		
Total score			<u>430·95</u>		

This result I have now come to consider as a typical good result. The score is 430.95 (the average chance



score for the same number of guesses is 279.50), and the score at or above which we may suspect the results

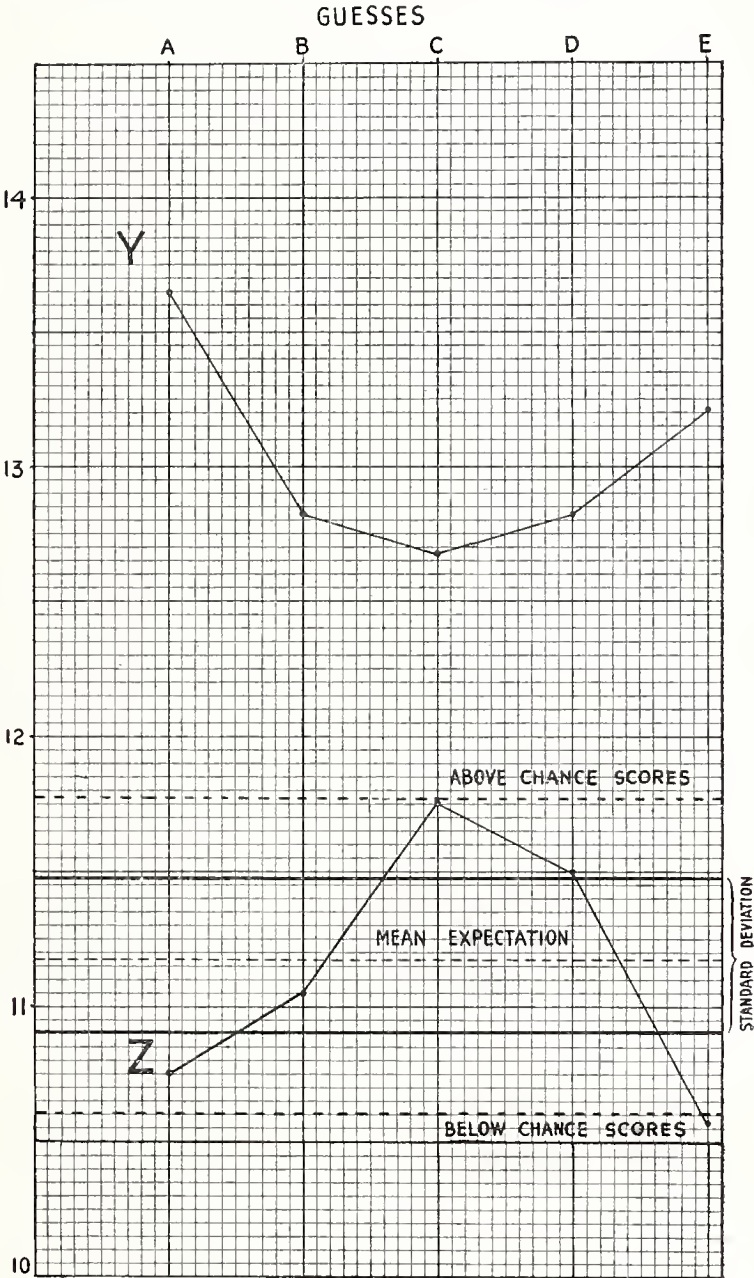
to be beyond chance is 329·50. Another very usual characteristic appears in that the first set of five guesses is considerably better than the last, the first scoring 130·75 as against the last 68·43.

The experimenter on this occasion was Mlle. Schelpe, the French governess to my sister's children, and I watched her do these trials as we sat round the fire in the school-room on five consecutive evenings. She did not seem at all surprised when I asked her to try, and told me that she had noticed before that she seemed to know what a card was before she looked at it, and had often tried by herself just for fun and to pass the time away. I asked her to do a "telepathic" experiment, and cutting the pack, I looked at the card cut which was the four of spades. She at once said "4 of spades," and went on to divine the next five cards with again a diminishing degree of success: 4S for 4S, 10D for 8D, 5H for QC, 3H for 6H, 7D for 7C, 5D for 3C. Possibly the fact that my mind was holding the image of the card made it easier for Mlle. Schelpe to get the card correctly.¹ If I had done a graph for the results of Mlle. Schelpe's twenty-five trials, we should get her *A* guesses scoring 125·67, her *B* guesses 85·01, her *C* guesses scoring 82·89, her *D* guesses scoring 71·91, her *E* guesses scoring 65·47, a very definite falling off from *A* guesses to *E* guesses.

The next diagram (4) shows the total result of the whole collection of guesses. It is the result obtained by 240 people each guessing five sets of five guesses, twenty-five in all, which makes 6000 divinations. I included, of course, every result that had been done correctly with the right time intervals; etc., up to the date on which I had completed the 6000 aimed at, whether the results were good, bad or indifferent. An inquiry such as this is fraught with delays, but the fact that the results continue so much the same for over four years has helped to

¹A very similar experience in an experiment in card-guessing is reported by Mr. Saltmarsh in *S.P.R. Jour.*, March 1925, pp. 44, 45. On this occasion five cards were being divined, and the only one to be named correctly was one accidentally seen by another person in the room.

impress me and made a mere run of luck seem an unsatisfactory explanation of the general success and of the success persistently attained in early guesses.



Y REPRESENTS CURVE FOR TOTAL RESULTS PEOPLE'S GUESSES
 Z " " " " " SAME NUMBER OF "CHANCE" RESULTS

DIAGRAM 4.

Results were sent from many countries: America, Canada, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Portugal, and of course from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, so that if there is anything curious about the results I think we can at least rule collusion out of it, for of course nobody knew at which particular point in the series to record fraudulently an increased degree of success.

The upper curve y on the diagram shows the amount of success achieved by these 240 people. I have scored all the A guesses together, all the B guesses together, and so on, so that each point on the curve represents 1200 A guesses, then 1200 B guesses and so on. The average score for one guess in each group has been struck on each occasion. The lower curve, z , shows the amount of success achieved by 6000 card-drawings: that is to say, 6000 cards were exposed from one pack and compared with 6000 cards exposed from another pack, and then scored in exactly the same way as a "guess" is scored against an actual card. On this curve also, of course, 1200 A guesses appear together, and 1200 B guesses appear together on each point of the curve, and an average score for each guess has been struck as before. It is possible in this way to make an exact comparison between the effects of divination and of chance.

The following is the table for Diagram 4:

AVERAGE SCORE FOR EACH GUESS.

	A	B	C	D	E
People (curve y) -	13.65	12.76	12.73	12.81	13.23
Chance (curve z) -	10.75	11.07	11.75	11.53	10.59

This next table is a further summary of the experiment:

	<i>People's Guesses.</i>	<i>Chance Card- drawings.</i>
Total score for 6000 -	78,205.57	66,832.85
Average for set of 25 -	325.85	278.65
Average score for each guess	13.03	11.14

The chance card-drawings were done by Herr Leonhard of Frankfurt. He is skilled in statistical work, and his figures can be relied on for accuracy. It was essential

to have an accurately scored chance series for comparative purposes, and Dr. Fisher's calculations are very closely confirmed. The theoretical chance average score for 25 pairs of card-drawings is 279.50, whilst Herr Leonhard for the same number gets 278.65. The theoretical mean expectation is 11.18, and in Herr Leonhard's series is 11.14.

It will be noticed that not at any point in the series do the experimenters' guesses touch the line of mean expectation, and more important still—that the guesses which achieve the highest score are in this case also the first or early guesses,—so that in the total results we do get the effect expected and hoped for from the beginning—the suggestive “fatigue-curve.” It resembles rather the fatigue curve occurring in factories and noted in industrial research, showing how the output starts well, diminishes as the worker gets tired, and improves again as the prospect of rest inspires their efforts. Many such curves can be seen in books on industrial psychology. In “guessing,” it may be confusion or lack of spontaneity which affects success—not fatigue.

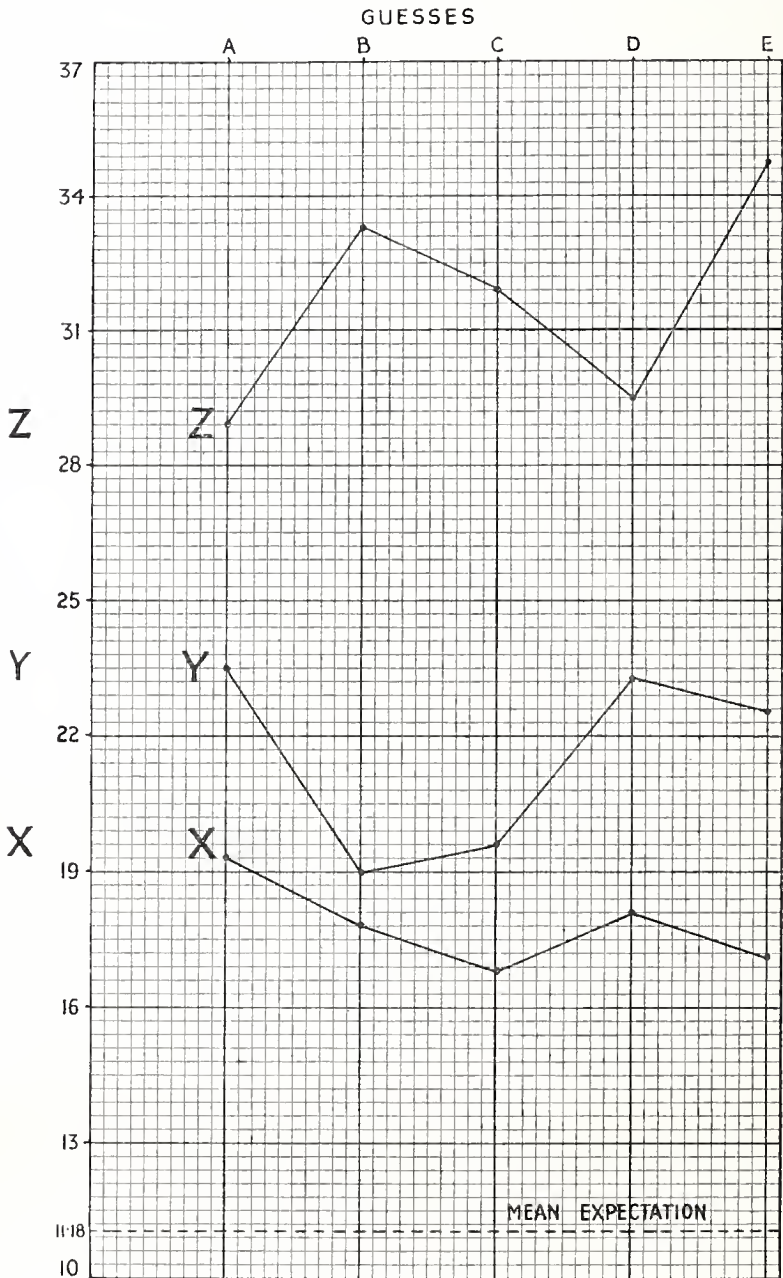
Diagram 5 is a further analysis of Diagram 4.

The object aimed at in this diagram is to analyse the curve for the total results with a view to discovering if the “fatigue” element would vary for experimenters of varying capacity, and in all these experiments I have assumed that clairvoyant capacity was at work, since all had achieved scores above chance (that is to say, scores that were better than 329.50 for twenty-five guesses). I made a rather arbitrary division, taking first all those scores between 400 and 500 for curve *x*, then all scores between 500 and 600 for curve *y*, then all scores over 600 for curve *z*. The following table gives the details:

<i>People.</i>	<i>Curve.</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>
33	<i>x</i>	19.31	17.82	16.97	17.97	17.14
9	<i>y</i>	23.42	19.01	19.68	23.44	22.60
4	<i>z</i>	29.02	33.22	31.99	30.51	34.85

Unfortunately I know none of the people in the over-600-score group, so though perhaps it is illogical to be

able to believe in some beyond-chance scores and not in others, I find these very high scores (the highest reaches 971.53) very hard to accept without further confirmation.



3 GROUPS OF BEYOND-CHANCE RESULTS

DIAGRAM 5.

On the evidence of these curves, if we assume that they are genuine, it does look as if the "fatigue" element became less marked when the clairvoyant faculty is stronger, but it is obviously impossible to draw conclusions from so small a number. The verdict must remain not proven, but such speculations are irresistible, and the possibility is certainly worth watching.

Diagram 6. Curve *y* shows the general deterioration of score from first sets to last sets. It is made by taking the average score for each guess in the first set of five consecutive guesses, and then the average score for each guess in the second set of five consecutive guesses, and so on, so that each point on the curve represents 240 sets of five consecutive guesses. (If the reader will refer to the comments on Mlle. Schelpe's score, a good instance of this deterioration will be clearly seen, her first set of five scoring 130.75, her last 68.43.)

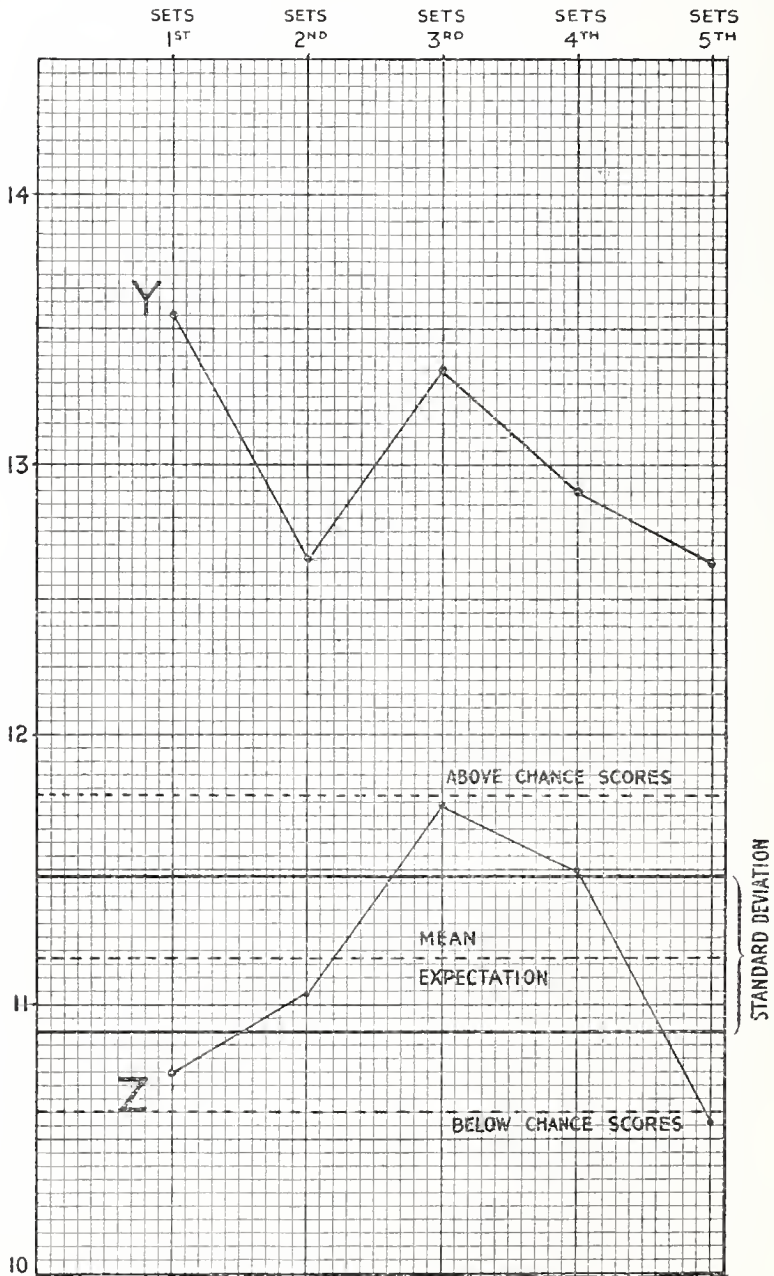
The lower curve *z* is again the chance curve, the average score of each guess in one-fifth the total number of 6000 card drawings being shown at each point.

Figures for Diagram 6	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>
People - - -	13.57	12.66	13.37	12.93	12.64
Chance - - -	10.75	11.07	11.75]	11.53	10.59

I consider this definite drop from first sets to last sets in the total results got by these 240 people reinforces very strongly the hypothesis put forward, that we are here observing at work, and progressively deteriorating, an unknown faculty of perception. The fact that there is a marked tendency towards first-guess-success in short series of five does not at all necessitate that we should also get this diminution of success from the beginning of the whole series to the end. That both these effects do occur is surely rather noteworthy and suggestive. It is also a further confirmation of a characteristic which I have noticed in my own efforts and which showed up again in my witnessed guesses with Mr. Dingwall.

With regard to the total number of results shown by curve *y* (Diagram 4), one great objection to it will immediately occur, namely—how do I know that this is a

genuine record of efforts to divine a certain number of cards? Every one may have recorded only their best results waiting on each occasion to record their guesses



Y REPRESENTS TOTAL GUESSES IN SETS OF 5
 Z " " " CHANCE " " " "

DIAGRAM 6.

till chance gave them some success. They may also have felt obligingly "We must do something for poor Miss Jephson" and scored accordingly. This doubt about the validity of the results I agree is a strong one, but there are also many strong arguments on the other side. Amongst these I should place the fact that I know a good many of the experimenters, and have confidence in their good faith; and with it I should couple the fact that I myself—those people whom I know—and those people who are unknown to me, get the same type of result. I admit that this is an argument which may weigh more with myself than with others. I was discussing this problem of the trustworthiness of the records with a critic, and had to agree that as a large proportion of guessers was quite unknown to me the possibility of fraud must not be lost sight of. It was suggested that the curve y (Diagram 4) which shows the average of the total result achieved by the experimenters, was not so much a "fatigue-curve" as a "fraud-curve" or a "curve of obligingness." The experimenter starts off by doctoring the score, repents slightly after his first lapse, and then ends up by feeling that perhaps he has not made it impressive enough and so finishes up with a little flourish. One of my transatlantic correspondents who had replied to an appeal to guess cards and to get others to guess also, wrote to me saying: "I enclose results from Miss Georgina C. Tibbs. The latter is the only person in the city of Townville whom I could rely on to fill in the scoring sheet." The names, of course, are imaginary. Perhaps my view is too narrowly patriotic and insular, but I do not think that things with us are as bad as that.

But there are far more convincing reasons than these personal ones for thinking that the records are worthy of confidence, for if the results are analysed, as they can be by the help of Diagram 7, it will be found that, after complete success, which amounts to more than double what chance should give, the next class to show superiority is the class scoring 21-12: that is, the class where suit and rank have been correctly guessed. The classes where number is concerned show success less markedly above

chance average. This curious heaping of success into one form weighs very heavily, I think, in favour of my unknown experimenter's probity. It seems too much of

ANALYSIS OF TOTAL RESULTS INTO CLASSES

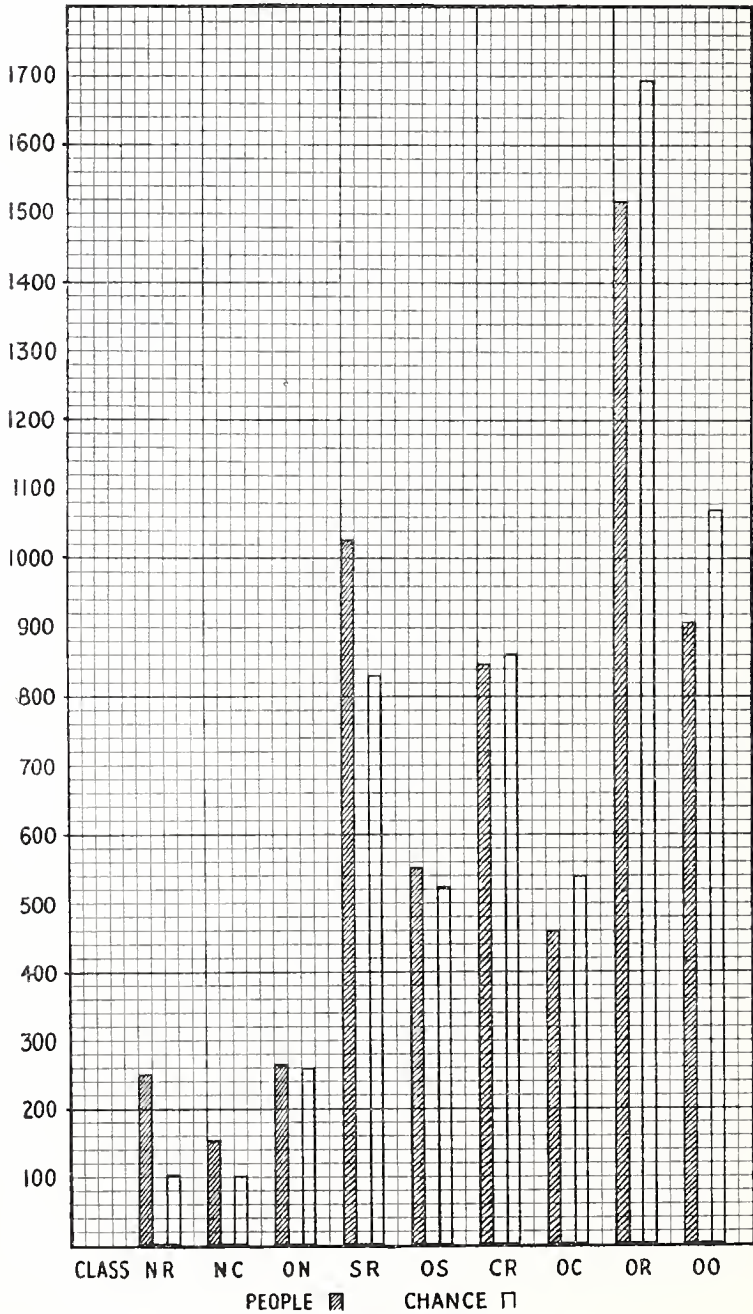


DIAGRAM 7.

a coincidence that they should all doctor their records in the same particular direction: that is, in such a pronounced colour-and-suit and rank success.

The following table will help to make this clear. In the first column is the analysis of 6000 cards. The figures show the number of cards in each class. In the second column an analysis is made of the *A* guesses (there being only 1200 *A* guesses, the number in each class has been multiplied by five so that a comparison may be made with the total).¹ The third column shows the amount of cards in each class in the chance card-drawings done by Herr Leonhard.

<i>Class.</i>		<i>People's Total.</i>	<i>People's A Guesses.</i>	<i>Chance Card-drawings.</i>
<i>NR</i>	Value and suit	- 245	220	106
<i>NC</i>	Value and colour	- 157	205	106
<i>DN</i>	Value only	- - 262	300	260
<i>SR</i>	Suit and rank	- 1032	1085	834
<i>OS</i>	Suit only	- - 555	550	522
<i>CR</i>	Colour and rank	- 856	930	866
<i>OC</i>	Colour only	- - 462	485	543
<i>OR</i>	Rank only	- - 1525	1465	1695
<i>OO</i>	Nothing right	- 906	760	1068

Diagram 7 perhaps will make comparison easier. The numbers for each class can be read on the scale, and the two columns, people's result and chance results, compared.

EXPLANATION OF DIAGRAM 7. .

<i>Class.</i>			<i>People.</i>	<i>Chance.</i>
<i>NR</i>	45.73	Value and suit	- - 245	106
<i>NC</i>	37.71	Value and colour	- - 157	106
<i>ON</i>	29.98	Value only	- - 262	260
<i>SR</i>	21.12	Suit and rank	- - 1032	834
<i>OS</i>	16.04	Suit only	- - 555	522
<i>CR</i>	13.09	Colour and rank	- - 856	866
<i>OC</i>	8.02	Colour only	- - 462	543
<i>OR</i>	5.07	Rank only	- - 1525	1695
<i>OO</i>	.00	Nothing right	- - 906	1068

Diagram 8 is a similar picture of 1200 *A* guesses compared with chance.

It is quite obscure, and I think a most interesting

¹As the total includes the *A* guesses, the comparison is not as elucidating as it should be.

problem, how much the perception of colour may contribute to getting the suit right, and *vice versa*. The psychological action involved is quite unknown, but further experiment should throw light on it. To elucidate further

ANALYSIS OF 1200 A GUESSES INTO CLASSES

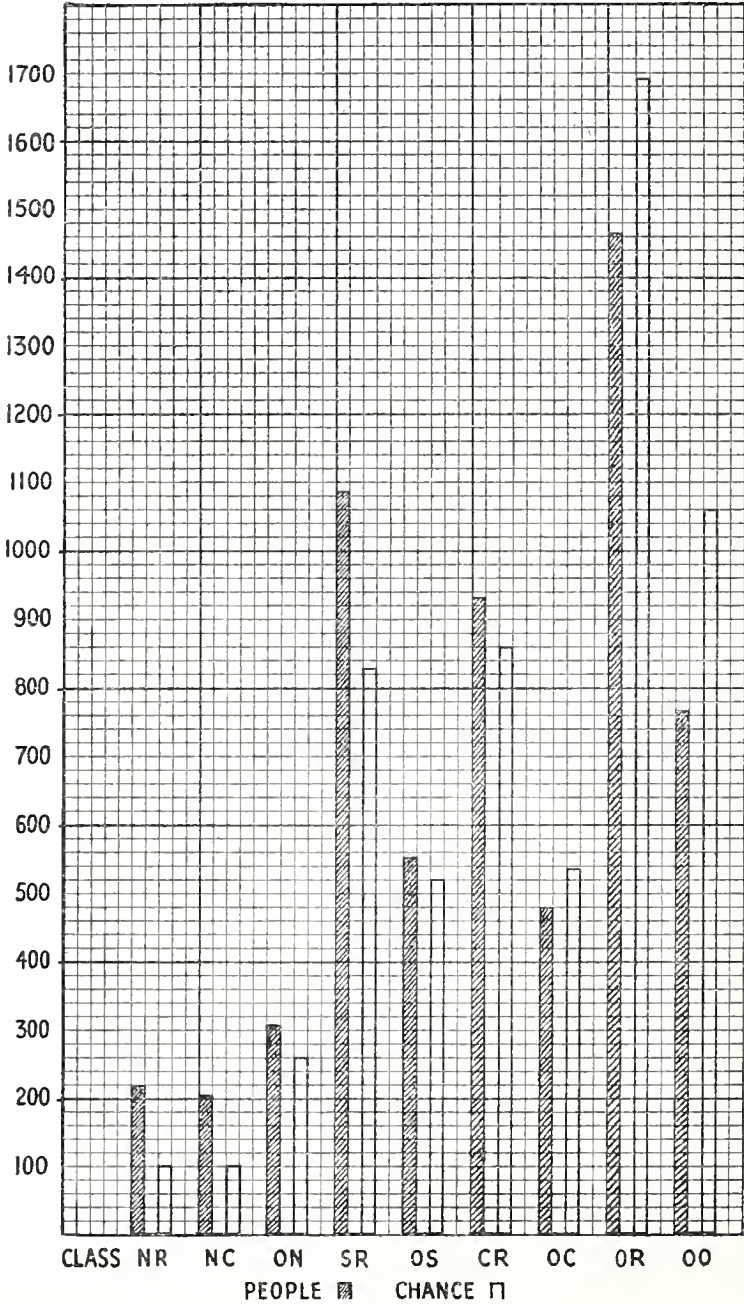


DIAGRAM 8.

this colour and suit success, I will give a table of the various classes in which it occurs.

<i>Six Classes in which colour is correct.</i>	PEOPLE'S GUESSES. <i>No. right in each Class.</i>
Class <i>NR</i> - - - - -	245
„ <i>NC</i> - - - - -	157
„ <i>SR</i> - - - - -	1032
„ <i>OS</i> - - - - -	555
„ <i>CR</i> - - - - -	856
„ <i>OC</i> - - - - -	462
	Total 3307

That is, an excess of 307 colour right results over the 3000 which chance should give.

<i>Three Classes in which Suit is correct.</i>	PEOPLE'S GUESSES. <i>No. right in each Class.</i>
Class <i>NR</i> - - - - -	245
„ <i>SR</i> - - - - -	1032
„ <i>OS</i> - - - - -	555
	Total 1832

That is, an excess of 332 suit right results over the 1500 which chance should give.

Below is a similar analysis for 1200 *A* guesses (again multiplied by five so as to make them comparable with the total).

<i>Six classes in which Colour is right.</i>	PEOPLE'S <i>A</i> GUESSES. <i>No. right in each Class.</i>
Class <i>NR</i> - - - - -	220
„ <i>NC</i> - - - - -	205
„ <i>SR</i> - - - - -	1085
„ <i>OS</i> - - - - -	550
„ <i>CR</i> - - - - -	930
„ <i>OC</i> - - - - -	485
	Total 3475

That is, an excess of 475 colour right results over the 3000 which chance would give.

<i>Three Classes in which suit is correct.</i>	PEOPLE'S A GUESSES. <i>No. right in each Class.</i>
Class <i>NR</i> - - - - -	220
„ <i>SR</i> - - - - -	1085
„ <i>OS</i> - - - - -	550
	Total 1855

That is, an excess of 355 suit right results over the possible 1500 chance would give.

The next two short tables will enable the reader to compare the amount of success achieved, first in the total results, and then in the *A* guesses in those three classes in which *number* is right.

TOTAL RESULTS.

<i>Three Classes in which number is right.</i>	PEOPLE'S GUESSES. <i>No. right in each Class.</i>
Class <i>NR</i> - - - - -	245
„ <i>NC</i> - - - - -	157
„ <i>ON</i> - - - - -	262
	Total 664

That is, an excess of 202·5 number right results over the 461·5 which chance would give.

A GUESSES.

<i>Three Classes in which number is right.</i>	PEOPLE'S A GUESSES. <i>No. right in each Class.</i>
Class <i>NR</i> - - - - -	220
„ <i>NC</i> - - - - -	205
„ <i>ON</i> - - - - -	300
	Total 725

That is, an excess of 263·5 number right results over the 461·5 which chance might give.

To compress these facts still further I give the following table :

	TOTAL.	A GUESSES.	
Colour right without suit.	Excess 307	Excess 475	A guesses improve on total guesses by 168.
Suit right - - - ,,	332	,, 355	A guesses improve on total guesses by 23.
Number right - - - ,,	202.5	,, 263.5	A guesses improve on total guesses by 61.

Interesting as they are the results of this series of experiments alone would fail to be very convincing. There are so many entirely justifiable criticisms which can be levelled against them. But the value of an experiment is enhanced if the results are endorsed by those obtained by entirely independent investigators. In this case the most remarkable confirmation has come from a series of experiments carried out by Dr. G. H. Estabrooks, Ph.D., in Harvard University. My attention was first drawn to them a few months after their publication last summer. They do not seem to me to have attracted over here nearly the attention they deserve. Dr. Estabrooks's account can be found in Bulletin 5 of the Boston Society for Psychic Research, February 1927. His experiments were in telepathy, and cards again were the medium of experiment. An agent in one room cut a pack of cards, looked at the exposed card, whilst the percipient in the next room, at an arranged mechanical signal, recorded his impression. He did a large number of experiments with many different percipients, guessing¹ in short series very much as we have done, getting, I may say, almost precisely the same results. The first or early guesses were distinctly the best. There was an excess of colour and suit right, and the scores were higher than could be expected from chance. His colour and suit successes resembled mine quite remarkably, as the following tables will show :

¹ Dr. Estabrooks says he tells his experimenters that they are literally to "guess cards."

DR. ESTABROOKS. 1660 CARD GUESSES.

	COLOUR.			
	<i>Chance.</i>	<i>Actual.</i>	<i>Chance.</i>	<i>Actual.</i>
			%	%
First 10 cards - - -	415	496	50	59·7
Second 10 cards - - -	415	442	50	53·2
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Total - - -	830	938	50	56·5

	SUIT.			
	<i>Chance.</i>	<i>Actual.</i>	<i>Chance.</i>	<i>Actual.</i>
			%	%
First 10 cards - - -	207·5	256	25	30·8
Second 10 cards - - -	207·5	217	25	26·1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total - - -	415·0	473	25	28·5

MISS JEPHSON. 6000 CARD GUESSES.

	COLOUR.			
	<i>Chance.</i>	<i>Actual.</i>	<i>Chance.</i>	<i>Actual.</i>
			%	%
First 1200 cards - - -	3000	3475	50	57·9
Total cards - - -	3000	3307	50	55·1

	SUIT.			
	<i>Chance.</i>	<i>Actual.</i>	<i>Chance.</i>	<i>Actual.</i>
			%	%
First 1200 cards - - -	1500	1855	25	30·9
Total - - -	1500	1832	25	30·5

I will show a yet further simplification of these tables so that Dr. Estabrooks's results and mine may be compared.

	<i>Dr.</i> <i>Estabrooks.</i>	<i>Miss</i> <i>Jephson.</i>	<i>Chance.</i>
	%	%	%
Total Colour right - - -	56·5	55·1	50
Total Suit right - - -	28·5	30·5	25
Early guesses, Colour right - - -	55·7	57·9	50
„ „ Suit right - - -	30·6	30·9	25

I must point out that the early guesses in Dr. Estabrooks's series and in mine are not really entirely com-

parable, I having taken the first guess in every series, and Dr. Estabrooks having taken the first ten consecutive guesses, but I hope later perhaps to be able to make an exact comparison.

I should like to allude also to some experiments by Dr. Estabrooks that were undertaken at a little distance, between two rooms in the University, the distance being about 60 feet. The technique of the experiment was the same as before. I give his tables as they are most interesting.

	COLOUR.	Chance.	Actual.
First 10 cards - - - - -		160	154
Second 10 cards - - - - -		160	153
		320	307

which is below chance as to colour.

	SUIT.	Chance.	Actual.
First 10 cards - - - - -		80	76
Second 10 cards - - - - -		80	54
		160	130

which is below chance as to suit.

As I have an entirely unjustifiable belief that distance does not make much difference to success where clairvoyance is concerned, I was disappointed at the result of this distance experiment. Dr. Woolley, however, drew my attention to the fact that (to quote from the report), "the subjects were for the most part men who had taken part in Series Number 1, this forming so to speak a *second experiment which was put through at the same sitting.*"

The failure may perhaps again be explained by fatigue, or anxiety due to the added distance may have acted detrimentally.¹

¹ A curious fact seems worth noting, that on the three occasions when the conditions may be said to have been adverse (my witnessed experiments with Mr. Dingwall, Dr. Estabrooks's long-distance experiments and Professor Richet's long-continued ones) the scores are reduced not

Dr. Estabrooks's results were on the whole considerably better than my collection (in spite of his subjects having been chosen largely, I think, at random). Whether this superiority is due to the experiments being done under better conditions, I do not know. I should suspect my group of subjects of being more clairvoyant than the normal, having been selected from among people interested in this subject, and therefore likely to have had previous experience of clairvoyance, and so possibly a bias towards success. A large proportion of the S.P.R. presumably join owing to experiences of a supernormal nature. My first experimenters I had chosen with care because they were successful in other experiments. The readers of *Light* would probably also be already interested, and then there was a group who had been supposed successful in Dr. Woolley's broadcast telepathy experiment. In spite of this the results are inferior to Dr. Estabrooks's collection.

There is another difference in the conditions of the two sets of experiments which must be considered, and which may have helped Dr. Estabrooks's percipients towards scoring more successfully than mine. In his experiment an agent was present, in mine there was no agent. The question arises again, which arose over Mlle. Schelpe's "telepathic" experiment: is it easier for the clairvoyant to divine a card when the card is known to another intelligence? It may give him two sources of information—the card itself, and the card in the mind of the agent. I think this may be the case, and I can picture the "clairvoyant" as capable of perceiving supernormally both a material object such as a card, and a mental image such as a card in the mind of another person. I admit this is stretching the meaning of the word clairvoyance to more than its accustomed use, but if we do extend clairvoyance to include the perception of mental images as well as material objects the hypothesis of "telepathy" becomes redundant and unnecessary, and merely to equality with scores which chance might give but they sink uniformly below chance-average. Further, we get this below average score (in Dr. Estabrooks's, I have not the data for Professor Richet's) combined with the characteristic fatigue curve.

we shall consider that the supernormal activities of the percipient alone will account for the majority of the known phenomena of supernormal perception. The fatal charm of speculation has tempted me too far. This attractively economical theory must remain for the present purely speculative. Further experiment, purposely devised to confine the problem to this special issue, can alone throw light on it.

Dr. Estabrooks's experiments are of great value to mine in many ways, but it must be remembered that on two other points our experiments are not exactly comparable. Firstly, his experiments are witnessed, mine are unwitnessed. Secondly, his percipients are in a separate room from the card, whilst my percipients presumably held the card or at least touched it.

The disadvantage of unwitnessed experiments I have already discussed; the drawback to the method whereby the card is held in the hand must be further examined. Where that method is employed we must allow for several normal and prosaic reasons for success before we need ascribe success to clairvoyance. The most obvious of these is the likelihood that the experimenters consciously or unconsciously know or remember variations and marks on the back of the cards. I am always much struck when playing cards with children how quick they are to notice and make use of such marks.

Another possible source of success, less normal, or at least less consciously recognised, may be a hyper-sensitiveness of touch or sight, enabling the experimenter to feel or see a faint impress on the card of pip or picture.

This subject is discussed by Mrs. Verrall in an interesting paper (closely relevant to this series of experiments), "Some Experiments on the Supernormal Acquisition of Knowledge" (*Proceedings S.P.R.*, vol. xi., 1895, p. 174). Mrs. Verrall undertook a long series of guessing cards under different conditions with a view to testing some of the suggested causes of success. Her conclusion is that hyperaesthesia of sight and touch does contribute to the success, but that it cannot alone account for it, or cover all the facts.

I must admit frankly the possibility that these normal reasons for success may account for the high scoring in my experiments, but we can have unfortunately no evidence as to the amount, nor does there seem any reason why these more normal sources of success should only affect the score in the early guesses, skill or practice being more likely to increase the later scores. The striking likeness between Dr. Estabrooks's results and mine, even when the modifying conditions of experiment have been taken into consideration, in my view give encouragement to the theory that *some* supernormal perception contributed to the success in both sets of results and that very similar results can be got *without* an agent as *with* one.

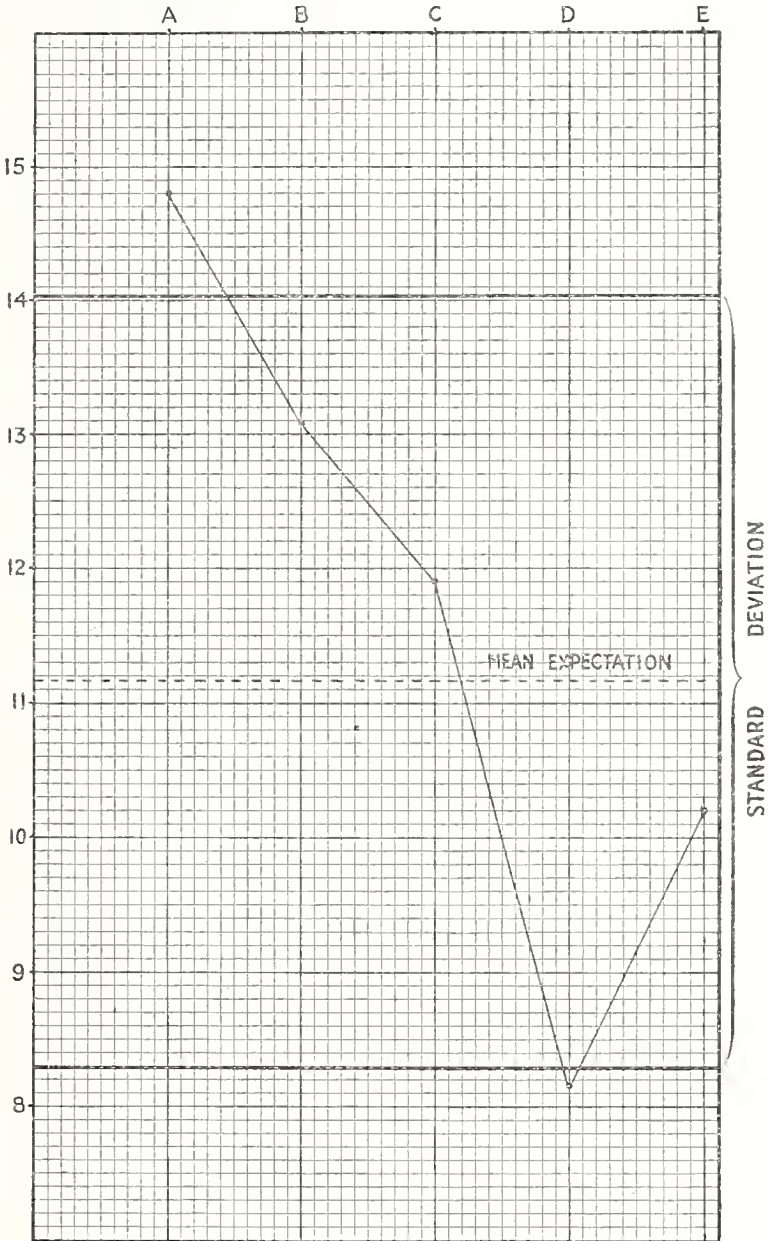
Dr. Estabrooks's own conclusions from his experiment on certain points coincide with mine. He found for instance, as have many others, that close attention by the percipient, anxiety, or a too analytical frame of mind are all detrimental to success; and moreover, he felt he could know what type of person was most likely to succeed.

Whilst I am on the subject of experiments in America, I will draw attention to Diagram 9.¹ It is the average score of the *A*, *B*, *C*, *D*, *E* guesses of twelve people each guessing five times. Dr. Walter Prince very kindly collected these results for me, being in ignorance, of course, of the effect hoped for; and here again, though I admit this is not a very large number of trials, we get a very definite fatigue-curve. Then in April he made some trials himself, getting what I have come to consider an absolutely typical good result, starting off with a complete success, Queen of Clubs for Queen of Clubs, getting his *A* guesses the best, and his first set of five better than his last set of five, and an above-average score of 410.38. He tried at least twenty more sets, but his initial success was the only "quite right" achieved in the whole series. Dr. Prince in sending me the record of the experiment called my attention to the significance of the gradual deterioration, saying he had noticed on former occasions,

¹ Table for Diagram 9.

<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>
14.84	13.03	11.92	8.17	10.11

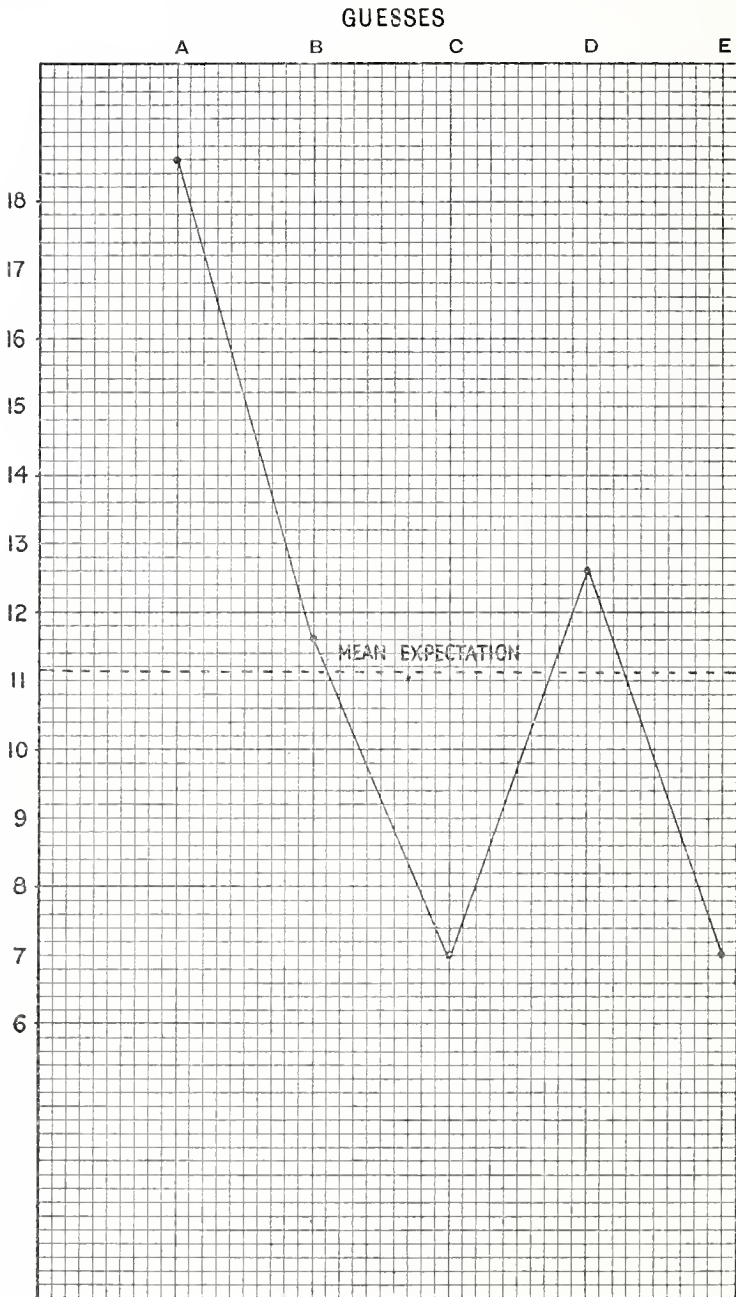
when experimenting in telepathy, clairvoyance and the like, that a similar deterioration had occurred.



60 GUESSES BY 12 AMERICANS.
DIAGRAM 9.

I will now give two diagrams, which need not, however, be taken very seriously; they cannot be taken very seriously because the number of experiments is so small.

But it is quite legitimate to feel encouraged when the effect hoped for and already familiar, is again repeated. By-paths of experiment were a great temptation in this



15 GUESSES CARDS IN SEALED ENVELOPES.
DIAGRAM 10.

research, so many alluring vistas opened up. Two I could not resist: namely, experiments with cards sealed in light-proof envelopes, and long distance experiments.

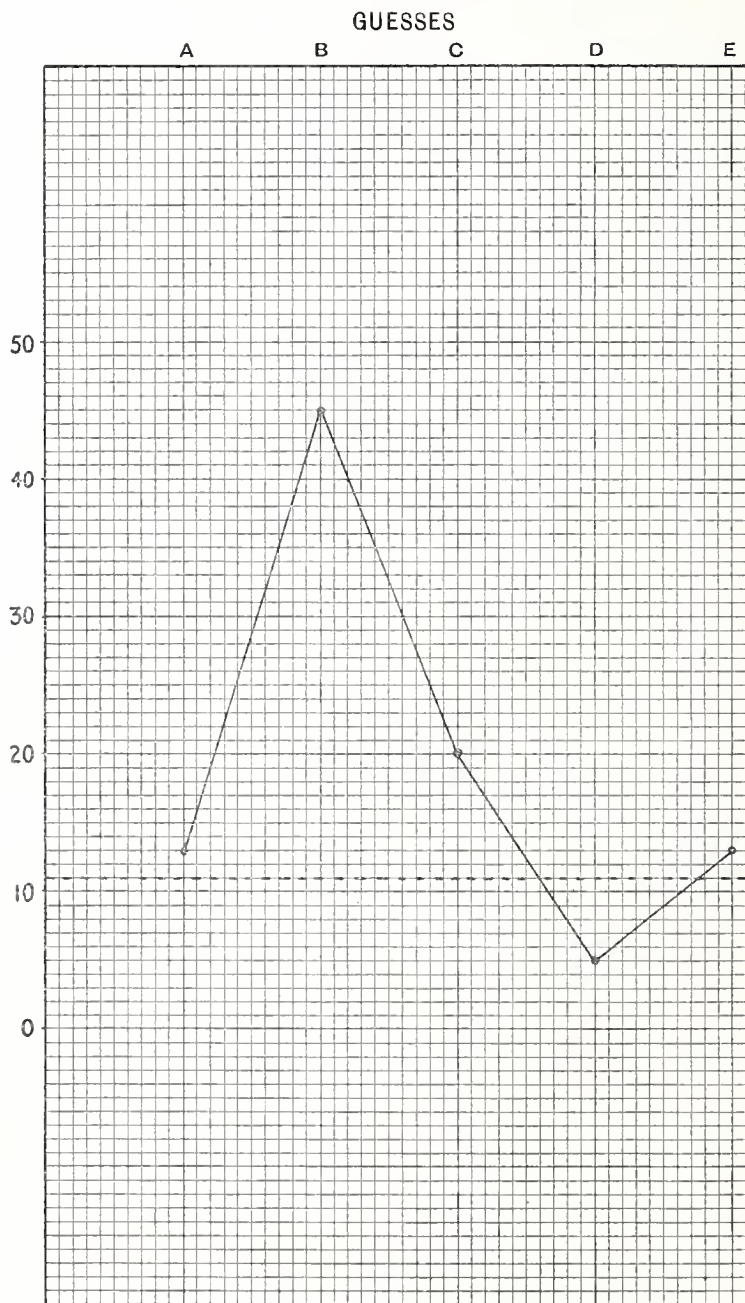
Diagram 10 shows some experiments with cards in opaque envelopes. Having collected a good many rather promising results with cards which had been placed by people other than the experimenters in opaque photographic, light-proof envelopes, it seemed worth trying some under test conditions. So Mr. Dingwall very kindly sealed up for me five numbered envelopes, in each of which he placed one unseen playing card. The envelopes were, of course, light proof and burglar proof. They were returned to him intact. Miss Boucher-James, Miss Tipping and another percipient achieved again a fatigue-curve.

Diagram 11 shows the result on a long distance trial, from London to Devonshire. I explained to my percipient, whom I will call Miss X., that I had arranged with Mr. Saltmarsh in Devonshire that on a certain night he was to put up in a row five cards on his mantelpiece. He was not to look at them himself so that telepathy might be excluded. I invoked the powers of suggestion and explained to Miss X. that the experiment was a perfectly simple one, that in the realm of clairvoyance distance was probably non-existent, that it was the merest detail that she had never been to Mr. Saltmarsh's house in Devonshire. I told her that she was to go to sleep with the intention of a leisurely inspection of Mr. Saltmarsh's mantelpiece during the night, and that when she woke in the morning she was to record what she had seen. I must explain that she habitually got, as I do, a second-card success, so this result was for her a perfectly typical curve and score:

Mr. Saltmarsh's cards	- 7D	9C	1D	6H	2H
Miss X.'s impression	- 2H	9C	3D	1S	10D
Ratio of success	13·09	45·73	21·12	5·07	13·09

Mr. Saltmarsh, reporting the experiment, notes that had the clairvoyant looked at the cards in no particular order the score might be greater, her 2H also being right. The clairvoyant's impression of "red cards predominating" was also

correct. Further long distance experiments with Miss X. were done, but of course, as I expected, with less success.



5 LONG DISTANCE GUESSES
DIAGRAM 11.

Yet another question occurs to one which it would be interesting to settle, but which again must remain un-

settled till we have further data, and that is: does sex make any difference to the faculty of clairvoyance? I should expect women to be more successful than men—for all down the ages there have been more witches than wizards, and the well-worn phrase, “woman’s intuition” may have a grain of truth in it. In this card-divining experiment out of the 240 people who tried, 145 were women, 93 men (of two I was unable to learn the sex); 75 per cent. of the women showed fatigue-curves, 44 per cent. of the men, whilst women’s average score was slightly higher than the men’s. It would be most interesting if this tendency should be confirmed by further research.

Although this report is becoming intolerably long, I should like before I end to refer briefly to work of earlier investigators in similar experiments with cards. Mrs. Verrall’s experiments in 1895 have already been mentioned, but as far back as 1882 Barrett, Gurney and Myers tried some “telepathic” experiments with cards, with remarkable above-chance success—(*Report on Committee on Thought Reading*, July 1882). In 1887, Dr. Schiller and his brother experimented both in telepathy and clairvoyance (*Proc. S.P.R.*, vol. iv. p. 209). The card thought of or to be divined was recorded in this case by Dr. Schiller’s brother, Mr. F. N. Schiller, writing automatically through planchette,—again with results above chance. In 1895 (*Proc. S.P.R.*, vol. xi. p. 2) Mr. Henry Rawson reports on experiments in thought-transference with cards; he remarks, “I found myself almost invariably less successful in every series of experiments after the first.” In France Professor Richet’s long series of experiments reported on in an article in the *Revue Philosophique* (vol. xviii., Dec. 1884), “La suggestion mentale et le calcul des Probabilités,” gave results which correspond closely to both mine and Dr. Estabrooks’s. He has:

1st guess success.

above chance success,

above average colour success,

„ „ suit „ „

and, a most interesting point, *below chance* success where the conditions were adverse, that is, in a prolonged series. Professor Richet's experiments were nominally in "telepathy," but he does not lay stress on telepathy, he affirms only that *some* supernormal agency is at work. I was delighted when I read Prof. Richet's article to find some confirmation of my views from a source which I respect so deeply.

M. René Sudre, in his article on "Clairvoyance and the Theory of Probabilities," *Psychic Research*, Feb. 1928, also alludes to some experiments with Eugénie by Professor Richet, the cards being in light-proof envelopes. The table he gives makes a perfectly typical fatigue-curve, and he calls attention to this early-success effect, but I do not think he has realised sufficiently its value for experimental purposes.

I should like here to put up a brief defence of experiments with cards, as M. René Sudre's article is written to try and dissuade investigators from undertaking experiments of this character, where the results have to be compared to chance on a mathematical basis. M. Sudre objects that few investigators have the necessary mathematical qualifications. I have none, but I have been able to supply the deficiency by enlisting the help of mathematicians; and others can do as I have done. The calculations given in this paper have almost entirely been done and checked by competent mathematicians. Another drawback to which M. Sudre calls attention is that in these experiments the negative results must be added to the positive ones. I agree that this may be most misleading. It has always reminded me of the old story of the two men, one bow-legged and the other knock-kneed, who were able to enter the Irish Constabulary by having their characteristics averaged. The analogy in a problem of curves is really very exact. M. Sudre's plea is for an experiment which would give a result so definitely and clearly beyond chance, that a single success in it would prove the existence of clairvoyant faculty. This might be effective from the point of view of mathematical proof, but M. Sudre does not allow for the fact (to which Prof. Richet

has drawn attention) that our belief in any phenomenon is almost entirely due to its *repetition*. It will only be when we can show the effects of clairvoyance at work in instances which can be repeated an indefinite number of times that we shall be convinced of its reality.

The use of a closed and rigid system, such as a pack of cards, gives scope for the detection of any recurring characteristics of the faculty under observation; and I feel that the importance of working within such a closed system, with which other experiments may be compared, far outweighs any difficulties there may be in examining the facts once they have been assembled. The main difficulty in psychic research is to get a sufficiently definite and an exactly repeatable basis for experiment, and here at least, whatever the inferences, the facts are explicit.

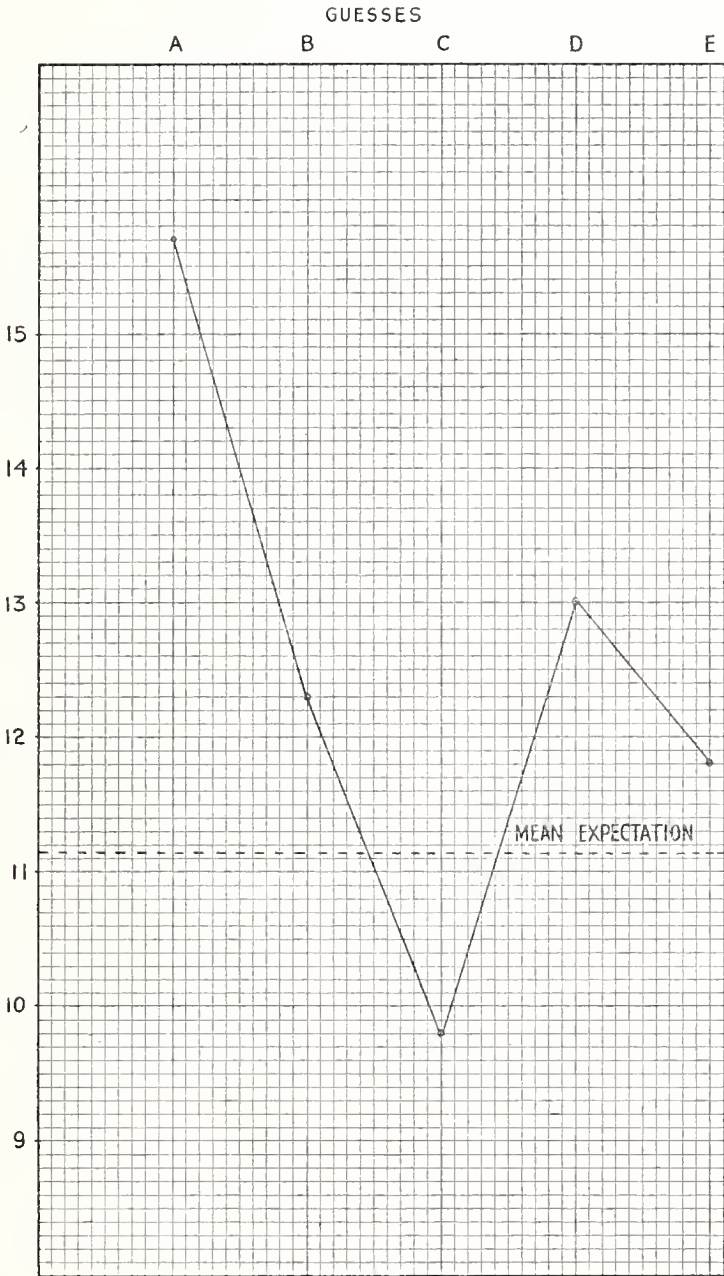
I will spare my readers a summary of the experiment, as I must have stressed to weariness the points which I have considered important. The interest must lie, not so much in its character but in the natural inference that if this supposed faculty of supernormal perception really exists we do not know what possible limit to put to its activities. Looked at in connection with cards alone this curious leakage of knowledge if accepted as a fact might have a marked effect. Bridge parties will become scenes of strain and suspicion and only those who show no clairvoyant power and have been passed by the S.P.R. as being free from "fatigue-curves" will be allowed to play; our best clairvoyants will leave abruptly for Texas or Monte Carlo. But the more serious import of the experiment must surely be that if its inferences are accepted, we must widen considerably our conception of our mental powers. It is most unlikely that this perceptive gift works only in connection with playing cards. Many other possible manifestations of it crowd to mind—such as book-tests by mediums—the reading of sealed packets, etc., etc. A fundamental change in our conception of human faculty must take place.

"To remain reasonable," says Prof. Bergson, "is to remain at work," and the work involved in these experiments for the moment being happily over, I will prove

the truth of Prof. Bergson's dictum by indulging my fancy.

I think that the many extra-normal phenomena with which investigators in psychic research become familiar can be more easily explained, or at least can live more harmoniously with our other conceptions of life, if we adopt the following view of mind and brain. (I did not originate it, and probably have distorted it somewhat for my own use, but I find it helpful.) This view of mind regards mind as "consciousness," and ascribes to the brain and sense organs the rôle of an instrument of exclusion and selection. It pictures consciousness as infinitely receptive, and in danger of being overwhelmed by the thronging impressions from the objective world were it not for the kind offices of the brain, which excludes any material which is not relevant to the activities of the "consciousness" which it serves. If we take this view we can picture the facts which we acquire supernormally (that is without the use of the normal senses) as facts which have somehow *avoided exclusion*. They have as it were passed the hall porter (whose duty it is to exclude unorthodox visitors), whilst he was asleep. In our experiment with cards, for instance, we are not helped to success by using our brains in the ordinary way. The information we seek seems to slip in best when our brains are otherwise employed; in other words, and as we should expect, when the hall porter is busy or slumbering. Another analogy may be taken. If we compare the "consciousness" to a sensitive plate in a camera and the brain to the lens, the plate (in a camera which is completely light-proof) can only record the impressions selected for it by the lens. If, however, any light enters by an accidental opening in the side of the camera the plate at once is liable to record extra impressions. It will record "facts inaccessible to its normal lens"; in the camera-world it would very soon be considered "clairvoyant"; it might even be fined for predicting the future, as it could, quite genuinely, be able to record facts which were "round the corner" from its light-proof companions.

There are many speculations and tempting correlations which I should like to indulge in, but I must refrain.



S. P. R.
DIAGRAM 12.

I have saved up the most attractive diagram (12) for a suitable "curtain." It has, I think, considerable charm.

The five people who took part in this and whose card divinations go to make up the curve are :

Dr. Hans Driesch, a former President,
Professor Dodds, a member of Council,
Mrs. Salter, the editor of the *Journal*,
Miss I. Newton, Secretary, and
Mr. Theodore Besterman, Librarian.

This combined curve shows very clearly how even in the realm of the unconscious the members of Council and officers of the society co-operate to help the efforts of members towards success; and success will have been achieved if this report prove sufficiently interesting to move others to carry the experiments further.

APPENDIX

When this report was read at a meeting of the Society, questions were asked as to how much the habit of preferring some cards to others may have affected the results—and if so, to what extent would it alter the scoring.

Card preferences do appear—my attention had first been drawn to this characteristic in Dr. Woolley's broadcast experiment in telepathy. I have not given the list of them because possibly further experiments may be undertaken, and I do not want my experimenters to know which their card preferences are, since it makes spontaneous guessing so much more difficult; but I hope to report on this aspect of the subject later. Mr. Fisher at first informed me that card preferences did not affect the scoring—but he subsequently modified his opinion slightly, and I give below his revised version. It is a slight modification of his first figures. It has not been possible to rescore all the existing records on the new figures, but the very slight preference for plain cards and the antipathy to picture cards which appeared in the total results would not have been enough to affect the score in any appreciable manner. Then there was another question as to whether the *actual* cards which had been drawn showed preferences for certain cards—for if there had been any marked irregularity it *would* affect the scoring. I have not overlooked the point, and so far as I have gone into the matter, I think I can safely say there is not enough irregularity possibly to affect the score to any serious degree, but I hope to make a further report later.

DR. FISHER'S STATEMENT CONCERNING THE EFFECT OF
PSYCHOLOGICAL CARD PREFERENCES.

The theory of scoring card coincidences is based upon the comparison between pairs of cards chosen at random, and pairs of cards of which one is drawn at random from a pack, while the other is obtained by the subject in an attempt to guess or divine which card has been drawn. If these two cases

differed only in the possession by some subjects of the power to guess a card in some degree like that drawn, the existence of such a power could have been tested strictly by the method of scoring previously proposed (*Proc. S.P.R.*, vol. xxxiv. p. 181, July 1924). There is, however, a second difference, which at first sight appears to be without influence on the results, yet which requires in an exact treatment some modification of the scoring system previously devised.

It has been shown that in attempting to guess an unknown card people in general—and the same is probably true of each person in particular—exhibit a rather marked preference for certain cards. The effect of such preferences on the frequency of different degrees of success may best be perceived by considering an extreme case in which, on every occasion, the first card which presents itself to the mind of the subject is always the same, for example, the King of Hearts. The card actually drawn will be with equal frequency every card of the pack, and it is evident that the guess will be right in colour half the trials, and right in suit in one quarter; also it will be right in value once in thirteen trials, these being in each case the probabilities for the same degree of agreement between two cards drawn at random. In the case of rank, however, there will be this difference, for the real card will be a picture card only three times in 13 trials, while the probability of two cards chosen at random being both plain or both picture cards is 109 in 169. The latter probability will in fact only represent the true chance if the subject guesses picture cards with the correct frequency, namely three times in thirteen trials. It will not be correct if he always guesses the King of Hearts, nor in less measure, will it be correct if, while varying his guess he yet guesses picture cards with more than the correct frequency.

The effect of this factor is thus somewhat to penalise those subjects who have a psychological preference for picture cards, and if this preference is general, so to give generally unduly low scores. On the other hand persons with a preference for plain cards will have enjoyed a slight advantage. In an exact analysis, it is possible to overcome the difficulty by scoring the two cases independently. Below are given two scoring systems appropriate for the two cases in which the

card guessed by the subject is a plain card or a picture card respectively. The nature of the real card does not affect the system.

<i>Plain card chosen.</i>			<i>Picture card chosen.</i>				
	<i>O.</i>	<i>R.</i>	<i>N.</i>		<i>O.</i>	<i>R.</i>	<i>N.</i>
O.:	·73	3·78	30·54	O.:	1·7	16·45	27·50
C.:	8·79	11·84	38·6	C.:	8·67	23·42	34·47
S.:	16·85	19·89	46·65	S.:	15·64	30·39	41·44

In both these systems the mean score, if the card guessed is independent of the true card, is 11·18, and the standard deviation of the mean of 25 guesses is 2·0. The effect of the change is simply to put upon an equal footing those whose preference leans to plain cards, or to picture cards respectively; it seems unlikely that it will greatly alter the average of any extensive group of scores.

It will be noted as an apparent defect in the use of two scoring tables that the effect on the score of guessing right instead of wrong on an even chance, for example, in colour, is 8·06 for plain cards and only 6·97 for picture cards. A guesser, in fact, whose strong point lay in colour or suit, will run up a big score quicker if he sticks to plain cards; this is a necessary consequence of using a single composite system for scoring different possible faculties. The different faculties may be examined separately merely by enumerating the number of successes and failures in each point (i) Colour, (ii) Suit, if the colour be right, (iii) Value, and comparing the observed numbers with those expected by chance. Only in the case of (iv) Rank, will the choice of a plain or a picture card affect the expected frequencies, and only in this faculty will a separate enumeration be necessary.

REVIEW.

La Lévitiation. Contribution historique et critique à l'étude du merveilleux, par Olivier Leroy, agrégé de l'Université. Librairie Valois, Paris.

THIS book of more than 380 pages (appendix and indices inclusive) is written by a Roman Catholic, a fact which,—mistakenly, as I think,—is not made apparent until nearly the end.

The book, however, is written almost throughout in a scientific and critical spirit; and M. Leroy may be truly said to be an amazingly wide reader. He is also well acquainted with recent researches in the domain of Physical Spiritism, has read the late Frank Podmore's work on Modern Spiritualism, and such names as those of D. D. Home, Eusapia Paladino, Stainton Moses, and "Willy" (Schneider) appear freely under his pen.

By far the greatest part of the book is devoted to hagiography, as M. Leroy is of opinion that "Catholic hagiography alone possesses on levitation a written and ancient tradition, continuous and varied, supported by controlled and precise documents. . . . Catholic hagiography among doubtful facts, or even facts probably interpolated, presents a certain number of cases where the proofs of the reality of levitation offer those guarantees which we are in the habit of requiring of History" (p. 349).

As a matter of fact, beginning with St. Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury (918-988), and ending with cases taking place in the nineteenth if not in the twentieth century, the author presents us with an endless series of alleged levitations, copiously quoting from the *Acta Sanctorum* and other sources.

He is the first to admit, nevertheless, that from an evidential standpoint the great majority of these cases proves nothing

at all. Such an admission instead of weakening his position, naturally only strengthens it. And we are the more inclined to lend an attentive ear to his argumentation in regard to those cases which, in his opinion, are of a conclusive and convincing character.

On the whole, the following cases deserve, according to him, peculiar attention as being well attested (in some cases perhaps excellently attested).

St. Joseph of Copertino (1603-1663). In the bull of canonisation of this saint (Pope Benedict XIV.) it is stated that no other saint can be compared to him in the domain of "ecstatic flights."

Saint Theresa of Avila (1515-1582).

Saint Alphonso of Liguori (1696-1787).

The Blessed André-Hubert Fournet (the first levitations occurring in 1820).

Joseph Benoît Cottolengo (died in 1842).

Marie de Jésus (Mère du Bourg). Several levitations are mentioned occurring in the forties and fifties of last century.

Bernardino Réalino (died 1616).

Francisco Saurez, the well-known Jesuit and theologian (seventeenth century).

Some of the incidents narrated in connection with these personalities are both apparently quite inexplicable by the action of known forces and seem to leave nothing to be desired in the way of attestation. Without entering into minute details I will content myself with stating that in my opinion these cases constitute an important body of evidence not to be lightly set aside. They certainly make it appear "more probable than not" (to use an expression of Mrs. Sidgwick's about the reality of the Physical Phenomena of Spiritism many years ago) that such things as genuine levitations of persons later beatified or canonised by the Roman Catholic Church did really occur.

This is undoubtedly the impression produced on me by M. Leroy's book, or rather by a few of the hagiographic cases therein mentioned. I feel bound, however, to make the following observations. It does not seem to me that the author takes sufficiently into account the possibility of *piae fraudes* as a causal explanation, though he mentions "hagio-

graphic amplifications" as he chooses to call them; this is perhaps not enough. We are told, for instance, that the most celebrated of Joseph of Copertino's levitations occurred in the presence of Prince John-Frederic of Brunswick (1649). This young Prince visited in that year the principal courts of Europe. When in Rome, he decided to go to Assisi to see St. Joseph. He twice was present at two masses said by the saint, and witnessed two levitations, of which one of five minutes' duration. He was so impressed by what he had seen that he became a Roman Catholic, one of the two chamberlains who accompanied him later following his example. Now it is obvious that in this case the saint's *entourage* had the greatest interest in producing the most powerful impression possible on the Prince's imagination. Any artifice in this direction could only have been considered as laudable: for would not the aim have been to save from eternal perdition a human soul, a princely soul? That in this year of grace 1928 many Roman Catholic priests would have disapproved such an artifice I have no doubt; but the case may have been quite different in the seventeenth century just after the Thirty Years' War. To the five very reasonable "*critères éliminatoires*" which, the author thinks, are apt to give us some security in the research of cases of authentic levitation if there be such (p. 217), I am therefore inclined to add a sixth one running as follows: we ought not to attach much value to such cases even well attested where there is very strong reason to suspect that a group of persons was intensely interested in producing the levitation.¹

Among the cases narrated I find one which may perhaps raise in the reader's mind a doubt as to whether even in the best attested cases confusion was invariably excluded. We are told (p. 152) that in 1745, at Foggia, St. Alphonso of Liguori was publicly levitated when preaching in church "on Mary's glories." But it so happens that an exactly similar incident (even including a ray of light which, starting from an image of the Madonna, struck the preacher's face) is related as having occurred in 1756 at Amalfi. Of course it is possible that there may have been *two* incidents, but

¹ To me the chief question in the present instance is, however, this: *is* the case "well attested"?

this similarity will appear to some suspicious. M. Leroy says himself that the similarity is so great "qu'on croirait faute de témoignage à une deuxième version du même évènement." Are these "*témoignages*" decisive?

It is further obvious that in some cases levitations are spoken of by one narrator where another sees, apparently, no supernatural phenomena at all. Thus Cardinal de Villecourt, author of a huge history of St. Alphonso of Liguori, mentions two cases where the saint, already quite old and almost motionless, was levitated over his armchair. But Father Berthe, author of another biography of the same saint, relates the same two incidents in terms which, properly speaking, may not suggest a levitation (pp. 157-158). In another instance whilst Cardinal Villecourt again speaks of a levitation, Father Berthe merely mentions that the saint "se livra à de tels transports qu'il n'en dormit pas la nuit suivante" (p. 159). One cannot help asking oneself whether such characteristic discrepancies could not be much more multiplied.

However, for me the chief consideration is that of the original documents. Some, or many, of the works containing biographies of the saints in question are said to have been written on the basis of documents having figured in the processes of beatification or canonisation, but the critical reader is well entitled to ask to be allowed to see if not the documents themselves, at least officially certified copies made anew. Seeing that a few of the saints asserted to have been levitated lived in the nineteenth century, the documents in question ought to be easily accessible, and I venture to suggest that an effort be made in that direction. A couple of centuries or so ago *copies* even certified might perhaps have been inadequate in dealing with such a problem, but happily we live in a more honest and more enlightened age.

Meanwhile I can only say that the impression produced by a small selection of the cases quoted by M. Leroy is almost irresistible. I have in particular in view the evidence of the surgeon Francesco di Pierpolo describing a levitation of St. Joseph of Copertino in the course of an operation (p. 137). No better evidence could be desired—of course with the reservation made above as to the documents.

Outside the hagiographic levitations M. Leroy is of opinion

that the *ensemble* of the alleged facts is rather of an elusive character. "The magico-religious facts of Oriental sects, remote and fabulous, elude every criticism. The exploits of the sorcerers whether savage or otherwise also belong to uncontrollable folklore. The evolutions of the possessed grow too restrained when approaching our time for us not to suspect exuberance in the old narratives" (p. 198).

The author seems to me to pass somewhat too lightly over the fakir performances. He mentions Jaccoliot's experiments with the fakir Covindassamy (p. 19) only to state that the author of *Le voyage au pays des fakirs charmeurs* does not inspire in him any confidence (p. 188). The author further notes that "whether in India or in the Far East we find ourselves in the presence of a mere theoretical tradition unsupported by any controllable fact" (p. 189).

As a matter of fact, though I have never made a special study of Indian mysteries, I have come across two first-hand cases of levitation apparently excluding every possibility of trickery. In the first case related to me by a Russian gentleman a fakir was levitated to a very great height¹ in the presence of a crowd. I had every confidence in this gentleman, now deceased. In the second case a Rumanian described to me the levitation of a fakir in daylight in Singapore, he (the Rumanian) assuring himself by contact that the fakir's feet were off the ground. (I have failed, though I have tried, to obtain from this Rumanian a written statement.) It seems therefore to me—unless I be in this case a specially privileged person—that such incidents are more frequent than is often supposed. I wish a serious effort could be made to collect more of them.

Of course they do not apparently exclude hallucination; but most of the hagiographic cases also do not exclude it. Though I have found in M. Leroy's book some evidence of the non-hallucinatory character of some of the episodes (I mean, of course, the best attested ones), this evidence amounts to little. And I think M. Leroy dismisses "fascination," as he calls it, in a little too cavalier a fashion. He writes (p. 328):

A criticism of this hypothesis can be summed up in a

¹ About twice the height of a five-storied building. Cf. *Zeitschr. für kritisch. Okkult.*, I Band, 3 Heft, pp. 196-200.

few lines : in fact it remains to be proved that suggestion can operate on a normal man in the waking state without preliminary manœuvres. It becomes still more unlikely in the case of a crowd. Even were it possible, the idea of the mystic suggesting [levitation] to those around him must be rejected for the following reasons : (1) the Saint does not wish to be seen when levitated but is afraid [of the prospect]; (2) some Saints experienced levitations when believing themselves alone.

On the contrary, I am rather inclined to think that where ardent and intense religious faith is concerned, a *crowd* may sometimes make easier the propagation of a hallucination or quasi-hallucination. What do we know, first of all, as to how many people in this crowd share in the impression? The *point de départ* of the hallucination may be some modest but concrete fact, such as the "mystic" rising on tiptoes (quite possibly in a genuinely "ecstatic" state). If the position of the man is such that his feet are not seen, if the crowd is already sufficiently *empoignée* by him, if a saint's nimbus already encircles his head in the popular imagination—last not least : if the audience is a southern one, a delusion *en masse* is, I think, likely to spread like wildfire. I have especially in view when writing this the incidents related of St. Alphonso in Foggia and (or?) in Amalfi. I wish, however, that there be no misunderstanding : such explanations will *not* cover some of the best facts.

Not to make too long a review long enough already, (but the subject, especially as presented by M. Leroy, is fascinating!) I will content myself with the following cursory remarks.

Pp. 29-32. Extracts are given by the author from the *procès-verbal* of an examination in 1591 of a possessed woman of Louvieu, named Françoise Fontaine. She was exorcised, and during the ceremony was, in the presence of several persons, repeatedly levitated and carried about in the air in a most extraordinary way. The original of this *procès-verbal*, we are told, is in the Paris *Bibliothèque Nationale*, MS. No. 24122 *du fonds français*.

The writer notes (p. 57) that he has been unable to find in the records of the Protestant Churches any statements as to levitations of Protestant "mystics." In particular he

thinks it noteworthy that no such beliefs have been engendered by the "overheated atmosphere of the revivals."

He suggests no explanation. Were I *convinced* of the genuineness of levitation (as yet I am only *inclined* to believe in that genuineness) I would tentatively point out that Protestantism having severed itself from the Mediaeval Church and adopted on so many points the exact *contre-pied* of the doctrines of the latter, it is but natural that there may be disseminated far and wide through the believing Protestant masses a psychological unconscious *something* specially inhibiting the production of such specifically mediaeval phenomena as levitation and stigmatisation.¹

P. 211. History repeats itself. In 1220, we are told, Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, learns that a nun lives at Leicester who sustains her existence through the Eucharist alone: whereupon he at once sends fifteen clericals to watch her during fifteen days, without ever losing her from view. Put four Franciscan nuns in the place of the fifteen clericals, and you have exactly one of the most striking and best attested apparently supernatural episodes connected with Therese Neumann and Konnersreuth.

In a footnote on p. 236 it is stated (on the basis of "private confidential statements to a friend who has repeated them to" M. Leroy) that Mr. Andrew Lang did not doubt the authenticity of Joseph of Copertino's levitations.

On p. 269 it is asserted that, so far as the writer knows, no mediumistic levitation of the human body has ever occurred in full light. If by "mediumistic" levitations fakir levitations are also meant, such a statement is incorrect, and I am not sure that levitations in good light have never been attributed to D. D. Home.²

As I said in the beginning of this review, the author reveals his Roman Catholic convictions at the end of his book only,

¹ On p. 57 a case of levitation is mentioned in connection with a Russian (therefore non-Catholic) Saint: Seraphim of Sarov (nineteenth century). I doubt if it is as well attested as we could desire.

² Cf., e.g., *D. D. Home. His Life and Mission*, p. 299: "It was asked if the phenomena of levitation did not invariably occur in semi-darkness. 'No,' replied Lord Crawford . . ., 'I once saw Home in full light standing seventeen inches from the ground.'" *Ed.*

and the reader must not be surprised therefore that to him (M. Leroy) the mediumistic levitations (and presumably the other Physical Phenomena too) should in the last analysis be of diabolical ("démoniaque") origin. Those of us who like myself reject this hypothesis for one reason or another have at their disposal, in my opinion, a very cogent argument. Satan is considered by those who believe in him a very powerful being. If so, why do experiments in Physical Phenomena almost always fail whenever crucial tests are applied?

Before parting with M. Leroy's very remarkable work, I wish to note the impression of the greatness of the Roman Catholic Church which emanates from his book. For no other body has been able to produce in the sphere which here interests us a mass of evidence so impressive and so voluminous. Compared with the hagiographical material all the rest dwindles into insignificance. Of course the sceptic is free to point out that if the yogi-fakir confraternity had possessed the same powerful and systematic organisation and the same resources material and moral, they might have produced results equally striking and imposing! Still we must count with facts as they are, not as they might have been.

PEROVSKY-PETROVO-SOLOVVO.

SOME AUTOMATIC SCRIPTS PURPORTING TO BE
INSPIRED BY MARGARET VELEY, POET AND
NOVELIST (1843-1887).

PART I.

By W. H. SALTER.

DURING the year 1927 and the early part of 1928 two members of the Society, *Miss Margaret Hunt* and *Mr. V.*,¹ writing automatically in conjunction, produced a number of scripts containing what purport to be communications from "Margaret Veley." There was a real person called Margaret Veley (pronounced Velly), who was born in 1843 and died in 1887, and who wrote poems and novels. The scripts consist partly of verse and partly of statements as to her ancestry, relatives and friends, and as to incidents of her life.

This is not *Mr. V.*'s first experience in automatic writing. He is the "Mr. V." of the Oscar Wilde scripts, printed in the *Occult Review* for 1923. A little later he and my wife (Mrs. Salter) had a few sittings together for automatic writing, at which some verse was produced quite unlike the automatic scripts my wife produces by herself, of which numerous examples have already been printed in our *Proceedings*. No claim was made as regards authorship in the scripts produced jointly by *Mr. V.* and my wife.

¹The real names of the automatists were given at a meeting of the Society on the 24th October, 1928, when part of this paper was read. While they have no objection to their identity being disclosed to their fellow-members, they consider that they might suffer professionally if the fact of their practising automatic writing were made known to the general public. *Mr. V.*, it may be stated, has no connection with the Veley family. His pseudonym, as appears from the next paragraph, was established in 1923.

In the sittings with *Miss Hunt* *Mr. V.* held the pencil, and *Miss Hunt* held his hand. If she removed her hand the writing at once stopped.

It seems clear, as regards the sittings both with my wife and *Miss Hunt*, that *Mr. V.* is the "predominant partner." *Mr. V.* can indeed write automatically by himself, but only slowly and with difficulty. The presence of a second person seems to remove an inhibition, and enable him to write with great fluency. The personality of the assistant automatist seems also to influence to some extent the contents of the scripts (see further *Mr. V.*'s statement, p. 333).

The difference between the cases of Oscar Wilde and Margaret Veley is obvious. Every fairly well-informed person has some knowledge of Oscar Wilde's life, and some familiarity with his literary style. Of Margaret Veley and her works few people nowadays have even heard, although she was a person of some note in her own generation.

Mr. V. informs me that he knew nothing whatever about her, when the scripts began, beyond having seen her name in an old volume of *Harper's Magazine* for 1881 (see his statement, p. 331, below).

I confess my complete ignorance of her until recently. After several of the scripts had been written *Mr. V.* asked me to look into the case. I did not then know whether she was a real or a mythical personage, but on consulting at home the *Index* to the *Dictionary of National Biography* I found the following entry :

Veley, Margaret (1843-1887), novelist and poet: began to publish, 1870; issued 'For Percival,' her best novel, 1878.

The *D.N.B.* itself gives a fairly full biography and mentions the volume of her verse, *A Marriage of Shadows*, published posthumously with a long biographical preface by Leslie Stephen. From these two books anyone with a ticket for the British Museum Reading Room and a spare hour can learn a great deal about her, from the foreign nationality of her grandfather to the name of her favourite

cat. There is a short notice of her in Allibone's *Dictionary of English Literature*, but this adds nothing to what is said in the *D.N.B.* Mr. George Moore in his *Confessions of a Young Man* (1926 Edn., pp. 169, 170) speaks of his friendship with her, and her death.

During the course of my enquiries I was fortunate enough to get into touch with several relatives of Margaret Veley, and friends of her family, to all of whom I wish to express my most cordial thanks for the help they have given. My obligation to them is increased by the fact that, as they have very frankly said, they dislike any canvassing of the possibility of their dead kinswoman and friend having "communicated" through perfect strangers. This is a feeling with which many will sympathise, but cases of supposed "communication" arise without our seeking them, and when they arise our Society has a duty to investigate them.

Fortunately in the present case there is no question of disclosing matters which should be kept private: there is nothing particularly intimate in the statements made in the scripts, and very little which has not already been recorded in print elsewhere.

The scripts may therefore be discussed without any disrespect to Margaret Veley's memory. Perhaps the discussion may help to revive interest in the works of a charming but now neglected writer.

In the first part of this paper I shall set out the scripts in full,¹ omitting the script verses, which can be detached without injury to their context; *Mr. V.* has incorporated what he considers the best of these verses in Part II. of this paper. In a parallel column will be shown how far the statements in the scripts can be verified, and the source of verification. At the end of

¹To avoid tediousness I have abbreviated the scripts slightly in places where the "communicator" makes several shots at getting a name: in most cases the fact that abbreviation has been made is noted in brackets. I have also omitted one short passage in which the "communicator" makes a comment which might be offensive to persons now living. Where no other source of verification is stated—in the second column headed "Comment"—the source is one or other of the relatives and friends of Margaret Veley who have kindly given me information.

this part I shall discuss briefly two possible hypotheses as to the origin of the scripts, on which, as the investigator, I ought to state my own opinion.

But the more complete discussion of possible hypotheses will be left to *Mr. V.* in the second part of the paper, where he will also compare the literary style of the scripts with that of Margaret Veley's published works. In view of *Mr. V.*'s great experience in psychical research, and his wide knowledge of literature, there is no one better fitted to undertake this task.

[ABBREVIATIONS.—*D.N.B.* = *Dictionary of National Biography*. *M.S.* = *A Marriage of Shadows*. *P.M.S.* = Preface to that book. *Miss H.* = *Miss Hunt*. *M. V.* = the ostensible "communicator": the use of the initials *M. V.* is not intended to imply that the "communicator" either is or is not identical with the Margaret Veley who died in 1887. Where the latter is referred to her full name is used. The pseudonyms of the automatists are printed in italics. Words in the first column printed in italics or capitals, represent words underlined in the original scripts.

The questions put by *Miss Hunt* were, except where otherwise stated, put by her on her own initiative, and were of course in all cases put by her without previous consultation with *Mr. V.*]

1. *Sitting 23rd May, 1927.*

Script.

Comment.

(After a poem of forty lines signed indistinctly "Margaret Veley") *M . . . M . . . M V . . . V . . . M . . .*

(*Miss H.*) Who is it please who is writing all this?

M. Margaret V . . . Enquire there's no more power—

(1) I wrote poems and a novel or two. *M. Veley* (name indistinct) Goodnight. No more power.

(1) In addition to the poems collected in the *M.S.* Margaret Veley wrote three novels, and some shorter stories; see notes 8, 43-46.

2. *Sitting 12th July, 1927.**Script.**Comment.*

(2) Time brings to us at last
The starry silence of eter-
nity

Be patient to the end and
the little western flower—once
white as milk now purple with
love's wounds.

Show this to Piddington—
more to come.

(Miss H.) Who is writing
this ?

One of a group which is work-
ing through others—the whole
yet is not given but send to P.
Chide, chide not the daughters
of the day. Too soon will
come what we hope or fear.
More will be given through
another. Only have patience
—There is no discharge from
our long wars—this will help.

(a pause)

Margaret Veley is here.

(A poem of twenty-eight lines
follows, with a direction to
correct one line.)

(3) These verses occurred to
me through your showing (*Mr.*
V.) the *rose* just now. *M. V.*

(Miss H.) Can you tell us
something about yourself ?

My life was uneventful.

(4) I was the second of 4
sisters,

(5) and we lived for the
earlier part of our lives in a
little place called Braintree and

(2) It would seem that these
lines do not claim to be original
verse by *M. V.*, but, as the
reference to *Mr. Piddington*
shows, an attempt (which is not
followed up) at a "cross-corres-
pondence." The original source
(if any) of some of the lines
I cannot trace. "The little
western flower . . . wounds" is
a quotation (not quite exact)
from the *Midsummer Night's*
Dream, and "There is no dis-
charge from our long wars"
may be an allusion to the re-
frain of Kipling's *Boots (The*
Five Nations).

(3) *Mr. V.* notes that before
the writing commenced *Miss H.*
had shown him a rambler rose.

(4) Correct. Described as
2nd daughter in *D.N.B.*; names
of other sisters in *P.M.S.*

(5) Correct; see *D.N.B.* and
P.M.S.; "moved to London in
1880," *D.N.B.*

(6) at Braintree I was buried.

(6) Correct: *D.N.B.*

(7) I wrote poetry or verses from a child—and—

(7) "began early to write both prose and verse," *D.N.B.*

(Miss H.) What are you doing now?

I am in a happy place but it's all confused when I come back into your world. To come back into your state one enters oblivion.

(Miss H.) Are you happy to come back?

Yes I am very happy to be able to indulge again in my old favourite pastime of verse-making. I did little else in life except write a few novels.

(8) One was called *Damocles*.

(8) Correct. *Damocles* appeared in serial form anonymously in the *Cornhill* (1882) and was published in book form the same year. It was not her first novel, but is the first named in the British Museum Catalogue. It is mentioned in *D.N.B.*

(9) I knew French rather well and that was a hobby of mine.

(9) Correct. "She and her sister competed in composition prizes offered by a French educational journal." *P.M.S.*

(10) Also gardening gave me great fun.

(10) Correct. See letter of hers printed in *P.M.S.*; and also p. 350 *post.*

(11) I was never married

(11) Correct: *D.N.B.*

(12) but came to live in London with my mother after a time.

(12) Correct: see (5). Her mother dedicated the *M.S.* from a London address. See also (66).

(Miss H.) Could you write us anything in French?

Aujourd'hui c'est un peu difficile j'ai oublié presque tout.

(Miss H.) Well, it is a pleasure for us your coming to talk.

Cela me fait, moi aussi, un grand plaisir. Voulez-vous m'interroger ?

(Miss H.) Have you brought anyone with you to-night ?

Non ! mais ma mère était ici la dernière fois que je suis venue vous voir.

(Miss H.) Are you interested to come ?

Je suis très intéressée. It is far better than to try to make one's presence felt through an ordinary medium.

(Miss H.) Have you ever communicated before through a medium ?

(13) Yes, many years ago. I was present at a séance and tried to make myself known but the people present did not take the trouble to make any enquiries although I gave them my name.

(14) I died in 1887 or thereabouts—perhaps a bit later.

(15) (Miss H.) Have you any friends living with whom we could communicate ?

Most of my friends are now gone from the earth.

(Miss H.) You will perhaps be able to give us their names another time ?

(16) Yes. I was introduced to a few of the literary people of the day but I was, I'm afraid

(13) Unverified.

(14) 1887 is correct. Exact date 7th December : *D.N.B.*

(15) Although the scripts, neither here nor later, mention any friend of Margaret Veley's as being still alive, two at least of her most intimate friends are still living, Mrs. Ionides and Mr. George Moore ; see later comments as to them.

(16) Correct ; her friends included Leslie Stephen and Mr. Moore.

(17) rather shy and diffident.

(Miss H.) How did you get here to us ?

I suddenly woke up and found myself here. I didn't choose to come but I found as if I had some vague sort of control over your brains and some of the things I thought of were written.

(17) Correet : *D.N.B.*

3. *Sitting 20th July, 1927.*

Script.

Comment.

Margaret is glad to be able to speak a little again to-night.

(There follow twenty-four lines of verse signed "Margaret Veley," and then an interval.)

(18) Margaret Veley. In this late garden of my mind a few memories still remain standing like bedraggled ehrysanthemums in winter hedged round by a wilderness of thoughts that I can hardly recognise to be my own.

(19) Seenes flit before my mind's eye—some from my own life and others that I feel to be experiences I have never lived, but belong to that larger envelopping life of which I am but an infinitesimal fraction.

(20) So I see myself in a London drawing-room with my sister Connie—so soon to be taken from me. and there

(21) surrounded by Burne-Jones' pictures.

(18) *A Garden of Memories* was the name of one of her short stories, printed in the *English Illustrated Magazine*, 1885-1886, and subsequently published with two others in book form (1887).

(19) This is an appropriate introduction to a group of episodes some of which occurred in Margaret Veley's life and others long after her death.

(20) Correet as to sister's name and early death (1885); see *P.M.S.* Incorrect so far as it suggests that this sister visited Mrs. Ionides: so the latter informs me.

(21) An exaggeration: there was only one Burne-Jones picture in the house.

(22) My friend Elfrida sits knitting while Luke her husband is reading the *Spectator*.

(23) Then the scene changes and I am on a boat—not a house boat but one of your real old Thames barges which is fitted up inside as a house—a long saloon with hanging lamp and old china and books—Oh! surely I was never there! and yet it all connects up with the London drawing-room in some way that I don't understand—I—I can't get it—I have forgotten.

(Miss H.) Can't you try to remember the name?

Yes—I will try—

(24) Luke was the brother of the man who left all the *Watts* so I have heard. He had a fine collection of pictures of all sorts, especially of the Pre-Raphaelite group.

(22) The names "Elfrida" and "Luke" are correct. Luke's name occurs in *P.M.S.* and Elfrida's in the dedication to Margaret Veley's novel *Mitchelhurst Place*. Mr. Luke Ionides habitually read the *Spectator*, in which Margaret Veley's first poetry appeared, but Mrs. Ionides was not given to knitting: information given by Mrs. Ionides.

(23) Mr. Cyril Ionides, a son of Mr. Luke Ionides, bought a Thames barge long after Margaret Veley's death, and fitted it up as a house for himself and his family. *Mr. V.* tells me he had seen the barge, when it visited one of the Essex creeks near his own home, and had met Mr. Cyril Ionides. He had also seen Mr. Luke Ionides without knowing who he was: see his statement later, p. 358. *Mr. V.* also called my attention to the book (*Our Floating Home*, 1918) which Mr. Cyril Ionides wrote about this barge.

(24) The full name Ionides is never given in the scripts: the initial I is given later. Mr. Luke Ionides' brother, Constantine (died 1900), left the "Ionides Collection" of pictures, now in the South Kensington Museum. The collection includes pictures by Watts, Burne-Jones and other contemporary artists and also some Old Masters.

(25) One shows Luke and his father—all the I family.

(Miss H.) Do you know where they are now ?

I don't know what has happened to them.

(26) Elfrida I—I I do not know if any of Luke's family are still living or where they are.

It was a large and wonderful collection.

(Miss H.) Can you tell the—

My life was broken up when poor Connie died. We had hoped beyond hope.

(27) We took her to Switzerland but it was not to be. If I had lived I felt I had it in me to write so many fine novels.

(28) (Miss H.) Had you any brothers ?

No brothers.

(29) My eldest sister was Alice. She also is buried at Braintree.

(30) My father was always arguing over his old church suits Veley *versus* — ? He could never forget these things.

(25) A small picture by Watts in this collection shows Mr. Luke Ionides' father and mother with their children.

(26) Mrs. Luke Ionides is, as mentioned, still alive : see also note (23).

(27) Correct : *P.M.S.*

(28) Correct.

(29) Name and place of burial stated in *P.M.S.* Alice was however younger than Margaret Veley : this may be inferred from *P.M.S.*

(30) Margaret Veley's father is described in the *D.N.B.* as a "solicitor, mainly occupied with ecclesiastical business." Neither the *D.N.B.* nor *P.M.S.* mention any particular litigation, but he was, as churchwarden, one of the Plaintiffs in what was one of the most famous lawsuits of the time, *Veley v. Gosling*, often called "the Braintree Church-rate Case." The events out of

which this litigation arose occurred before Margaret Veley was born, but the case was not finally decided until 1853. The final hearing before the House of Lords is reported 4 House of Lords Cases 679-814. The plural "suits" is, I think, accurate, as there seem to have been other suits connected with the main one. A report of the case is indexed in the B.M. Catalogue under the father's name.

(31) I wrote stories before even I learned to write long-hand. I remember I used to print them.

(Writing stopped owing to interruption.)

(31) Unverified. *P.M.S.* speaks of her handwriting as being "as legible as print."

4. *Sitting 12th October, 1927.*

Script.

(32) A—M—the—the—M—M—M *Margaret Veley* There is some change X X Margaret It is rather difficult to-night. Almost impossible to write poetry.

(33) The lady here is not in good health and it would be very difficult for your mind to catch up with my thoughts quickly enough.

(Miss H.) Which lady ?

The lady here—

It is of no use my trying to write verse for it would only be spoilt. I must wait for a more favourable occasion. Perhaps you might like to ask me some

Comment.

(32) This sitting was held at a different place from the preceding ones.

(33) *Miss Hunt*, the only lady present, was in fact in quite good health.

questions about my life and the people I knew, etc. ?

(Miss H.) Could you give us the names of some of the people you knew ?

Names now are very difficult but I might be able to get through a few of my friends.

(34) There was—you might enquire about it—if possible—a family who lived not in Braintree but *near* Braintree who (were) old friends of our family. A Clergyman he was and his daughter—O—Over—Over—Over—*Thomas* Over—Over—Thomas Over—THOMAS OVERTON

O Overton and his daughter at a place near BRAINTREE Black N ? Blaek Not—(repeated several times) Afraid I can't get the last syllable but Blaek *Not*—will be near enough. Near Braintree.

(35) Also I had a nephew lived at Braintree who was called John John EDWARD H. *Homes* HOLMES. J. E. Holmes.

(36) He was the Captain of the Braintree Cricket Club. My sister's SON.

(Miss H.) Can you give me name of sister ?

(37) Mrs. Edward Holmes, but she was dead before I died. Edward Holmes her husband. Also some other minds come to me in connection with Braintree, they are not my

(34) The Rev. Thomas Overton was the clergyman at Blaek Notley (the name is given in full later in the scripts). Black Notley is very near Braintree. He had two daughters and his family were friends with the Veleys. This information comes to me from other friends of the Veleys. I do not know of any printed reference to this friendship.

(35) Correct. See note (57) on statements as to the Holmes family.

(36) Correet, as I am informed by friends. Presumably the fact could also be verified from old ericket annuals, but I have not done this.

(37) Aliee Veley married Mr. Edward Holmes and died in 1877 : see *P.M.S.*, where, however, her husband's Christian name is not given ; see also note (57).

own friends and I don't know why I give them except that they are the only ones left in my mind.

(38) There was BAILEY kept a grocers shop in the old High Street and

(39) Sp—Sp—Sp— Oh yes the *Preacher* Spurgeon kept a boot shop in Bank St. That's all I can think of just now—it's very confused I know.

(40) I suppose I am very much of a back number by now. I often think of my 6 novels. They must now be mouldering in our national libraries with the rest of the fruit of dead men's brains. Do they ever dust them I wonder? No doubt the worms have made many a meal off the works of M. Veley. What are the wild worms saying Margaret?

(41) However, as they must have bored so many readers it is only right that they in turn should be *bored* also. Do the little worms prefer our old-fashioned paper to your modern wood-pulp?

(38) Correct. County *Directories* 1886 and 1890, *i.e.* after Margaret Veley had left Braintree (in 1880).

(39) "the Preacher": these words probably represent the way the name Spurgeon is arrived at, not a suggestion (which would be ludicrous) that the Rev. Chas. Haddon Spurgeon kept the shop. There was a bootshop in Bank St. kept by a Spurgeon: see *Directories*, 1862-1886.

(40) "Back-number," as applied to a person, is, I think, a piece of slang which was unknown in Margaret Veley's day: see also note (88). "Six novels" is correct if the three short stories, published together, are reckoned as novels: see notes (18, 43-46).

(41) While Margaret Veley's published works, especially her poems, were serious and even sombre, she was personally cheerful and fond of jokes, as appears from the *P.M.S.* and the letters quoted there.

5. *Sitting 26th October, 1927.**Script.**Comment.*

M. Margaret Veley (some illegible words followed by a poem of thirty-three lines signed "M. Veley").

(42) It's really very difficult to get any of my thoughts expressed. Only the very simple ones get shaped—the more subtle ones simply don't appear at all. This lady doesn't easily allow my thoughts to emerge to you. All my sparks seem to fall on her mind as on cold water. It's (a) very curious thing to explain. Her mind is like the strainer of a whale's throat—it only lets through the small mental fry.

If I could only get my thoughts direct to yourself it would be easy for you quickly take them up and shape them but unfortunately you haven't the peculiar *psychic* power necessary and all has to be transmitted through the lady here.

Last time I did try to impress your mind directly and I think I succeeded to some extent but it was harder work than breaking stones.

(Miss H.) Is there anything we can do to help?

I have really nothing to advise. I am only telling you how things appear to me. I

(42) In view of M. V.'s complaints as to *Miss Hunt* being a hindrance to good communication, it is only fair to *Miss Hunt* to state that she has had considerable success as a sitter with trance-mediums.

In this passage "you" clearly means *Mr. V.*, *Miss H.* being "this lady."

would use of my personal preference 5-stressed lines and try to impress these rhythms on you but the thought that gets through is so thin that it would scarcely bear it—it would sound absurd.

(Miss H.) Could (*Mr. V.*) try with someone else?

You may of course try—Have you anything to ask me to-night?

(Miss H.) Could you give us the names of any of your novels?

Yes I think I could but wait a minute or two. (Pause).

(43) The best of my novels I think was my earliest one of For—For—For—For—P—P—P—P—For Percy Per—Percival. For Percival, that's it.

(44) Then Damocles—I think I gave you that before.

(45) Cousin Lizzie Cousin Lizzy.

(46) Mitch Mitch Mitchl Mitchel Mitchl Place Mitchelham Place—not quite right. Mitcheley Place No No No Mitchelham Place Mitchel Place—I can't get the last part of the word. (Pause.) Margaret—Do you wish to ask me anything more?

(Miss H.) Name of first school?

(43) Correct. *For Percival* appeared as an anonymous serial in the *Cornhill* in 1877 and in book form in 1878: it was her earliest novel, and is described by the *D.N.B.* as "her best and most successful novel."

(44) See note (8).

(45) *Lizzie's Bargain* was one of the three short stories.

(46) *Mitchelhurst Place* (see note (22)) first ran in *Macmillan's Magazine*, 1884, and came out in book form the same year: see *D.N.B.* and *B.M. Catalogue*.

(47) Tufnel Tufnel Tufnell
Park Tufnell London.

(Miss H.) Was it a p(ri)va)te
sehool ?

No—a girls' college.

(Miss H.) What part of
London ?

West.

(Miss H.) Can you give the
name of headmistress ?

P. P. A. A. A An diff
An An Miss A Miss (word
illegible) I'm rather muddled
to-night. I was not at Queen's
College long. All my education
was at Braintree previously to
that.

Next time I will try to get my
thoughts clearer about my early
days.

(Miss H.) Is there anything
we can do ? I am so sorry you
find it so difficult to impress
me.

I am not blaming you but
getting one's thoughts especially
poetical thoughts is very deli-
cate operation.

(Miss H.) I understand the
diffieulties and can only give
you an assurance of our good-
will towards you and hope that
we can be of greater help next
time.

6. *Sitting 2nd November, 1927.*

Script.

Comment.

(Some incoherent writing.)

Margaret Margaret the con-
ditions are not good tonight

Everything is befogged. (poem of twenty-four lines signed "Margaret Veley") You have got my ideas but hardly the form that I should have given them. (Eight more lines of verse signed "M. Veley.") I really am not in the mood for writing poems to-night. The atmosphere is charged with oppression. I feel strangled in it.

(Miss H.) Shall we ask you questions ?

Please try.

(48) (Miss H.) Could you give us the C(hristian) name of your father ?

I'm afraid I can't get it just now. Wait a minute A. Month of the year Do you guess ? Month of the year *Hot time*.

(Miss H.) June ?

No.

(Miss H.) July ?

No.

(Miss H.) August ?

Yes *Augustus*.

(49) (Miss H.) Name of your mother ?

I'll try. Wait a minute. Do give me another pencil please. S. S. I've nearly got it. It's like an article of *furniture* but I can't think of the word. Just guess.

(Miss H.) Sofa Sophy Sofie ?

First time *Sophia*.

(Miss H.) Could you give us

(48) The full name was Augustus Charles Veley: see *D.N.B.* and *P.M.S.* Note the roundabout way by which the name is approached, and ultimately given, or part of it given, not by M. V., but by *Miss Hunt*. The same procedure is adopted with many other names, Sophia, Stephen, Cunnington, Hart, Rayne, etc.

(49) The mother was a Miss Sophia Ludbey: see *D.N.B.* The surname is given later in the scripts: (113).

any information about your parents' relatives ?

What do you mean by relatives ?

(50) My father had only one brother who survived him. F F Veley F. I think that's it F F Veley *Frederick* Veley. But there is another name in between.

(Miss H.) Could you give the other name ? If not now perhaps later.

Hopeless now I'm afraid in this state.

(51) My father was really of French extraction but not a Frenchman. My grandfather was from the Continent Not France Not France but French-speaking place.

(Miss H.) Could you name the country ?

(52) Oh I have just thought of something. I remember my mother once sent me to Cox's shop the druggist's and I broke a big bottle on the floor. It was when I was about 14.

(Miss H.) That fact would be difficult to verify.

Only it was a strong smell and made a great mess. It just flashed into my mind. I'm afraid it would be for the man would not be there now Cox. Cox.

(Miss H.) Could you give us any further information about the shop ?

(50) All correct, as I am informed by a member of the Veley family.

(51) *P.M.S.* says " Her father was the eldest son of a Monsieur de Veley who left Switzerland for England about the beginning of this [*i.e.* the 19th] century." M. V. specifies Switzerland later : (59).

(52) This incident has not been verified. There was a firm of W. Cox & Co. who had a shop in the High Street in 1859 when Margaret Veley was 16. The firm do not appear (at least under that name) in other *Directories* than that for 1859. For information in the County *Directories* as to Braintree residents mentioned in the scripts, see tabular statement *post*, p. 328. I am indebted to Mrs. Braekenbury for checking the names and dates in the *Directories*.

In High Street, Braintree.

(Miss H.) Number in High St. ? Is the shop still there ?

Oh no it was gone years and years before D—D—D— I left Braintree. He gave up the business and someone else took it on. D D. Suggest something. D. D. D. D. Suggest something. It wasn't entirely a druggist's shop. It was a sort of general stores as well.

(Miss H.) Could you give the name of an adjoining shop ?

It was next—Hopeless—Afraid I know nothing about what Braintree is now whether the people are descendants of the old shopkeepers or not—I just thought of something else.

(53) My brother-in-law Teddy

(54) used to have a splendid garden and hot-houses with most choice flowers.

(Miss H.) What was his profession.

(55) Wait a minute Oh he was a man of the LAW LAW LAW A man who earned his income by expounding the law to people who paid him for it.

(Miss H.) Where ?

In Braintree and district.

(56) He was also very interested in education.

(Miss H.) Was he a lecturer ?

Oh no, but he encouraged

(53) Mr. Edward Holmes. The diminutive "Teddy" was, I am told by a member of his family, never used.

(54) He was a very keen gardener and had large conservatories. His garden was not large but splendidly kept. Information supplied by a friend.

(55) He practised as a solicitor at Braintree and lived at the adjoining town of Bocking : see *Directories*.

(56) He was on the School Board for several years from 1874 : see *Directories*. His name appears (as Clerk to the Board)

education and young people's clubs more especially.

(57) He was interested in the Club.

(Miss H.) Could you name any of the clubs or people who were associated with him in the work?

Difficult but it was a sort of place where young working people of Braintree met in the evenings and had recreation. He was the—well not the head of the Club but an important man in connection with it.

(58) (Miss H.) Which sister did he marry?

He was the husband of my sister *Alice*.

(59) Could you try and tell us where your *grandfather* came from?

A French-speaking country but not France.

(Miss H.) Belgium?

No.

(Miss H.) Switzerland?

Yes. Yes.

(60) (Miss H.) What is the name of the town?

Could you suggest names?

(Miss H.) Zurich?

No.

(Miss H.) Geneva.

No—It's rather difficult, especially these complicated names.

(Sitting ended by interruption.)

on the foundation stone of the Braintree Council Schools.

(57) "The late Mr. Holmes came closely into touch with the public as Secretary to the Literary and Mechanics' Institution, a position which he held for a number of years. . . . He resigned the secretaryship in 1899." Extract from obituary notice in *Essex Weekly News*, 29th January, 1909. *Mr. V.* may have seen this notice, as he tells me that this paper was taken in by his parents from 1898-1914: this matter is discussed more fully later.

(58) Mrs. Alice Holmes is mentioned in *P.M.S.* and, of course, in her husband's obituary notice.

(59) See note (51). The *P.M.S.* clearly indicates the French-speaking part of Switzerland.

(60) He came, I am told, from Vevey. The fact is not stated in *D.N.B.* or *P.M.S.* It is curious that M. V. should boggle at a name so like her own.

7. *Sitting 30th November, 1927.*

Script.

Comment.

M. M. M. Margaret Why have you neglected me for so long. It's so unfortunate I have to begin all over again as it were.

Have you any more enquiries to make ?

(Miss H.) Could you give the name of the town where your grandfather lived in Switzerland ?

It's rather too difficult. Ask me something else. I may be able to get it later.

(Miss H.) Could you tell us anything of your earlier life ?

(61) There's one thing comes to my mind. We were coming home from a concert at B B B Black b (after several attempts) Black Notley my sister Julie and I and Miss

(62) T T T Miss T Ta Ta Ta Tab—Do ask me Ta Tab Tab Tab Miss Tab say something Miss TABOR in the pony cart and the pony walked right into a pond near there up to its girth. We were frightened.

(Miss H.) Could you tell anything more about the incident ?

Oh we daren't move for 5 minutes and luckily he decided to walk quietly out again.

(Miss H.) It must have been amusing.

Very exciting.

(Miss H.) That's a better word.

(61) For Black Notley see note (34). Julia was Margaret Veley's eldest sister.

(62) The Tabors are a well-known Essex family. Some of them lived at Rochford (where *Mr. V.* lived as a boy) and also near where he now lives. Others lived at Braintree and Rayne (about four miles from Braintree). The Miss Tabor of this incident was, as appears later, of the Rayne branch. One of the Braintree Tabors informs me that the Veleys were friends both of the Rayne and Braintree Tabors, and that the incident, which cannot be verified, might very well have happened. There were two Miss Tabors (of

(Miss H.) Could you tell us the name of any schools you attended and if you won any scholarships?

(63) No. Once I won a prize for a French essay.

(Miss H.) Where?

In a competition Essay on Victor Hugo.

(Miss H.) Where?

It's very difficult now but it was when I was quite young.

(Miss H.) What was the name of the School?

No school

(64) I was living at my father's house at G G G Big Great Great

(Miss H.) Great Square? Surely not.

Yes. My father's house in Great Square, Braintree.

(Miss H.) Could you describe the house?

Nice garden.

Oh yes. Queen's College that was the only school I ever went to for about a session—

(65) but before that I attended Miss—Miss—boarding school as a day visitor in Braintree in Manor Street M Miss Miss London Road Miss Give me time Miss *Day* No not that not that Miss It's clean gone.

(Miss H.) Was this the only house you lived in?

(66) The only house before my mother and I came to London and then of course we lived

Rayne) a few years older than Margaret Veley: see also (96).

(63) See note (9); the passage there quoted from *P.M.S.* continues "although she won no prizes she received honourable mention." This is, I think, the only case where the scripts definitely contradict either *P.M.S.* or the *D.N.B.*; see, however, note (29).

(64) Correct as to address of father's house; see *Directories*. The garden is a large one in view of its situation in the centre of a town.

(65) There is a confusion here between the school in London Road, which was a *boarding* school, and that in Manor Street, which was a *board* school: see *Directories*. The surname of the mistress of the boarding school is given correctly later (83).

(66) Margaret Veley and her mother lived in London at 45 *Matheson* Road, Kensington,

in M M M You have this word in your mind. [I abbreviate a long passage the effect of which is that the street was in Kensington, and that *Mr. V.* was connected with it, as he had sent mathematical problems to a lady who lived there.—W. H. S.]

(Miss H.) Could you give the number ?

45 M 45 Ma Matthew not quite that Math Maths Mathers Matheston Matheston *Road.*

(Pause.)

(67) Miss Ann. Margaret Miss Ann Margaret I am trying to give the name of the lady who kept the young ladies' boarding school at Braintree in London Road but it's the surname that's difficult. Miss Ann Miss her—

and her mother dedicated *M.S.* from that address. *Mr. V.* had in fact sent mathematical problems to a lady living at another number in the same road, about eighteen years previously.

(67) No lady with the Christian names Ann or Margaret, or either of them, appears in the *Directories* as head of this school between 1851 and 1890.

Up to this point I had allowed the scripts to take their course, but now, at *Mr. V.*'s request, I decided to put some questions. The questions to be put by me were on each occasion placed in a sealed envelope given to Miss Newton, and handed by her to *Mr. V.* or *Miss Hunt* as immediately as practicable before the sitting at which they were to be answered. At the date of the sitting next recorded (7th December, 1927) I knew nothing about Margaret Veley except what could be gathered from the entry (already quoted) in the *Index* to the *D.N.B.* and from the entries under the name Veley in the British Museum Reading Room Catalogue. On the 9th December I looked up her biography in the *D.N.B.* and read the *P.M.S.* in the British Museum. A few weeks later I got in touch with a friend of the family, and later with other friends and members of the family: several of these suggested questions on matters with which Margaret Veley

was familiar during her life, but which were not, so far as they knew, recorded in print.

8. *Sitting 7th December, 1927.*

Script.

Comment.

M M M Margaret Veley.

(Miss H.) Can you answer one or two questions ?

I will do my best but the conditions are not very good.

(68) (Miss H.) Can you give the name of any man of letters interested in your poetry about the time of your death ?

Names are very difficult but I will try. It is a name very like the Christian name of one of my *nephews*. Would that help ?

(Miss H.) Yes.

(69) Well please suggest the name of my nephew then. I don't mean Teddy's sons but Constances only child S. S. S. begins with S.

(70) (Miss H.) Sidney ?

No No It's It's a bible name.

(Miss H.) Samuel ?

No.

(Miss H.) Saul ?

No ! How absurd that is !
Try again.

(Miss H.) I'm a heathen. I don't know my bible.

(71) One of the—You would if you had lived in my generation. It was a man who was stoned.

(Miss H.) Stephen ?

(68) Question put by me.

(69) Mr. Edward Holmes had several sons : Mrs. Warner (Constance) only one, Stephen.

(71) The Veleys were brought up very religiously, but Margaret Veley (as stated in *P.M.S.*) in later life "reached conclusions very different from those which naturally found favour with the home circle."

(72) YES. Stephens. Leslie Stevens was the man. He was a great friend of mine, but of course there were others. There was Mr. Mr. Luke Luke.

(Miss H.) Is that a Christian or a surname ?

Christian name.

(Miss H.) Could you give the surname ?

(73) I tried to do so before but I don't think I succeeded.

(74) But this gentleman was more interested in my novels than in my poems. No one thought very much of my poems

(75)—not even the Review—*Spectator*. They said that the note of melancholy was so pronounced as to be monotonous and no doubt they were right. My poetry would only appeal to a very few kindred spirits.

(76) (Miss H.) Can you give any particulars about Mr. Luke's life ?

He was the son of a con—help me please—a con—a person

(72) Leslie Stephen was the answer which, if any, I anticipated ; he is mentioned in the *B.M. Catalogue* in connection with *P.M.S.* I did not then know of the close friendship with Mr. George Moore, whose name would have been an equally appropriate answer. Mr. Moore is not mentioned in the *M.S.* or *D.N.B.* ; nor anywhere in the scripts, a very curious omission. *M.V.* erroneously adds an s to Leslie Stephen's surname.

(73) See note (24).

(74) Mr. Luke Ionides' friendship arose out of his admiration for the novel *For Percival* : see *P.M.S.*

(75) This does not quite represent the *Spectator's* view of her poetry, as shown in the review of the *M.S.* (28th July, 1888). This review calls her " none the less a true humourist, that her humour had frequently a sad vein in it. . . . Miss Veley if she had lived might have surpassed greatly as a poet the considerable reputation she had made as a novelist."

(76) Mr. Luke Ionides' father started the " Ionides Collection " to which Mr. Constantine Ionides added.

who takes a great interest in pictures.

(Miss H.) A connoisseur?

Yes that's right. His father was a Greek and very wealthy.

Have you any other question to ask?

(77) (Miss H.) You mentioned your father having to do with a law suit. Could you give the names of any other parties engaged in the suit?

That is really extremely difficult because when my father had these troubles I would only be about 10 years old or thereabouts and although I knew he used to worry tremendously about the Braintree Church moneys I really couldn't attempt to mention names at this point of time.

(78) It would be about when Mr. *Brown* was rector.

(79) (Miss H.) When did your father die?

When I was about thirty-six or thereabouts. 36 perhaps.

(80) (Miss H.) Had he discontinued his practice at the time he died?

Oh no! he had retired for some time before his death. There was—

(Miss H.) Can you give any other name associated with your father or yourself?

(77) Question put by me. See note (30). Margaret Veley was in fact ten when the case was decided by the House of Lords.

(78) Mr. Brown was *vicar* (not rector); see tablet in Braintree Church, also *Directories*, 1855-1862.

(79) The father died in 1879 (*D.N.B.*) when Margaret Veley was 36.

(80) From the *Law List*, 1876-1879, it appears that he retired from the *firm* (Veley and Cunningham) in 1876 but continued to take out a practising certificate till the year of his death.

(81) Mr. C. C. C. Suggest something please Mr. C—

(Miss H. suggests various surnames in C all of which M.V. rejects. M.V. then says)

Oh, when a fox is very sly what do you call it ?

(Miss H.) Cunning ?

Cunnington. Mr. Cunnington was a close friend of ours—of all our family.

(Miss H.) What was his profession ?

A man of the law !

(Miss H.) Was he associated with your father ?

Oh yes : he was in close touch with my father's business at Braintree.

(Miss H.) Could you give names of any eminent men or women interested in your poems or novels ?

Names are so difficult.

(Miss H.) Any names connected with your father's business ?

They were all in connection with the clergy.

(Miss H.) Then could you give the name of the clergyman at Braintree ?

(82) What time ? There were several rectors there. There was Mr. C. C. C. Can you help and please do exchange this wretched pencil.

(Miss H.) Yes. (Exchanges pencil.)

(Miss H.) Cormick ?

(81) Mr. Augustus Cunnington was a solicitor at Braintree, and is of course mentioned as such in the *Directories*. He was a close friend of all the Veley family and in close touch with Mr. Veley's business ; but this understates the position to a degree which almost amounts to mis-statement. He was Mr. Veley's first cousin and his partner ; Margaret Veley always called him "Cousin Gus."

(82) See note (78) as to mistake between rector and vicar. Mr. Cartwright's name appears in the *Directories* 1866-1878. He succeeded Mr. Brown.

No. I think it had to do with a kind of blacksmith. A sort of blacksmith who has to do with wheels.

(Miss H.) Carter ?

Not quite but very HOT Cart—Cart—Cart—but something else.

(Miss H.) Cartwright ?

Yes. CARTWRIGHT.

(Miss H.) You do tax my imagination.

I can't help it. I don't do it to mystify you.

(Miss H.) I'm sure you don't.

(83) There was a name I was trying to give you last time about the boarding-school.

(83) The full name was Catherine Mary Hart : see *Directory*, 1851.

(Miss H.) Yes I remember.

I attended as a day visitor, in Braintrec. Miss—Miss—It's to do with *love*. What we love with.

(Miss H.) Heart ?

Yes but *Hart* Miss M. M. Margaret No Mary Hart Mary Hart.

(84) I learned drawing there and painting.

(84) I am informed that Margaret Veley never attempted to draw or paint, and that there was nowhere in Braintree where she could have acquired these accomplishments.

(Miss H.) Did you ever exhibit any of your work ?

Oh dear no ! Only as a very inefficient amateur.

Have you any more questions ?

(Miss H. repeats question 77.)

Its so difficult—asking for all these names. They tax me to the uttermost.

(Miss H.) Would you like to write poetry ?

I'm afraid there isn't much power left to-night. You ought always to begin with the poetry but when you set your minds on getting facts the poetry becomes impossible.

(Miss H.) Forgive us for being so trying. We are so interested and anxious to obtain data of evidential value.

Oh, I quite realise that. I will try!

(Miss H.) Next time we will begin with a poem, then finish up with hard facts.

Yes, that will be the best.

9. *Sitting 22nd December, 1927.*

Script.

Comment.

M. M. M. *Margaret Veley is here.*

(Forty-two lines of verse signed "M. Veley.")

Have you any enquiries to make?

(85) (Miss H.) Yes, some posers.

I hope you may get answers.

(Miss H.) What associations have you with Amaranth and Moly?

Wait a moment. Amaranth and Moly.

(86) I rather remember I once thought these were very romantic blooms and then one day I happened to read somewhere

(85) The three questions at this sitting were all put by me. The answers are all to be found in *P.M.S.* I wished to test how far M. V.'s knowledge, which the earlier scripts had shown to be very full as regards the more important biographical facts set out in *P.M.S.*, extended to the more trivial details also to be found there.

(86) This agrees with a letter of Margaret Veley quoted in *P.M.S.*; see also p. 349 *post.*

that Moly was a kind of wild garlic! and that simply dispelled all the Romance.

(Miss H.) Yes quite. Shall I ask the second question?

Yes, do please.

(87) (Miss H.) Have you any special associations, and if so what, with Zoroaster?

Please say it again, or rather *spell* it *please*.

(Miss H.) ZOROASTER.

Oh! rather! it was the name of my FAVOURITE CAT!

A CAT!

(Miss H.) Oh!

Pussy-cat.

(88) (Miss H.) Have you any special associations with Christmas, and if so what?

I suppose no more than the great majority of rather dull respectable Britishers.

(Miss H.) But no special associations?

Of course it was always a rather busy time sending out cards to one's friends. I can't think of anything very special about it.

(Miss H.) Could you give us further data about your life?

It is really rather difficult because there isn't much power. Wait a little while.

(Interval of eight minutes followed by "Margaret" and thirty-six lines of verse, signed "M. Veley.")

(87) There is also a letter in *P.M.S.* about this cat. See also note (103), and p. 350 *post*.

(88) As appears from *P.M.S.* it was Margaret Veley's custom to send her friends Christmas cards with original verses of her own on the back, and two of these poems are printed in *M.S.* M.V., however, it would seem, thinks only of the ordinary Christmas card of commerce. "Britisher" was in M.V.'s lifetime purely an Americanism.

I'm afraid there isn't enough power to go on.

(Miss H.) You have done splendidly. Thank you for coming.

Thank you.

10. *Sitting 20th January, 1928.*

Script.

(89) M. M. Margaret Veley (an incomplete poem of nine lines) Why have you changed all the conditions? It has made things very difficult for me. It's the sudden change which upsets things and also waiting so long. It's like beginning all over again. I'm not here so strong as I used to be. If I went on with the poem it would only be spoiled. Things are very confused to-day.

(Miss H.) Is it too great a strain to ask you to continue writing?

I will try. Have you anything to ask me?

(90) (Miss H.) Who were the originals of the two pastel portraits belonging to Mr. Veley?

Belonging to my father?

(Miss H.) I presume so.

I don't know which ones you refer to.

(91) (Miss H.) What was the name of your sister Alice's second son, and what caused his death?

These names are so difficult.

Comment.

(89) The four questions put at this sitting were formulated by a niece of Margaret Veley, who considered that the answers would certainly have been known to Margaret Veley at the time of her death. The questions were sent to me in a sealed envelope, so that I knew neither the questions nor the answers: I sealed this envelope in another envelope and gave it to Miss Newton.

The "change" complained of was change of place for the sitting.

(90) The lady who framed the questions informs me that the portraits were valued heirlooms, and that Margaret Veley during her life would certainly have known what portraits were meant, and who the originals were.

(91) It is correctly stated that a son of Alice (Mrs. Holmes) was named Bernard Willoughby and that he survived Margaret Veley. He is called "Bernard W." in

Wait a minute. B. B. *Bernard* B. B. that is not all. Will—Will—*Bernard Willoughby* but he wasn't dead. I mean he was living when I passed over.

(92) (Miss H.) Who was Mrs. Fish ?

Mrs. Fish. I don't seem to be able to remember anything to-day. All seems a blank in my mind.

(93) What was the name of the gardener at "the Square" and also the old horse ?

I will try to get it. G. G. G. Can you suggest a name beginning with G ?

(Miss H. suggested several names beginning with G, all of which M. V. rejected, adding) No most of the names you have given I could picture as objects : unless they come spontaneously to me I can only get them when I can picture some objects which they suggest.

(Miss H.) Could you give the name of the horse ?

You mean my father's horse ?

(Miss H.) Yes. (Pause.)

(Miss H.) Joc ?

No he was a shaggy old horse. Abraham ! Abraham !

(Miss H.) Try to get the gardener's name. (M. V. suggests it had an A sound and began with a P. and makes various attempts).

his father's obituary notice in the *Essex Weekly News* ; see note (57). This notice also mentions another son who died in infancy, and was in fact the second son, Bernard being the third.

(92) Mrs. Fish was the family nurse. After the days of her nurse-hood were over she long retained her connection with the family, helping in arrangements for parties, etc.

(93) The gardener was called Simon and the horse Peter. Simon was very much attached to Margaret Veley, and made every effort to have a dish of gooseberries ready every year for her birthday (12th May).

It is to be noted that M. V., although she fails to get either name, correctly gives the horse a biblical name.

(Miss H.) Was it an English name ?

Yes but not at all common. All is confused to-day. I seem to be losing hold on you. I'm afraid I shall never succeed in getting any names through to-day.

(Miss H.) Would you rather write a poem ?

That's very difficult too.

(A pause, followed by sixteen lines of verse)

It's no use ; things are hopeless to-day.

(Miss H.) Shall we stop ? Will you try to continue next week ?

I think that will be best.

11. *Sitting 1st February, 1928.*

Script.

Comment.

(A new communicator appears for the first time who wishes to be called "Mr. X. the unknown"; he requests the automatists not to ask his identity, "for that is not important." He writes about 130 lines of verse, which is printed at the end of Part II to show the difference in style between it and the M. V. verses. Miss H. then says)

(94) Margaret Veley, will you try to come ?

I am here but not very strong. I feel I am being ousted out as it were ; but have you anything to ask me ?

(94) The questions (95, 97, 98) at this sitting were formulated by Miss M. E. Tabor of Braintree : see note (62). I knew the questions, but not the answers.

(95) (Miss H.) Which Miss Tabor was in the pony cart with you when the pony walked into the pond, and where did she live?

Mr. who?

(Miss H.) Miss Tabor.

Oh yes. It was Miss Tabor from R. R. R. Think of something. It's something common from the sky.

(Miss H.) Rain?

(96) Yes *Rayne* from *Rayne* where Miss T. lived. Her father and mother were *dead*. Yes at *Rayne*.

(97) (Miss H.) Did your brother-in-law (the husband of Alice) marry again after your death and if so whom?

Yes he did marry, and before my death. It's rather difficult to get just now.

(98) (Miss H.) Try later. Can you give the names of any of your father's neighbours in Great Square, Braintree?

These names are rather difficult: I will try.

(Miss H.) Yes. I know they are.

There was a butcher FAIRHEAD FAIRHEAD *Fairhead* but NOT in Great Square.

(Miss H.) Is that the only one you can remember?

Its the only name that comes into my mind just now.

(95) Correct so far as it shows knowledge that the Tabors of Rayne and the Veleys were friends: see (62).

(96) Two Miss Tabors of Rayne survived their mother, who, however, did not die till 1874; if the incident occurred after that date it can hardly be called an incident of Margaret Veley's "earlier life": see (62).

(97) Correct that this brother-in-law, Edward Holmes, married again in Margaret Veley's life. M. V. volunteers further information on the subject in the script of 2nd March, 1928.

(98) Correct: see *Directory* 1874.

(99) Oh! Wait. There was J. J. J. Jess—not Jesse no Jesseps *Jesseps* and a

(100) man who worked in leather Har—Harr—not quite Harrisen. I could get them if you could try again.

(101) T. T. Till the cock crows—cock crows. There's no power for this kind of thing now.

(Miss H.) When would you like to try again?

Whenever you like.

(Miss H.) Next week?

This week if you can.

(Miss H.) To-morrow?

Yes.

(99) A family called *Jessops* lived in the Great Square: see *Directory* 1878.

(100) A Harrisson, leather merchant, lived in the Great Square, and is mentioned in *Directories* 1851-1890.

(101) Apparently a punning allusion to another Braintree resident, Tilcock, who kept a grocer's shop in the Great Square: see *Directories* 1882, 1886.

12. *Sitting 8th February, 1928.*

Script.

Comment.

M—M—M Margaret Veley I am he(re) have no power. I am getting too far away to write. There are others who are barring the way for me to come. I am like a fading ghost.

(Miss H.) Can we do anything for you?

(102) I don't think you can. I am only hanging on by a few threads as it were. Was there anything you wished to ask me?

(103) (Miss H.) Who gave you the cat Zoroaster?

It was a lady—but my mind is all confused.

(Miss H.) Try later.

Mrs. Kate Mrs. Kate McQuoid Mrs. Kate McQuoid the novelist gave me the cat.

(102) Questions 103 and 108 suggested by Miss Cunningham, a daughter of Mr. Augustus Cunningham already mentioned.

(103) The donor was in fact Miss Cunningham.

Names are all hopeless now.
I am too far away.

(Miss H.) Could you write a poem ?

Poetry—I leave that to others.

(Miss H.) Nonsense. Try.

I leave it to the gentleman who came last week. Did he think that stewed-up elaboration a poem ? No I have been ousted out and I shan't trouble you again.

(Miss H.) Please don't desert us. Do try !

It is impossible. I have no hold on your minds now. I feel myself miles away and it seems absolutely impossible to get any of my thoughts through correctly. What you get are stray thoughts which ought not to appear at all.

(104) Tell my aunt Louisa could—Aunt Louisa—it's hopeless.

(Miss H.) How is it you cannot answer these personal questions ? . . . Cannot you remember the details of your father's house ?

I told you that names were getting impossible. If you had asked these things a month or two ago I think I might have answered them.

(Miss H.) Cannot you describe the interior of your father's house ?

(105) There were a lot of cloaks—but it's no use asking me to describe my father's

(104) Margaret Veley had no Aunt Louisa.

(105) There was no exceptional number of cloaks in the Veley house, I am told.

house because I simply can't see it at all. If anything came to me I would gladly tell it you but the whole thing is at present obliterated from my memory.

(106) (Miss H.) Can you tell me anything about Mrs. Fish ?

(107) My mind is a blank. You mean Mr. Fish who was on the *School-board*. Mr. Fish on the school-board.

(Miss H.) What was he on the school board ?

Just an ordinary member.

(108) (Miss H.) Can you tell me of Uncle Gus's children ? How many boys and girls ?

The whole thing wakes no recollection in me at all.

(Miss H.) Could you describe your personal appearance ?

I have really forgotten. Could you describe yours ?

(Miss H.) I think I might.

(109) I was dark and not very tall. Not at all good-looking.

(Miss H.) What colour your eyes ?

Very dark brown.

(Miss H.) And your teeth ?

Rather small teeth. Quite my own.

(Miss H.) You know we doubt if you are Margaret Veley.

If you go on I shall soon begin to doubt myself if I am Margaret Veley. At present I seem very shaky about my

(106) See note (92).

(107) I have not traced any Mr. Fish who was a member of the School-Board. There was, however, a Mr. Fish who was clerk to Edward Holmes, and is mentioned in the *Essex Weekly News* as attending Mr. Holmes' funeral : and see note (56).

(108) I should more correctly have said "Cousin Gus" : M. V. shows no sign of knowing that Mr. Cunningham, concerning whom she has already volunteered some information (see 81) is meant.

(109) This is considered by Margaret Veley's friends a moderately good description. Mr. George Moore, however, in the passage from his *Confessions* already mentioned, speaks of her as tall. It is curious that M. V. when speaking of her eyes omits all reference to the fact that Margaret Veley wore very strong glasses ; her eyes were grey not dark brown.

identity. Certain scenes and names come into my mind but there are great gaps.

13. *Sitting 2nd March, 1928.*

Script.

Comment.

(110) M. Margaret Veley. There is something I was trying to get through to you last time or the time before. It was very difficult. Something to do with my brother-in-law Edward. A name you asked for but I could not get it then A A A AGNES AGNES that is the name. But there is something else—No I'm afraid it's clean gone again but try AGNES. It was in answer to some question concerned with my brother-in-law. I am certain about AGNES but I hoped to give the rest of it but I'm a complete blank. . . .

(111) There was something else I had in mind but I have never been able to find conditions favourable enough to get it through. About my other brother-in-law—sister Constance's husband. He was a man NOT connected with the law like Edward but his work was with BUILDING. I can't get the right word but it was in connection with *plans* for building.

(Miss H.) Architect?

Yes!! That's right: he was an architect—not at Braintree though.

(Miss H.) Where?

(110) See (97). Mr. Edward Holmes' second wife was Miss Agnes Kate Day. She was always called "Kate" or "Kitty," never Agnes. In the obituary notice in the *Essex Weekly News* neither of her Christian names are given.

(111) Constance's husband, Mr. A. Warner, was an architect. They lived in Regent's Park Crescent until she went abroad for her health.

The name would I am afraid be difficult but it was certainly in LONDON. They lived in LONDON.

(Miss H.) What part ?

I should say North or perhaps more west : a *little* north but WEST. Could you suggest some names ?

(Miss H. suggests various districts, finally Marylebone.)

(112) YES that's it near THERE. But it was the street I was trying to get that begins with M. (Various attempts by M. V. at Mont— : "It might be the name of a person beginning Mont Mont—"; Miss H. suggests Montgomery).

Yes, that is exactly right. I used to go there very often when Mother and I lived at Kensington.

(Miss H.) Was there anything of special interest in the house ?

(113) Nothing very special. There were one or two *family* portraits of the L—L—Lud family LUDBY family belonging to my sister Connie.

(Miss H.) Who was the artist ?

Difficult to say P. P. P—I can't get it now (Pause). (Here Mr. X. intervened and M. V. disappeared so far as sittings between *Mr. V.* and Miss H. are concerned. This was their last sitting. *Mr. V.* however

(112) No connection has been traced between Margaret Veley and *Montgomery* Street. When Constance returned from abroad (see last note) she lived in *Montagu* Street, and died there. Both *Montgomery* and *Montagu* are, of course, personal names.

(113) For the name Ludby (should be Ludbey) see note (49). Constance did not in fact have any of the Ludbey pictures. The artist's name has not been traced.

informs me that she has re-appeared at sittings for automatic writing he has since had with another lady.)

It will be convenient at this stage to state the extent of *Mr. V.*'s normal knowledge of the matters mentioned in the scripts, up to the time the scripts came to an end.

Mr. V. was brought up at Rochford, about 20 miles from Braintree, where he lived till he was twenty-four, and he now lives near Southend, a few miles further away. While at Rochford his parents took in the *Essex Weekly News*, a local paper published at Chelmsford, which regularly devotes a paragraph to Braintree news. *Mr. V.* was in the habit of glancing through this paper, but does not remember ever seeing in it any reference to any of the matters mentioned in the scripts. The period his parents took in the paper (1898 to 1914) was long after most of the principal persons mentioned in the scripts were dead: two such persons, however, died during this period, Edward Holmes and Augustus Cunnington, and they received obituary notices in this paper (see pp. 321-322 for further discussion of this).

After *Mr. V.* had asked me to look into the scripts, but before I had in fact made any enquiries, I put to him the questions, which, with his answers to them, are set out below; his answers are dated 2nd November, 1927; additions in square brackets are by me:

(1) Have you any normal knowledge of anyone, living or dead, called Margaret Veley?

If yes, give particulars.

Yes. After first sitting I found a poem by Margaret Veley in an old copy of *Harper's Magazine*. [See further statement on this, p. 331.]

(2) Do you know anyone else of same surname? If so, give particulars.

No.

(3) Have you ever lived or stayed in Braintree? If not, what is nearest place to Braintree you have stayed at?

No.

Harwich [about thirty-five miles away. *Mr. V.*, of course, excludes Rochford and his

- present address both of which I already knew.]
- (4) How often, if at all, have you visited Braintree ?
- Once in May 1916, en route to Harwich my company disen-
trained at Braintree and I passed
a couple of hours there.
- (5) Have you ever been in the church or churchyard there ?
- No.
- (6) Do you know at all well any people who now live or have lived at Braintree.
- No.

It may be added that the same set of questions were at the same time put to *Miss Hunt*, and each of them answered in the negative. *Miss Hunt* has no normal knowledge of the matters referred to in the scripts.

Mr. V. had, as already stated, met *Mr. Cyril Ionides* and seen his barge; he had also seen *Mr. Luke Ionides* but was not introduced and did not know who he was (see *Mr. V.*'s further statement, p. 358). *Mr. V.* had never seen the "Ionides Collection" and did not know what it contained.

Mr. V. had never seen the *Marriage of Shadows*. He cannot recollect ever having seen the notice of *Margaret Veley* in the *D.N.B.*, but he cannot be positive that it, or part of it, may not have caught his eye in looking up some other reference in the same volume; he cannot, however, remember ever looking at that particular volume.

This, he assures me, was to the best of his recollection the sum total of his normal knowledge until after the scripts had ended.

In view of his having at one time seen the *Essex Weekly News*, he and I agreed that, notwithstanding that the period during which he read it was long after the deaths both of *Margaret Veley* and of most of the other people mentioned in the scripts, it would be well to test how far the information to be found in that paper tallied with the statements in the scripts, *e.g.* concerning *Edward Holmes* and his family, of whom much is said in the scripts and practically nothing in the *Marriage of Shadows* or the other

printed sources from which I had checked the statements in the scripts. We accordingly met at Chelmsford on the 3rd September, 1928, and went to the *Essex Weekly News* office, where we looked up the files containing notices of the deaths of Edward Holmes (1909) and Augustus Cunnington (1902).

I am satisfied that these notices have no bearing on the scripts. In the case of Edward Holmes, for instance, mention is made of some facts also stated in the scripts, *e.g.* his connection with the Literary and Mechanics' Institution; but the paper, while mentioning his interest in the *public* gardens, says nothing about his own garden and conservatories about which the scripts are enthusiastic; moreover some interesting facts mentioned in the paper, *e.g.* his connection with the Volunteer movement, are not alluded to in the scripts. Incidentally, Margaret Veley is not mentioned in the obituary.

In view of the very slight correspondence between the scripts and the newspaper, as exemplified by these two obituary notices, I did not think I was called upon to hunt down all the possible Braintree references in all the other issues (say 830) of this paper which *Mr. V.* may have casually glanced at in his early youth.

On the same day we also visited Braintree and saw the graves of the Veley family in the cemetery; also the church and the Great Square.

It will, I think, be generally agreed that the proportion of success to failure, as regards matters outside the admitted normal knowledge of the automatists, is unusually high in these scripts, if they are compared with most ostensibly spiritistic communications. The verifiable statements (and the unverifiable residuum is very small) may be classified under four heads, as follows:

(A) Statements, whether volunteered by *M. V.* or made in reply to questions, which can be verified from the *D.N.B.* and the *M.S.*

(B) Statements, whether volunteered or in reply to questions, which can be verified from matter scattered up and down a considerable number of other books, *e.g.* volumes of the County Directory.

(C) Statements volunteered as to matters which cannot be verified from any printed source which I have been able to trace.¹

(D) Statements in reply to questions regarding matters which cannot be verified from any such source.

The success is almost perfect under head (A) and the failure almost complete under head (D). Under both heads (B) and (C) there is a mixture of success and failure, with the successes largely preponderating.

As already stated, *Mr. V.* is contributing a critical discussion of the various hypotheses which may be framed to cover the facts of the case, and I am more than content to leave such a task in his very capable hands. There are, however, two possible hypotheses on which, as the verifier of the statements in the scripts, I ought to say a few words.

The first possible hypothesis, and one that *Mr. V.*

¹I here set out a list of the printed sources I have consulted:

Index to *D.N.B.*: Title—Veley, Margaret.

D.N.B.: Titles—Veley, Margaret; Ionides, Constantine.

A Marriage of Shadows (1888).

Confessions of a Young Man, George Mooro (1926 Edn., pp. 169, 170).

Our Floating Home, Cyril Ionides (1918).

Allibone's *Dictionary of English Literature*: Title—Veley, Margaret.

Times, 8th December, 1887. Obituary of Margaret Veley.

Essex Weekly News: 11th July, 1902, and 29th January, 1909;

Obituaries of Augustus Cunningham and Edward Holmes, and account of the funeral of the latter.

British Museum Reading Room Catalogue: Entries under name Veley.

Veley v. Gosling. 4 House of Lords Cases, 679-814.

Life and Letters of Leslie Stephen.

Spectator (1888) review of *A Marriage of Shadows*.

Athenæum (1888) review of *A Marriage of Shadows*; also (1887) Obituary of Margaret Veley.

Saturday Review, vol. lvi., review of *A Marriage of Shadows*.

County Directories for Essex 1851-1890, inclusive.

Law List, 1875-1880.

I have also glanced through all Margaret Veley's novels published in book-form, and most of the periodicals (*Harper's*, *Cornhill*, *Blackwood's*, *Macmillan's*, etc.) in which her poetry and novels first appeared, for the period during which she was a contributor.

I cannot of course claim that this list covers all possible references to matters mentioned in the scripts, and shall be greatly obliged if any reader can suggest other printed sources of verification.

would be the last person to wish to have shirked, is that the scripts are a conscious and deliberate fake on his part. That, I may say at once, is not my personal opinion.

It has often been observed, but it is well from time to time to emphasise the point, that in most mental phenomena it is the bona fides of the medium or automatist or percipient that really matters. In some of the simpler forms of experiment in telepathy and clairvoyance it is possible to exercise the same sort of control as can be exercised at sittings for physical phenomena, but as regards any more complex mental phenomena this is impracticable. In cross-correspondences, for example, the length of time over which the phenomena extend, and the number of persons who, if their bona fides were not above suspicion, would have to be regarded as potential conspirators, make impracticable that kind of control. All proper precautions should of course be taken, as they are in the case of the S.P.R. cross-correspondences, in the way *e.g.* of getting original documents properly signed and dated; such precautions are an indispensable safeguard against accidental mistakes arising from lapses of memory or other like causes; but unless there is an absolute assurance on the point of character,¹ all precautions however elaborate are a snare and a delusion, the more elaborate the more delusive.

Mr. V. is known to all members of our Society, and even outside the wide limits of our membership, as one of the most active workers in the field of Psychological Research. He is in addition personally well known to many of us. *Mrs. Sidgwick*, who came into close touch with him in connection with his "Oscar Wilde" scripts, writes to me as follows:

I had the pleasure of making *Mr. V.*'s acquaintance before you met him, I think. As you know, I reviewed in *Proceedings*, vol. xxxiv, what had been published concerning the Oscar Wilde script in which *Mr. V.* was one of the

¹The character of the observers and reporters is, needless to say, equally material with that of the medium or automatist.

automatists. It is, I think, one of the most curious and interesting cases of automatic writing we have come across in our investigations. While writing that review I had some correspondence with *Mr. V.* and we had a very long conversation at the S.P.R. rooms, when he told me of various curious impressions and experiences he had had. I formed a high idea of his openmindedness, his really scientific interest in the subject, his perception of what constituted good evidence, and the trouble he was spontaneously willing to take to make the evidence as good as possible.

I think all of our members who know him will agree with me that he is not the sort of man deliberately to fake phenomena, and, if this is a fake, it is a very elaborate and ingenious one.¹

Moreover, the internal evidence of the scripts corroborates the evidence from character. While it is true that *on the whole* the proportion of success to failure decreases as the scripts pass from matters to be found in easily accessible books into the region of intimate family affairs, this is only a very rough statement of the case. Attention has been called to several correct statements which I cannot find on record in print, but have only been able to verify by enquiries among friends and relatives of the Veleys, who cannot suggest any printed sources of verification other than those I have already consulted.

The second hypothesis is that the M. V. of the scripts is the surviving personality of Margaret Veley who died in 1887.

Among the many peculiarities of the present case, by no means the least remarkable is that we have to do with an ostensible communicator whose "communications" only begin forty years after her death. "Communications" have indeed been received from persons of the remotest antiquity, compared with some of whom Mrs. Piper's "Moses of Old" is a mere parvenu, and some people, I

¹As *Mr. V.* queries the appropriateness of the word "ingenious" (see p. 354 below) I should say that, on the hypothesis of conscious fraud, which I do not hold, some of the lapses of memory seem to me most artistic. An unskilful faker might, *e.g.* have made M. V. remember the name of the Defendant in the great Church-rate lawsuit.

suppose, take these things seriously. But such "communications" as afford any reasonable evidence for survival usually purport to come from persons who begin to "communicate" within a few years of their death. We lack, therefore, any useful standard of comparison for the Margaret Veley case.

In weighing the evidence for identity afforded by "communications" from the recently dead, it is usual and reasonable to make some allowance for difficulties of communication; an occasional mistake in matters of fact, which the "communicator," if alive, would not have been likely to make, may properly be disregarded. In the M. V. case the lapse of forty years since death justifies us in considerably enlarging this allowance. Margaret Veley, if she had been alive when the scripts were written, would have been eighty-four years old, and her memory of her early life might be at fault on certain matters. A very substantial allowance for error must therefore be granted M. V.

The fact that M. V. under cross-examination, so to speak, cannot remember the names of old family retainers like Mrs. Fish and the gardener Simon, should not condemn her off-hand, though many living people would probably agree that these are the sort of things which stay longest in the memory. We may even excuse lapses in statements volunteered by M. V., e.g. that her sister Alice was older than herself, when she was in fact younger. We may strain a point and disregard M. V.'s curious inability to draw the relevant connection between facts correctly stated; she remembers the cat Zoroaster; she speaks of Mr. Cunnington as a family friend; she never at any time, even when questioned as to who gave her the cat and as to Mr. Cunnington's children, says "By the bye, Mr. Cunnington was not only a friend, but a first cousin of my father, and it was his daughter who gave me the cat."

But, after all such allowances have been made, the onus of establishing identity rests with the "communicator," whether recently dead, or dead for forty years, and the question is, has M. V. discharged this onus? Do the statements in the scripts *taken as a whole*, and so far as

they go beyond the automatists' normal knowledge, suggest a continuity of memory, without which the word "identity" would be meaningless?

In my opinion they do not. The statements in the script seem to me to consist of biographical dry bones, names of relatives and neighbours, dates of deaths, etc.; the sort of thing that might be found in *Who's Who*. In addition, there are a few more intimate details, either in their nature unverifiable, like the pony (62) and druggist's shop (52) incidents; or all too easily verifiable from the biography in *A Marriage of Shadows*, as e.g. the name of her cat.

Finally, there are a few statements which I have been able to verify from information supplied by surviving friends, but not otherwise. The proportion of these is, however, very small. Let any of my readers of mature years imagine himself giving reminiscences of the first forty years of his life at the length M. V. has done, and decide whether he would in his own ease have left the dry-bones of names, dates, etc., sticking out so nakedly.

The biographical matter in the scripts might, I think, fairly be entitled "Margaret Veley and her circle seen from the outside." A typical example of the failure to get an inside view-point is provided by the usage of the scripts as to diminutives of Christian names. M. V. calls her brother-in-law, Edward Holmes, "Teddy," an abbreviation not in use in the family; she calls his second wife "Agnes" although she was always known as "Kate" or "Kitty." Most surprising, she never uses the diminutive "Meggie" by which Margaret Veley herself was always known to her family and friends. This is all the more striking as M. V. has, generally speaking, an easy way of bringing out names which many otherwise successful "communicators" might envy.

Then there is the curious omission of all reference to Mr. George Moore, although more than once (see notes 15, 68, 72) questions were put to M. V. which might have been expected to revive memories of him. The perfection of her memory as to matters, sometimes very trivial matters, stated in the *D.N.B.* and *P.M.S.*, throws into strong relief her silence as to a close friendship which

RESIDENTS IN BRAINTREE (OTHER THAN
TIONED IN THE SCRIPTS, AND

<i>Name, etc., in Script.</i>	<i>Entry in Directory where differing from Script.</i>	1851	1855
Bailey, Grocer's shop, Old High Street.			
Spurgeon, Boot Shop, Bank Street.	Spurgeon, Geo. [* From 1851-1859 he had a shop, but not in Bank Street.]	x*	x*
Cox, Druggist and General Stores, High Street.	W. Cox & Co., Druggists.		
Brown, "Rector."	Rev. J. D. Brown.		x
Cartwright, "Rector."	Rev. T. E. Cartwright.		
Hart, Mary, Boarding-School.	Hart, Catherine Mary.	x	
Fairhead, Butcher, "not in Great Square."	Bank Street.		
Jesseps.	John Jessops, Sur- geon, Great Square.		
Harrisen, "a man who worked in leather."	Harrisson, Leather <i>Merchant.</i>	x	x
"Till the Coek crows."	John Tilcock, Grocer.		

RELATIVES OF MARGARET VELEY) MEN-
IN THE COUNTY *DIRECTORIES*.

1859	1862	1866	1870	1874	1878	1882	1886	1890
							x	x
x*	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	
x								
x	x							
		x	x	x	x			
				x				
				x	x			
x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
					x	x		

does not happen to be alluded to in either of those books.

Notwithstanding, therefore, the large number of correct statements on matters outside the automatists' normal knowledge, I do not think the present case a strong one for inferring continuity of memory as between Margaret Veley and M. V.

But personal identity, whatever definition the philosophers may give to the words, is not in ordinary usage co-extensive with continuity of memory. Every individual has his own particular outlook on life and habits of thought, which find their expression in various ways, readily recognisable to his friends, but it may be imperceptible to the outside world. In considering trance-communications or automatic writings it is customary to regard the presence of this factor as good *prima facie* evidence of identity, assuming of course that the characterisation goes beyond the medium's or automatist's normal knowledge concerning the "communicator." This is a point on which in the present case only those who knew Margaret Veley personally are entitled to speak. This part of the paper was shown in proof to two of Margaret Veley's relatives, with a request that they would kindly express their opinion on this point. One of them writes :

To a certain extent the Script falls in with my recollections of my Cousin Margaret, especially in the early parts. The touch of peevishness which appears later is not like her. She was a very calm, well-balanced person, who did not indulge in complainings, and it was impossible to make her "cross."

The other relative (a niece) writes :

I have read the M.V. Script through very carefully, and coming fresh to it again it strikes me in the same way as it did at first. In my opinion there is nothing in it that recalls my Aunt in any way. In fact, it is all most unlike her, in what is said and the way of saying it.

PART II.

BY MR. V.

THE LITERARY STYLE OF THE SCRIPTS.

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN on 23rd May, 1927, I obtained by automatic writing a little poem above the signature of "Margaret Veley" the name seemed vaguely familiar. For some days I was at a loss, and then, led no doubt by the half-conscious workings of memory, I looked up an old volume of *Harper's Monthly Magazine* for the year 1881 which had been in my family for at least 20 years. In the poetry index I soon found what I wanted. Opposite the name Margaret Veley was the title of a poem called "Almond Blossom," which was printed in the August number of the same volume and illustrated by a full-page frontispiece depicting a youth dressed like an admiral, walking with a high-waisted girl in a wide-brimmed hat through a romantic wood. I had probably read the poem on occasions previous to this, but I cannot remember that it had ever excited in me any special curiosity as to its author. It had struck me as being careful, well-knit verse, better, in fact, than half the loosely-constructed verse that is printed in magazines to-day.

The real Margaret Veley, her biographer, Leslie Stephen, tells us, took endless pains with her poetry, never resting till she had found the word or epithet which exactly matched the shade of her thought. Of the seven or eight automatic poems signed Margaret Veley I estimate the average rate of production to have been about three octasyllabic lines a minute. Rarely, indeed, were there any corrections, and these when they occurred never amounted to more than the rectification of the obvious omission of some single word. The verses, in fact, were written faster than the average person would be able to transcribe them

from a book. One cannot help wondering what Margaret Veley, that careful rider of Pegasus, would have thought if she could have had any premonition of this posthumous bolt. Whether or not there was a preliminary stage of subconscious gestation I am unable to say, but at least one incident occurred which, though it does not prove, at any rate suggests that certain of the poems may have been spontaneous productions.

At the third sitting on 12th July, just before the writing began, *Miss Hunt* took down from the mantel-piece a flower-pot containing a species of pink rambler rose. A few minutes later, without hesitation or pause, "Margaret" wrote a poem about a rose that consisted of fourteen rather carefully finished octasyllabic couplets. This poem she declared had been suggested to her by the sight of the rose. The verses are in the true sense of the word "automatic" productions. They are not mere transcriptions of words and imagery that well up rapidly into the conscious mind. Nor, as in the case of *Patience Worth*, are they written to the dictation of an imperious inner voice. By concentrating my mind on some trivial calculation I have learnt how to create a mental state of intense distraction, and it is during the moments when my mind is thus occupied that the writing is produced. The moment my mind reverts to what my hand is supposed to be doing the writing stops as suddenly as it commenced. It is, however, impossible to maintain this mental attitude of complete abstraction for more than a very few minutes at a time, but a fresh effort of rapid concentration made at the very moment when I feel my mind to be straying back will often enable the state to be renewed and the writing prolonged without noticeable interruption. In order to aid concentration I invariably keep my eyes closed while writing, and, if for no other reason than this, the presence of a second person is always necessary to guide my hand when it reaches the end of a line. I can, indeed, obtain words and phrases of automatic writing when absolutely alone, but the mere mechanical impediments arising from the use of pencil and paper with eyes closed are always sufficient to break up rapidly my mental

concentration. Sitting alone I have never been able to produce anything so sustained as a poem or even an odd stanza.

But there is no doubt in my mind that the person who assists me in these automatic ventures of mine fulfils more than a mere mechanical function. Between my partner and myself I have never observed the kind of telepathy that appears frequently to take place between medium and sitter in spiritualistic séances, although I have always been on the lookout for it. I have never noticed that the intelligence writing through my hand showed any knowledge of the secret thoughts of my companion or even of the latent content of her mind. My partners assure me that they can find no connection between what is in their minds and what I write.

In spite of this I feel sure that the general tone of the literary communications does depend in some subtle way on the temperament and mental make-up of the person in whose presence the writing is produced. The "Oscar Wilde" who had been manifesting in the presence of Mrs. Travers-Smith was not quite the same "Oscar Wilde" as the one who turned up a few weeks later in the company of Miss Helen McGregor. Not only did this later "Wilde" talk about rather different things, but his prose, while still highly characteristic, seemed to have undergone a subtle change and to show signs of more careful fabrication.

Even the handwriting suddenly altered, growing smaller and more reminiscent of Wilde's fine Greek hand. [See *Psychic Science*, January 1924.]

And the "Wilde" who appeared at the few sittings I had with the lady I have called "Mrs. L." showed himself to be apter at repartee—in fact, more of a conversationalist and less of an essayist than either of the other two Wildes.

These differences might be partly accounted for by autosuggestion, but I do not believe this to be the complete explanation.

Not only does the second person appear to count for something in the general tone of the communications but

I am conseious that in the presenee of certain people I should be inhibited from getting any automatic writing at all. I happen to be peculiarly sensitive in other people to what Prof. James called the "hidden wraith of personality" which lies beneath the exterior of each of us. It is this *Binnenleben* or inner-feeling tone of which I am most acutely conseious when I meet a person for the first time and which impresses me more than either manners or personal appearance. The thing may seem absurd but I feel I must record it. I believe it is generally possible for me to judge beforehand of the hopefulness or otherwise of attempting automatic writing with a particuar individual.

MARGARET VELEY'S VERSE.

Margaret Veley, one of our undeservedly forgotten lesser poets, wrote verse during the 'seventies and the early and middle 'eighties of last century. In 1888, the year after her death, her collected poems appeared in a slender volume entitled *A Marriage of Shadows and Other Poems*, and they were introduced by an extraordinarily full and detailed biography from the pen of Leslie Stephen, an early editor of the *Dictionary of National Biography* and a personal friend of Miss Veley. Many of the poems had been previously printed in magazines like *Harper's New Monthly* and *The Century*.

Pervaded by a faint sophisticated melancholy, this verse leaves one just a little too conseious of the labour that must have gone to its making. But though the verse shows signs of careful workmanship it is neither affected nor insineere. Like so many others who lived in the closing decades of the century Margaret Veley was profoundly influeneed by the disillusion, the religious doubt and loss of simple faith that were natural consequences of the new vistas opened up by science with regard to the probable evolution of Man's life on the planet.

Poetry for Margaret Veley was rather a stepping-stone in her search for a personal philosophy than the medium through which she could record the reactions of her spirit to sensuous beauty. In her longer poems are many musings,

many tranquil meditations on death and human destiny. And she put these preoccupations into verse that is sometimes as placid and unruffled as the mill-ponds that lie in the quiet meadows around her Braintrec home. But her monodies on death are hardly ever morbid. She does not, like Blair, see a churchyard and a delving sexton round every corner, or like Maeterlinck scare herself into shudders over the unknown terrors that may be lying in wait outside the gates of life. She is much too sane for that. She sees Death watching above the revelry of life, "sitting with a quiet face"; but being, like Keats' "Meg," brave as "Margaret Queen," she greets Death, if not with a smile, at least with a note of frank interrogation, and also we may be sure with the politeness to be expected from a Victorian gentlewoman.

But it seems she gets little change out of the old fellow. It is Margaret Veley who does all the talking; and when she has finished, Death is still "sitting there with the quiet face."

But her personal philosophy is a brave one, and in some respects almost an anticipation of the one that Mr. Bertrand Russell has given us in his fine essay, *A Free Man's Worship*. Only there is more poetry in Mr. Russell's essay than in Margaret Veley's verse. This is from *A Marriage of Shadows* :

Must all our life be quenched? It may be so.
 It may be so. Yet can it change my cry?
 Let the last man be nobler far than I.
 Though I am dead, though he shall surely die.
 It may be so. Yet who can tell the height,
 The joy, the white perfection of the light
 He may attain before the coming night.
 Who knows what clearer vision there shall be
 In the great days that I shall never see?
 Shall not this hope be hope enough for me?

Though there may be no personal immortality, though even the race itself is doomed to perish in the eventual night, she will continue to fling her challenge of life triumphant into the face of Death.

Yet will I scorn thee—scorn all craven fears,
 Flinging on high my handful of salt tears,
 To flash in lucid sunlight as I die,
 And Death, if it be Death, will I defy.

[*A Dream of Life and Death.*]

But she reflects it is easy enough to keep up one's spirits when one is young, but how will it be when old age comes on? Will her faith stand the strain?

But if I thus believe why fear old age?
 Why not pass boldly through the mocking mist
 In full assurance of eternal youth
 And of the final triumph of the sun?
 Ah! but my faith is like the sun itself—
 No little talisman to have and hold
 And grasp more tightly when the shadows come:
 But a mysterious majesty of light
 Across whose glory billows of black cloud
 Drive and the sudden darkness is astir
 With wavering of fantastic shapes of doubt.
 Unto the very verge of death we go
 With those who die. . . .

And so there is a shadow on the end.

[*A Shadow on the Dial.*]

It was not Death itself but the Death in Life of old age that Margaret Veley feared. But she need not have worried. Whatever gods there be decreed that she should be cut off in early middle age, actively engaged in her last novel, which I believe was never published.

One could hardly expect a Margaret Veley, who had survived Death for forty years to continue writing about it in the same strain. Such a phenomenon if it occurred would suggest the resuscitation of a past Margaret rather than a Margaret who had actively survived and developed in a new life.

It is perhaps just a little strange that nowhere in her script does M. V. make the slightest reference to these old preoccupations of her earthly life.

There is indeed one little poem on Death that occurs in the automatic script, but this is written in a naturalistic manner that is in no way reminiscent of any of the real Margaret Veley's published verse. The verses that follow were written on the 2nd November, 1927.

Come let us lay a wreath
 On the quiet brows of Death.
 For Death no flowers hath
 Nor any rose sweet-smelling ;
 Cold grief alone he hath
 And tears beyond all telling.
 So we'll build a rose-path
 Right round the roof-garden
 Of his lone damp dwelling.
 Come let us pipe a song
 To cheer Death's way along ;
 For Death no music hath
 But the wind in the swathe ;
 Or the quiet mossy tread
 Of footsteps overhead.
 O oft-times he
 Has sorry company
 When witless worms earouse
 Within his silent house.
 Death learns no news of Spring.
 He knows not night from day.
 So on his low door-sill
 Let a kind wren sing
 To while dark hours away.

(Signed) MARGARET VELEY.

Since much of the automatic verse is of the sort that is commonly known to-day as "Nature Poetry" it will be necessary for us to examine Margaret Veley's own attitude towards Nature. I think I should be right in saying that Margaret Veley never wrote verse for the sake of expressing her intimate feelings about landscape. When she wrote about Nature she did so in a way that was almost conventional and always incidental to her true concerns

which were human beings and their destiny. Tennyson could write

“ And only through the faded leaf
The chestnut pattering to the ground,”

and his disciple, Richard Dixon, of

“ The diamond drip of a white wing upon
A lake struck dead with shadows,”

but Margaret Veley never saw Nature with this delicate intensive observation. She was content to use the language of the precursors of the Romantic Revival. The “ peaceful plains,” “ the everlasting hills,” “ the groves and lawns,” “ the bowers,” “ the mossy fountains,” “ the laughing rills,” “ the ripened grain ”—all the well-worn pieces of the pre-romantic currency are to be found in her verse, and sometimes the old coins ring a little thin. Here is a typical specimen :

A land of sunny turf and laughing rills,
A land of endless summer sweet with dew,
Girt with a range of everlasting hills
Asleep beneath a sky of white and blue.
There with a silver flash mid grove and lawn
Like curving blades are thrust the narrow creeks,
And ocean breezes rise at dusk and dawn
With songs of freedom round the guardian peaks.
In sparkling air the poplars quiver high
In every thicket sing the birds unseen.
O'er sculptured walls beneath the glowing sky
Fruits cluster purple ripe and waters lie
Lucid in fountains rimmed with mossy green.

[*The Level Land.*]

“ Creeks like curving blades ” is good, but “ the guardian peaks ” seem to have been introduced into the landscape because the creeks were already there and they afford an obvious rhyme. Indeed, almost the whole of this passage could be re-written in simple prose without very much loss or gain in poetic quality. You do not make poetry by ironing out rather commonplace observations into smooth

pentameters. When the diction is undistinguished, as it is here, there must be some compensation in the way of rhythmic life or metrical subtlety.

But in impassioned moments of melancholy meditation Margaret Veley sometimes strikes on a fine image. Here are six lines from "A Shadow on the Dial" that convey the real thrill of poetry :

For Death is great, inscrutable, alone,
Common to all, but never commonplace.
It overhangs our dull and hackneyed lives
As the grey silence of an endless cliff
Sheer to the flood and towering to the sky
Defies and dominates a waste of waves.

Margaret Veley seems to have had a natural preference for five-stressed lines, but she wrote also a certain amount of heptasyllabic verse in a distinct trochaic metre. All the verse purporting to come from her spirit has either four or three stresses to the line, and the metre is invariably iambic.

Any notice of Margaret Veley's poetry would be incomplete without a quotation from her most remarkable effort, "A Japanese Fan," first published in *A Marriage of Shadows*. It is not a great poem or even a poem with great moments; but it is unlike anything else she ever wrote, and it is instinct with such a vivid sense of arrested life that as we read it to-day we feel as if the passing moments of one thundery day in the 'seventies had been caught and petrified for the inspection of some later age. The poetic form is for Margaret Veley's day unusual, and the free almost conversational rhythm serves to sustain and accentuate the undertones of gentle but grim irony that run beneath the forced vivacity. I quote the first forty-four lines.

How time flies! Have we been talking
For an hour?
Have we been so long imprisoned
By the shower
In this old oak-panelled parlour?
Is it noon?

Don't you think the rain is over
Rather soon ?

Since the heavy drops surprised us
And we fled
Here for shelter while it darkened
Overhead.

Since we leaned against the window
Saw the flash
Of the lightning, heard the rolling
Thundererash ;
You have looked at all the treasures
Gathered here
Out of days and countries
Far and near ;

At those glasses thin as bubbles
Opal bright
At the earved and slender chessmen
Red and white,
At the long array of china
Cups and plates—
Do you really understand them
Names and dates ?

At the tapestry where dingy
Shepherds stand
Holding grim and faded damsels
By the hand.

All the while my thoughts were busy
With the fan
Lying here, bamboo and paper
From Japan.

It is nothing ; very eommon
Be it so.

Do you wonder why I prize it
Care to know ?

Shall I teach you all the meaning,
The romance,

Of the picture you are seorning
With a glanee ?

COMPARISON WITH THE SCRIPT VERSES.

To discover the essential differences in diction between Margaret Veley's verse and the "spirit verse" we need only contrast a few stanzas of Margaret Veley's "Spring" with the automatic poem "April Storm" written on 22nd December, 1927.

Here are the first three stanzas of "Spring," the work of the real Margaret Veley :

Just a tiny blue-eyed maid
Newly out of Eden strayed ;
Lips a bud, rose-tinted rare
And the sunlight in her hair.
Here is Spring !

Leaves are few to make her bowers,
Bunches bright of leafless flowers
Are by baby fingers placed
Side by side in happy haste.
Little Spring !

Gardens dark with winter gloom
All at once begin to bloom,
Budding branches lifted high
Laugh and whisper in the sky.
Welcome Spring !

[From *A Marriage of Shadows.*]

And here is the "spirit" poem, written in the presence of *Miss Hunt* on 22nd December, 1927.

APRIL STORM.

Beneath this April storm Spring stirs
But hardly and with pain ;
Unwelcomed by the sun the buds
Break into green again.
Spring stirs, but earth lies wrapped about
With clouds and windy rain.

These are no tears wept softly down
Unto a patient earth,

That meekly drinks their drops and sees
 The lightly chasing mirth
 Of April follow down the wind,
 Her grief of little worth.

Scarcely a blue and sudden gleam
 Parts clouds of drifting grey ;
 The flickering fearful sunbeam comes
 But seldom here to stray
 His timid glance upon the fields
 Where the blown grasses sway.

Late in the sullen afternoon
 Blue livid clouds grow chill ;
 Moved in the low unkindly heavens
 By winds unkindlier still ;
 And trees like spattered purple ink
 Sprawl darkly on the hill.

There comes a sudden dash of rain
 That coldly stings the face ;
 Now all the wavering drops whirl on
 At the swift tempest pace ;
 While in the field wet flying gusts
 Swoop down through leagues of space.

And yet the tender leaves put forth
 Brave hearts beside the way ;
 For there is sap that mounts and sings
 In tree and hedge to-day ;
 And silken buds of willow-palms
 Flash green and silver-grey.

So blows the wind or beats the rain
 With scarce a ray between ;
 But there is joy in hearts of men
 Who other Springs have seen ;
 For low beneath heaven's folded cloud
 The world is growing green.

[Signed M. VELEY.]

Margaret Veley's poem has a captivating and winsome rhythm, but in it we miss I think some of the true and

tender observation there is in the spirit poem. Whoever wrote the spirit poem, he or she had at any rate actually observed a stormy April day and was not merely echoing what dead poets have said about April. I do not think the living Margaret Veley would have written the script poem. It remains on too objective a level. Margaret Veley could not have written so many verses without allowing her personal melancholy to appear. Even the "Spring" poem which begins objectively enough becomes subjective in tone after the three stanzas quoted.

Moreover, Margaret Veley's four-stress verse has generally a distinct falling cadence, while a feature of the spirit verse is an evenness of iambic movement with a predilection for rising cadences.

Moreover, I doubt if the living Margaret Veley would have introduced such specific detail as "silken buds of willow palms" or "trees like spattered purple ink." She was generally content with the almost Chaucerian simplicities of "leafless flowers," "budding branches," "sapless leaf and stem."

As regards vocabulary, the differences between the two poets are perhaps not very remarkable, but I have come across individual words such as "lucid" which the living Margaret Veley frequently used but which occur nowhere in the script verse.

The word "unkindly" which occurs in this script poem does not seem to have been one of Margaret Veley's words. And I am quite certain she would never have referred to the "roof-garden of a grave." [See p. 337.]

Probably many spiritualists will argue that such superfine criticism is beside the mark when it is a question of a poet who has been dead forty years. Forty years! Why in that time she might have developed into an Edith Sitwell or a Rose Macaulay, or at least a Miss Sackville-West. But if you asked me just what kind of poetry I should expect Margaret Veley to write after forty years of evolution in the "spheres" I should be completely nonplussed.

According to orthodox spiritualist tradition one ought I suppose, to expect a *vers libre* or at best a very free blank

verse. The sentiment would consist of lofty but rather boring moral platitudes, or perhaps of a nebulous mysticism striving feebly to penetrate a cloud of coloured words. But of two things we might be fairly certain: whatever the sentiment of the verse it would have no rhymes and no regular stanzas.

Setting aside the numerous sorry Shelleys and garrulous, inglorious Miltons that have provided poor enough sport even for the spiritualists themselves, there are on record few really interesting cases in which literary ghosts have been raised a quarter of a century or more after their deaths. Perhaps one of the most intriguing was the spirit return of Oscar Wilde in 1923 after a sojourn of twenty-three years in what (if we are to believe the unhappy author's own account) must have been the least delectable regions of Hades. This soi-disant Wilde, who continued to write through my hand for several weeks, reproduced not only the salient features of his mundane calligraphy—a feat that seems almost inexplicable on any psychological theory of the soul—but in addition all his egotism, most of his literary mannerisms and an occasional flash of his old wit and fire. Indeed, after nearly a quarter of a century of stagnation in what Sir A. Conan Doyle calls “the grey spheres” Wilde was still capable of producing a style equal to his earthly worst, and in the McGregor scripts even recovered his second best.

He made no attempts to write poetry, it is true, but he was no great hand at that on earth. When we remember what a fluent capacity the resurrected Wilde showed for writing imitations of himself, and sometimes bad ones at that, it seems at first sight curious that the spirit poems of Margaret Veley should be so entirely unlike those of the living authoress. But the anterior circumstances were widely different in the two cases. Before the Oscar Wilde scripts were produced I had read *De Profundis*, *The Picture of Dorian Grey*, and the *Ballad of Reading Gaol*—three works which contain a good deal of the quintessence of Wilde. There probably existed therefore sufficient well-assimilated material in my memory out of which my own subconscious activity could recon-

struct—or if you are a spiritualist—out of which the spirit of Oscar Wilde could reconstruct a very tolerable imitation of the dead author's prose style. But I am morally certain that besides the poem "Almond Blossom," which by the way bears no signature in *Harper's Magazine*, I had read nothing of Margaret Veley's at the time I received the messages.

Nowadays even the most ardent and advanced spiritualists are being compelled to admit that if the dead can communicate with the living they probably make use of material that is in the memories of the living. To permit oneself the dangerous licence of a metaphor, one might say that the spirit of Wilde found in my mind a well-tilled field in which to sow his seeds of style, while Margaret Veley found only a barren and stony ground.

But there is another consideration that must be given due weight. All who have had considerable practical experience of spiritualistic phenomena will know that if a psychic circle expressly concentrates its attention on getting some particular sort of manifestation the psychic energy seems to be diverted gradually into the desired channel, and the chosen manifestation will continue to develop at the expense of other rudimentary phenomena, which will be suppressed or at least clipped in their growth.

Now most of the Oscar Wilde scripts were produced in the general literary atmosphere of Mrs. Travers-Smith's Chelsea drawing-room. The conversation turned naturally on books and authors, and the people present were usually persons like Miss Cummins, with literary inclinations, who showed the liveliest interest in all that the so-called Wilde wrote. We did not strain after mere facts. Wilde was never pestered to give the name of his favourite horse or of the butler at Tite Street. When he "descended into the dull abyss of facts" he did so of his own free-will and under no pressure from us. In fact, our really strong interest in him was literary and not biographical, and so long as the experiment lasted we let this soi-disant Wilde develop for what he was worth as a literary personality. And there is much to be said in favour of

this attitude when dealing with literary ghosts. The study of subconscious literary creation is in itself a legitimate subject for psychic investigation, and one that is at least as fascinating as telepathy or clairvoyance. Only the earth-worms of psychic research will argue otherwise.

From the literary point of view I think it is possible that we lost a good deal by not giving the spirit of Margaret Veley more encouragement. Perhaps for a literary ghost we put her through too severe and too constant a catechism. *Miss Hunt* was sympathy and patience themselves, but between us I fancy we just failed somehow to provide the right atmosphere for the genial nurture of a rather shy poetic shade. If we had relaxed a little the tension of the sittings, and been less assiduous in interrogating M. V. on her family and connections, it is probable that Mr. Salter would have been provided with a smaller budget of facts, but that on the other hand the literary developments might have more than compensated for the loss.

Nothing, I feel, would be gained by printing here¹ the whole of M. V.'s script verses.

Enough to say that this verse is invariably melodious and well finished and charming in sentiment even though it does not reach a high imaginative level. And in the whole of it I have been unable to discover even slight indications that might lead one to suspect that the "real" Margaret Veley had any hand in it. A specimen or two will suffice.

The little poem which follows is the one by which the spirit M. V. first intimated her presence at the initial sitting on 22nd May, 1927. The form is here not altogether inappropriate to the mood.

SUNSET STREET.

Across the gardens to the sun,
When westward skies enthrone the sun,
I gaze, and lo! the gilding falls
With kindling strangeness on the walls.

¹ A complete copy of the M.V. verses is filed at the rooms of the Society.

A magic's loosed upon the street,
 And the last gables of the street,
 Shine more remote, and now to me
 Speak of a nobler masonry.

I seize the last good gift of day,
 Surprise the bounty of the day ;
 I make my rare, kind truce with Fate,
 And Here and Now obliterate.

Appropriate to me is this Time,
 I'm sovereign mistress of this Time,
 And Space has slipped its cable slack—
 The world's width's mine for gazing back.

Graciously stand the minarets
 Light-garmented ; those minarets
 Have talked with Time ; that turret's edge
 Despoils the sun of one bright wedge.

The sun-kissed stairways spire and climb,
 How airily they spire and climb !
 Beheld in beauty from their height
 All the long city lies in light.

Yon roof's a garden, leafed and flowered,
 With pink and purple bells 'tis flowered,
 And tunefully they're wont to swing
 On the gold fringe of evening.

Hear now ! a fragment of the chime
 Minute and silver-lipping chime !
 And perfumes wayward on my face
 Make sweet this lapse of Time and Space.

O land far-off from every day !
 O Age long-lost to every day :
 O vanquished leagues ! O captured hour !
 The sun has dipped behind the tower.

The sun has dipped behind the roof,
 Behind Rose Villa's gabled roof,
 And the last chimney-pot goes gray,
 A hundred sober yards away.

(Signed) MARGARET VELEY.

Certain of the unfinished fragments are perhaps more interesting than the completed efforts. I cite two examples. The first was written on 20th January, 1928, in the presence of *Miss Hunt*.

THE GARDEN.

In a corner close-embowered
 Where green boughs dip and shade,
 Where flakes of light are showered
 And a peace of leaves is made.
 Somewhere a child in a garden
 The flower of joy in her hands
 Stood near those other garden gates
 That open in unknown lands.
 Through musk and scent of roses . . .

(*Unfinished.*)

The second fragment is interesting as being the sole example of "Margaret Veley" verse written in the presence of a person other than *Miss Hunt*. After the middle of February, 1928, *Miss Hunt* was unable to co-operate any longer and the M. V. sittings came to an end. I did not resume automatic writing till the following May, when I had one sitting in the presence of Mrs. Mackenzie at No. 2 Adelaide Road. At this sitting the new communicator Mr. "X" manifested but not Margaret Veley. On October 10th however I had my second sitting with Mrs. Mackenzie, and at this sitting in addition to Mr. "X" the "spirit" of M. V. paid us a flying visit as unexpected as it was brief.

Having announced her presence by signing her name M. V. wrote a couple of stanzas of a poem called "The River," the first stanza being very confused and almost illegible. But the second stanza suggests that under happier conditions the poem would have been a charming one :

Rosebay and rush and reed-feather
 At its sweet selvedge elustering,
 While summer's luring finger-tips
 Draw bloom down to its laughing lips ;

Mirror of crystal shows !
 And for its robes' best fashioning
 As for the raiment of a king
 The flag-flower a purple blazon sews.

THE PROSE STYLE OF THE SCRIPTS.

Margaret Veley's novels are stamped with a date. Her poetry has an individual note, a faint characteristic vibration, but none of those great original qualities that will cause the verses of Edward Thomas and of W. H. Davies to be rediscovered and read again and again in the ages to come. Margaret Veley's poetry is an echo with a personal ring, but still only an echo. But while few nowadays would care to wade through her novels or read much of her verse, there remain a few passages culled from the letters she left that reveal a humour that is as fresh and sparkling in 1928 as it was in 1888. One could wish that Leslie Stephen had preserved for us more of this quiet ironic fun. Miss Jane Doe writes much in the same vein to-day. I will cite one or two examples. On one occasion Margaret Veley seems to have felt uncomfortable at having used the poetically commonplace flowers of amaranth and asphodel, and she looks them up in a French dictionary. In a letter she writes :

And they said that amaranth was "Love lies bleeding," "Prince's Feather," etc. Could Milton's angels be crowned with that? I attacked a book in thirty-six volumes on English Botany and hunted up a wild amaranth. Milton's amaranth, if I remember rightly, grows "hard by the tree of life," but the description of *my* wild amaranth began, "This dunghill plant grows chiefly in the neighbourhood of London."

She is reminded of "Moly," of which she used to read in Pope's *Odyssey*, and looks it up for old acquaintance sake :

Horror! The four authorities I consulted were all unanimous. It is a wild garlic with yellow flowers! After that—I can but hope the Lotus eaters lay very still; for the only wild garlic I know *if crushed*—

Asphodel is better but it was a shock to me to learn that it has a nutritive and medicinal root shaped like a small turnip.

This passage concerning "Moly" is interesting in connection with one of Mr. Salter's test questions and I shall refer to it later.

Margaret Veley was rather fond of playing on words. Of the cat Zoroaster she writes :

As for Zo he is simply and literally "the desolator" as Byron puts it. When I was planting out seedling asters the other evening in a hurry because the light was failing he said quite distinctly "A Zoroaster is better than a China-aster any day" and proceeded to plant himself in every hole in turn. Being with difficulty uprooted he climbed and bounced about till the next hole was ready.

Here is her analysis of this same garden :

"There are," she writes, "in 100 parts	
Stones (say) 76	
Potsherds, brickbats, bones	} 14
bits of glass and a rusty iron bar	
Worms, grubs, etc.	7
Bits of Newspaper and various	
rubbish always mysteriously arriving	} 2
about	

If you add it up you'll find it comes to just 100:—no it doesn't, it comes to 99. What little trifle have I forgotten? Well it can't much matter can it? Oh! but I have it:
Earth:—1

And there you are!"

There is little enough of this humour in the scripts, which are, except for the poems, devoid of either grace or style, being for the most part simply bare unentertaining lists of facts, names of family connections, etc.

In this barren desert there is one and only one little oasis which might lead one to believe that with proper encouragement the "spirit" Margaret might in time have developed a sense of fun not entirely unlike what is

revealed by the letters of the real Margaret. On 12th October, 1927, *Miss Hunt* being present, M. V. wrote :

I suppose I am very much of a back number by now. I often think of my six novels. They must now be mouldering in our national libraries with the rest of the fruit of dead men's brains.

Do they ever dust them I wonder? No doubt the worms have made many a meal off the works of M. Veley. What are the wild worms saying Margaret? However as my books must have bored so many readers it is only right that they should end in being bored also. Do the little worms prefer our old-fashioned paper to your modern wood-pulp?

It is only a gleam, but there seems to be here a tendency to play on words rather reminiscent of the "Zoroaster" passage quoted above.

One may indeed question if Margaret Veley in her lifetime would have referred to herself as a back-number as she was somewhat of a purist in her English. In another script she calls herself a "Britisher." At the time when Margaret Veley wrote there appears to have been a prejudice in literary circles against the use of this word which was an importation from America.

But if Margaret Veley, who admits that this was not the first spiritualistic séance she has visited, is in sufficiently close touch with the living to be able to reply to their spoken words by automatic writing have we any right to suppose that her vocabulary would remain what it was in 1887? Oscar Wilde claimed to have read the novels of Arnold Bennett through twentieth century eyes, and he even criticised them rather amusingly if somewhat caustically according to his old canons of aesthetic creed. Why should not a surviving Margaret Veley in contact with the living have picked up fresh phrases during the years just as we do ourselves?

Indeed, if what survives the death of the body is a true mind, with all its capacities for development and adaptation, we might well expect to find that after forty years' sojourn in a new environment this mind had

changed out of all recognition so far as its faculties and mental content are concerned. We ought not to be surprised if we find it as difficult to identify by purely mental traits a posthumous M. V. of 1927 with the old M. V. of 1887 as it would be for us to discover the boy of six in the grown man of forty-six. In the last case, apart from such purely physical permanences as birth-marks or finger-prints, we should have to rely upon a few uncertain childish memories as the sole material for identification.

On the other hand, what survives death may not be, as the spiritualists believe, a real mind, but only a timeless component of the old mind which is captured and revitalised into a sort of temporary new mind by the nervous system of the automatist. In this case we might expect the new mind to exhibit certain characteristics of the old, but these would be modified by the fusion of the surviving components with the new organism.

Unfortunately our ignorance of the real nature of the surviving components of human minds makes it at present impossible for us to determine just what qualities of the old mind we should expect the new compound mind to exhibit.

Is this surviving entity to be identified, for instance, with the "Pure Memory" of Bergson, which persists but is unable to realise itself as consciousness except when fused with the perceptions of a living organism? And, if so, would such personal traits as handwriting, word habits, facial gestures, vocal characteristics, etc., which would seem to depend largely upon mechanisms built up inside the nervous system, perish utterly with the old organism? Yet we know that many sitters claim to recognise the physical idiosyncrasies of deceased relatives in the gestures of an entranced medium.

In the Margaret Veley scripts the handwriting seems indistinguishable from my own, but in the scripts of Oscar Wilde the writing bears an indisputable resemblance to that of the living author. But I should deny emphatically that it was a replica of Wilde's own handwriting. When I come to examine it it seems to be rather my own

handwriting modified by the introduction of Wildean characteristics. It is, in fact, my own handwriting disguised by such devices as the breaking up of individual words, the substitution of Greek *alpha*'s for *a*'s and Wildean *r*'s and *f*'s for my own *r*'s and *f*'s.

Handwriting is undoubtedly a bodily habit, but it is nevertheless probable that there is associated with it an element of what Bergson calls "Pure Memory." The mere fact that we are able to recognise other people's handwriting when we see it shows that we retain a memory of handwriting that is different from the mere automatic memory of the nervous mechanism which reproduces it.

If this spiritual memory is part of the surviving component of mind we might expect the handwritings of automatic scripts to bear certain resemblances to those of the living personalities without being in any sense exact replicas.

The real difficulty is to explain why characteristics of the handwriting of Wilde are reproduced and no such characteristics in the case of Margaret Veley by one and the same automatist.

Reproduction of handwriting is, however, a very rare phenomenon in the history of automatism.

There is indeed the classical case of Mrs. Thompson who reproduced in her trance handwriting which bore a remarkable resemblance to that of the late Prof. Henry Sidgwick. It was pointed out however by Mr. Piddington [*Proceedings*, vol. xviii.] that there was no reasonable certainty that the medium had not previously seen a specimen of Prof. Sidgwick's handwriting. In this connection Mr. Piddington mentions his own capacity for vivid visualization during dreams of the handwriting of various friends and conjectures that this faculty may be even more active in the mediumistic trance.

Such considerations might tempt one to suppose that sometime in the year 1914 I had casually glanced at the Countess de Brèremont's *Oscar Wilde*, a book that was rather prominently displayed on the bookstalls of that time and which contains a facsimile letter of Wilde's,

were it not for the fact that the later O. W. scripts contain certain calligraphic details such as the "looped" f which do not appear in this specimen. It is not therefore easy to dispose of the handwriting in the Wilde script as an example of cryptomnesia, and the mystery remains.

HYPOTHESES.

I. The Hypothesis of Conscious Fraud.

At the end of his paper Mr. Salter expresses the opinion that if the scripts are a fake then they are an elaborate and ingenious fake. Elaborate the fake would certainly be in this respect that the faker must have spent a great deal of time in ferretting out the various bits of information, but I can hardly admit that it merits the word "ingenious." Indeed, I am frightened to think how much more effectively the thing could have been done by a forger who set about the business in a systematic way. How these dull scripts could have been enlivened with local colour by means of a judicious and discreet questioning of unsuspecting old Braintree residents, some of whom would almost certainly have known Margaret Veley in their youth. Then it seems scarcely credible that a faker who can presumably write verse should refrain from setting himself the easy exercise of imitating Margaret Veley's unaffected pentameters. And when he started to collect information one would imagine that the clever faker would certainly make a point of visiting the Veley tombstones in Braintree cemetery and of noting carefully what was inscribed on each of them. And, having done so, he would have been well primed with the Christian names of Alice Holmes' second son who died in childhood. But our faker apparently has been so clumsy as to neglect to read the simple book of the churchyard tomb, and so he is unprepared to give the name of Edward Holmes' second son. He has, however, got hold of something more difficult—the name Bernard Willoughby of the third son which is not to be found in the churchyard.

The faker, however, is very familiar with the old Essex directories prior to 1887—so familiar, in fact, that he

was able to give extempore in reply to an unforeseen question, the correct names Harrisson, Jessops and Tillcock (Till the Cock Crow?) of three former residents in Great Square, Braintree, and, in addition, the occupation of Harrisson. He is also well aware of the existence of the lawyer Cunnington and of the fact that the latter was in close touch with Mr. Veley's business. The directory which has taught our faker so much should also have taught him that the Christian name of Mr. Cunnington was Augustus. Apparently, however, in spite of his excellent memory for the obscure Jessop, Harrisson and Tillcock, he has failed to note that the name of Cunnington is the same as that of the elder Veley. Or, having noted it, he is so obtuse that he cannot by putting two and two together connect up the "Uncle Gus" of the test question with the only Augustus that was at all eligible for the sobriquet.

In one of the scripts our faker gives the surname Miss Day in a wrong connection. This Miss Day was the name of Edward Holmes' second wife, who came from Peckham and is therefore not mentioned in the Braintree list of residents. How came the faker to get hold of this name if not through reading some old notice of Miss Day's wedding to Edward Holmes? And if he had come across such a notice would he not have pounced upon it and pigeon-holed it in his memory for future use? Yet how comes it that when he is asked the name of Edward Holmes' second wife he is unable to give it? A week later, however, he volunteers correctly the Christian name Agnes of Edward Holmes' second wife, but still does not produce the surname. What are we to make of this?

But the most astonishing puzzle yet remains. Why should a perpetrator of literary hoaxes, who has presumably faked the Oscar Wilde script so well as to deceive both Robert Lynd and James Douglas, condescend to angle for a lesser literary fish like Margaret Veley? Would he not have chosen for his second attempt some writer still remembered by our generation, and one whose style would repay imitation and whose resurrection would cause a little flutter in the literary world?

Our faker is not only clumsy and strangely negligent but also curiously oblivious of his own self-interests.

II. *The Hypothesis of Cryptomnesia.*

I do not think cryptomnesia can be accepted as a major explanation of the Margaret Veley scripts any more than it would serve to account for the Oscar Wilde scripts taken in their entirety.

It is true that there are fragments of the Oscar Wilde script which almost certainly had their origin in passages that I had previously read in books or composed myself. [See *Psychic Science*, Jan. 1924, p. 314, and *S.P.R. Journal*, July, 1926.] The resemblances in these cases are too obvious to be ignored, and cryptomnesia seems a perfectly legitimate explanation when applied to these individual instances. But for my mind to have gathered together the very numerous scraps of information—many of them of an out-of-the-way kind—which are scattered throughout the scripts it would be necessary to assume that I had seen at least five different lives of Wilde, and opened in a casual way a number of out-of-print books such as *My Diaries*, by Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, at just those pages where Oscar Wilde is mentioned.

Further, I must have obtained also in a casual way a far more intimate acquaintance with Wilde's prose works than is represented by a reading of *De Profundis*, *The Picture of Dorian Grey*, and the *Selected Poems*. The criticisms of living authors, for instance, would seem to be modelled on those contained in *The Decay of Lying*, though in no sense could they be described as plagiarisms. And it is difficult to believe that certain of the automatic essays could have been written by anyone who had not steeped himself in the languid music of *Intentions*. Similar arguments against cryptomnesia apply with even more force to the Margaret Veley scripts.

While, for instance, it is possible that all the facts concerning Edward Holmes and his family had their origin in my boyhood's reading of the *Essex Weekly News* from 1898 onwards it is practically certain that my knowledge of the cat Zoroaster and of the "Moly" incident could

have come from no other source than the out-of-print work *A Marriage of Shadows*.

But even if we supposed that I might on some forgotten occasion have come across this book on some second-hand book-stall and casually turned over its pages there are still large numbers of facts quite unaccounted for. There is, for instance, the knowledge shown of the friendship between the Veleys and the Overtons, or the fact that the Veleys and Tabors were acquainted. It seems certain that, even if these items could have been ferretted out of old newspapers, we should have to go back to the years before I was born. Again, there is the knowledge of the Christian name Julia of Margaret Veley's elder sister who is referred to in *A Marriage of Shadows* merely as Mrs. Webb. It is rather doubtful if that Christian name, together with the lady's relationship to Margaret Veley, could have been obtained from an Essex newspaper of so late a date as 1898.

To have got the name Cox and his occupation of druggist we should have to refer to old directories or newspapers round about the year 1854.

The names of former vicars of Braintree could have been learned easily by walking inside Braintree church, but I am certain I was never inside that church till I visited it in September, 1928, in company with Mr. Salter. It is very improbable though not impossible, that these names should have been mentioned in the *Essex Weekly News* as late as 1898.

It is also interesting to note that "Agnes," the Christian name of Edward Holmes' second wife, is not given in the obituary notice of him which appeared in 1909, while the marriage itself took place in the 'seventies.

SUPERNORMAL HYPOTHESES.

The Automatist's Links with the Communicator.

If I did not know the truth about these scripts, and were compelled to choose between conscious fraud and cryptomnesia, I should have to stake on fraud.

Fortunately we are not confined to such a choice. The

case has at least one curious precedent in the "Hacking" communications of a few years ago. Here the casual week-end visit of a Wesleyan clergyman to the town of Bury, and his subsequent attendance at a spiritualist séance, seems to have been the occasion for an immense outpouring of information from a trance medium concerning the shopkeepers, tradesmen and other vanished residents of the district in which the late Mr. Hacking had lived half a century ago.

In this case the link between the psychic circle and the "intelligence" behind the communications seems to have been of the slightest; apparently the mere fact that one of the circle had recently visited the locality was sufficient to start the train of supernormal communication.

In the Veley case the links are equally tenuous, but still they are there. I had once in my life passed an hour in the town in which Margaret Veley had lived. Mr. Luke Ionides, an old friend of Miss Veley, had visited his son in the district in which I lived. Though I have never spoken to Mr. Luke Ionides I have seen him at least once as he was being driven past me in a pony-cart, while his son Mr. Cyril Ionides lived only a mile and a half from my home. With Mr. Cyril Ionides I have had many long conversations, but at that time I was unaware that the Christian name of his father was Luke. So far as I am aware Mr. Cyril Ionides knew nothing of Margaret Veley; at any rate she was never made the subject of conversation.

Another link may have been made by my reading of the poem "Almond Blossom."

I. The Hypothesis of Telepathy.

The first of the supernormal explanations which naturally suggests itself is telepathy from the living. There are, I think, several good reasons for rejecting this hypothesis as a major explanation.

In the first place I have never been able to discover that my automatic writing ever reflects the ideas or thoughts of the persons in whose company I write. At the time when I was producing the "Oscar Wilde" scripts

Mrs. Travers-Smith was herself getting messages through the Ouija board purporting to come from the same author. These messages were spelled out in my absence, and when I visited her flat to attempt my own writing Mrs. Travers-Smith would carefully refrain from showing me these Ouija messages until my own script was finished. Here, therefore, was a unique opportunity for telepathy to assert itself. Nevertheless, I was quite unable to find that my scripts were in any way influenced by those Mrs. Travers-Smith had written in my absence. If, therefore, telepathy failed to operate at a time when the conditions seemed particularly favourable, it is difficult to imagine that while the Veley scripts were being produced my mind succeeded in establishing rapport with the minds of people who were quite unknown to me and who had in all probability never heard of me.

Again, I think it is extremely improbable that any one of Margaret Veley's living friends had in his or her memory every one of the complex array of facts given at the sittings. Granting this we should have to assume that the case is not a simple case of accidental rapport established between my mind and the mind of some individual relative or friend. Instead it would be necessary to suppose that my subconscious mind had accomplished extraordinary feats of selection. It has had, so to speak, to knock at the doors of perhaps three or four different minds, and, gaining an entry, manage to obtain just those bits of information that are connected with Margaret Veley, extracting from one mind what it could not find in another. A similar supposition would have to be made if one tried to explain by telepathy from the living certain mental phenomena of Mrs. Piper, Mrs. Thompson or Mrs. Leonard.

But perhaps the main reason for rejecting the hypothesis that Margaret Veley's living friends were the real source of the facts given in the script is to be sought for in the nature of the facts themselves.

On the assumption of spontaneous telepathy from the mind of an intimate friend one would, I think, expect the subject matter of communication to consist largely of

the recollection of trivial incidents and personal souvenirs having an emotional interest for the mind of the living friend.

The bulk of the information tendered, however, is not of this private personal character, but consists of facts that must have been known to hundreds of residents of Braintree who were quite outside Miss Veley's circle. I should hardly expect, for instance, that one of Miss Veley's intimates would provide me with such bits of information as the existence of the druggist Cox (which goes back to the 'fifties) or the fact that Augustus Veley had a brother F. Veley. The story of the pony walking up to its girth in a pond on a dark night is more the sort of thing one would expect if telepathy were at work. Unfortunately, although the narration of this alleged incident is accompanied by names that are correct and plausible, the story itself remains unverified. Possibly, of course, all the people are now dead who could have confirmed it. As it is we have no evidence that the story is anything more than a cunning subconscious fabrication, with one or two names added to lend it an air of plausibility.

In fact the messages are singularly devoid of just those pieces of private information that one often obtains at a good sitting with Mrs. Leonard, and which would serve to support the hypothesis of telepathy from either the dead Margaret Veley or from at least one of her still-living intimate friends.

The conjecture that the information was obtained telepathically from the mind of some Braintree resident who was not an intimate of Miss Veley's circle squares better with the actual facts, but I do not think it is entirely satisfactory. We should, of course, have to assume that such an old resident knew at least the names of Miss Veley's novels, and that he had read *A Marriage of Shadows*, as otherwise we should be unable to account for the "Moly" incident.

We might reasonably expect that living for years in Braintree he would know all or much more than the scripts give about Edward Holmes and his affairs. He

might easily be aware that the Overtons were friends of the Veleys.

But should we be likely to get from a Braintree resident the out-of-the-way fact that Mr. Alfred Warner, the husband of Constance, lived at Montagu Street,¹ London?

II. The Hypothesis of Clairvoyance.

To suggest that the supernormal knowledge contained in these scripts has its source in "a perception of Reality," or "a sixth sense," is merely to renounce all attempts at intelligent discussion.

I do not think that any advantage is gained by abandoning the old-established terms telepathy, telaesthesia, clairvoyance, in favour of some all-embracing non-committal word like "cryptaesthesia." It is true that when we describe a case as a case of telepathy or of telaesthesia we do not thereby gain any intimate understanding of it, but at least we classify it by assimilating it to a familiar class of phenomena which resemble it in certain important characteristics. It may be true also that our present system of classification of mental phenomena is often crude and misleading, but that is no reason for abandoning the system before we have evolved a better one.

In the case of the Margaret Veley scripts we must ask ourselves: "To what known class of supernormal phenomena are these scripts most readily assimilated?"

We have seen that the facts are on the whole not the sort of facts that come easily under the heading of spontaneous telepathy, whether we understand this term to mean an involuntary transmission of thought from a distant agent to the automatist, or an active reading by the automatist's subconscious mind of the mind of the distant agent.

Now it seems certain that the great bulk of the verified information exists somewhere as printed matter in books, directories, newspapers, or even birth certificates or death

¹Not quite accurately given in the script as Montgomery Street, but taken in conjunction with the other facts near enough to put coincidence out of the question.

certificates, and there is the possibility that with sufficient patience all the facts could be traced to printed sources, although Mr. Salter has not so far succeeded in doing this. Even items such as "the hothouses of Mr. Holmes" may quite possibly be mentioned in some old column of *Brain-tree* news, say, in connection with a gift to a local hospital, etc.

In fact, with the exception of the two unverified incidents of "the broken bottle in Cox's shop" and of "the pony walking into the pond," and of perhaps the knowledge shown of Mr. Luke Ionides' habit of reading the *Spectator*, there is hardly anything in the scripts that we might not reasonably expect to find in print if we could search long enough.

I would suggest that the *Spectator* incident might be no more than an astute inference drawn by my own subconscious mind from a memory I had of Mr. Cyril Ionides writing occasional articles on his barge for the same paper.

Moreover, there is curious accuracy in the answer given to the question about the herb "Moly" that suggests strongly that the real source was neither the memory of Margaret Veley nor of a living relative, but the account given in Leslie Stephen's biography.

Now the supernormal reading of printed matter is a phenomenon that seems now to be fairly well established through the book-tests of Mrs. Leonard and Mrs. Cooper, and by such isolated experiments as those of Mr. Dunne and others.

Whether, with Mr. Drayton-Thomas, we look upon the phenomena as being due to the agency of a discarnate spirit, or whether, with Mr. Dunne, we see in them the mind's prevision of its own future experience, is immaterial to our present purpose.

The fact remains that we have a good deal of evidence tending to show that there is sometimes an apparent reading of printed matter by supernormal means. In supposing such a supernormal faculty to be at work in the M. V. scripts we should of course have to postulate that it possessed an extraordinary selective power over its material. But in Mr. Drayton-Thomas' experiments with

books the faculty seems also to be endowed with considerable powers of selection. Just those phrases are chosen from the books which are in some way appropriate to Mr. Drayton-Thomas' late father. Mr. Drayton-Thomas is of opinion that the possessor of this supernatural power of reading closed books is the actual surviving personality of his deceased father. I would not venture so far as to suggest that in my case the intelligence which apparently reads old newspapers and directories is the spirit of Margaret Veley. I have, however, some reason for believing that the agent at work is not solely my own subconscious mind.

After reading Mr. Dunne's book, *An Experiment with Time*, I have repeatedly tried to obtain impressions through automatic writing of the contents of books I had not previously read. Though as far as possible I followed Mr. Dunne's methods I have never obtained anything I could call even a moderate success. My hand wrote phrases, but they were either inappropriate or well within the scope of chance-coincidence. Nor can my failure be attributed to lack of emotional interest. I was at least as keenly interested in getting successful results in this direction as ever I have been in obtaining sensational "communications" from the dead. And it is this repeated failure that makes me believe that, if the M. V. scripts have their origin in a supernatural reading of distant printed sources, there is probably some factor at work which is external to my own mind.

III. The Spirit Hypothesis.

In discussing this, our final hypothesis, I am well aware that I am venturing into regions that in our present ignorance would seem to lie beyond the limits of legitimate scientific speculation. The history of modern science is a record of the elimination of spirits as agencies in the working of the world and the substitution of rational laws and mechanisms. When Kepler discovered that the planets describe elliptic orbits with the sun as focus he supposed that each planet was kept in its path by a "guiding angel." To-day we look no longer for angels but

seek to interpret gravitation by the very geometry of the space-time in which we live.

Our science of psychical research is still in the empirical stage. It is still to-day a collection of "cases" and isolated observations, with not a single well-established law to its credit so far as supernormal phenomena are concerned.

It is true, of course, that the scientific study of mind in general has not made any progress comparable with that achieved by experimental physics or chemistry. Nevertheless, if we are to make any scientific progress at all in either normal or abnormal psychology, our efforts must be directed towards the discovery of rational and uniform laws in the mental field, always assuming of course that such laws exist.

Our first efforts in psychic research therefore should be directed towards an exploration of the mechanisms of the subconscious parts of the mind and the laws which underlie its supernormal activities. Our primary business is with the living minds that we partially know and not with the hypothetical spirits of the dead. Immediately we begin to "explain," say, a case of telepathy, by postulating that the message was "carried" by the spirit of a dead man from the agent to the percipient, we are advancing the kind of hypothesis that will lead us nowhere. Such "explanations" in reality explain nothing, and no true scientific man will be deceived by them.

We have not yet accumulated sufficient experience to be able to say with even probable certainty what are the limits of the supernormal knowledge to be expected from a medium concerning a person who has been dead for one, five, ten, twenty or forty years. Decades of work may have to be done before we are even in sight of such certainty.

To-day we attempt to estimate what a spirit should be expected to remember by analogy with what we know about the memories of some living people. But such analogies may not be legitimate, and the psychology of the surviving mind may for ought we know be quite different from that of the living mind. It is only our lack of organised knowledge that makes us resort to such analogies.

The failure of a soi-disant Myers to reveal the contents of a sealed envelope—a test which the living Myers set great store upon—certainly does not advance his claim to be considered the surviving mind of the living Myers, but on the other hand it does not entirely invalidate it. It is conceivable that a personality might survive which showed a great many of the characteristics of the living Myers, but nevertheless with certain lacunæ in its memory.

In our present ignorance we are quite justified in putting the onus on the “spirits” to prove their case if they can, but we are not justified in making dogmatic assertions as to what a spirit should be expected to remember.

Because I find I have forgotten the names of scores of men whom I knew quite well in the army ten years ago, and whose faces and personal characteristics I can still recall, I argue illogically that we ought not to be surprised to find that after forty years Margaret Veley cannot remember the name of the gardener at Great Square or the name of the pony.

Still pursuing the analogy I argue again illogically that, though Margaret Veley could not be expected to name the gardener or the originals of the two pastel portraits, yet she ought to have been able to describe them and tell interesting anecdotes about them, since in my own case, although I have forgotten the name of the man who slept in the dug-out with me at Guillemont, I could yet tell quite a number of true things about him.

But in this case the vagaries of the apparent “spirit memory” are even more disconcerting than the lapses. “M. V.” can give us the names of people like Harrisson, Jessops and Tillcocks, who meant probably little to her in life, and yet fails to recognise the name Fish as being that of her old nurse. And how is it that the mention of “Uncle Gus” awakens no responsive chord in her memory? Here, as in the case of “Fish,” the difficulty cannot be the comprehensible difficulty in recalling a proper name. There is here apparently a real lacuna in the surviving memory.

Of course it may be possible that one day, if the spirit hypothesis becomes *scientifically* established, perfectly

legitimate explanations may be forthcoming with regard to such apparent lapses of memory. But until that day comes it is simply a waste of time to try to argue about them, and a still greater waste of time to attempt to invent arbitrary excuses for them.

Again, I notice that throughout the scripts there is often considerable circumlocution in the finding of proper names. Thus, in trying to recall her mother's name Sophia, the "spirit" is *apparently* only aware that the name she is trying to give has some association with an article of furniture, and *Miss Hunt* finds the right word for her by suggesting "Sofa." In trying to recall the name Stephen she can only remember at first that she is after a Biblical name and then that it was the name of a man who was stoned.

In all this I may fancy that I detect an analogy with what is observed to happen in the case of certain aphasics. But if I am wise I shall bear in mind that the analogy may be merely a superficial one, and I shall refrain from following the pernicious example of those psychic researchers who rear their imposing castles of philosophy on foundations that would not bear the weight of a wooden hut.

For aught I know all this circumlocution in the giving of names may be nothing more than a mere piece of unconscious play-acting, and I absolutely refuse to see in it any support for the "instrumental" theory of mind, or indeed of any other theory.

In conclusion, I do not wish to ridicule the spiritistic interpretation of these communications. It may conceivably be true that the surviving spirit of Margaret Veley in some mysterious way assisted in their production. I would merely emphasise that, regarded as a scientific working hypothesis, spiritism does not seem to me to be a very hopeful avenue of investigation. The spirit hypothesis has a delusive appearance of simplicity, but so also had Kepler's hypothesis of guiding angels. And how remote this was from the complex reality of Einstein's description of gravitation! In fact, if these supernormal mental phenomena depend on the whims and caprices of departed spirits, then I for one despair of ever being able to discover any law and order in them.

One final word must be added. Cases of automatism like those of "Oscar Wilde" or of "Margaret Veley" can in no sense be considered as controlled experiments, and it would be absurd to criticise them as such. If one takes a sitter anonymously to an automatist with proper precautions controlled experiments can be made, but when an automatist suddenly produces a communication purporting to come from a dead author no one can produce irrefutable evidence of the exact extent of the automatist's previous knowledge. The case, therefore, fails at the outset to satisfy the canons of scientific investigation. Nevertheless, such cases provide interesting material for reflection and speculation.

THE POETRY OF MR. "X."

Although the *Proceedings* of this Society are only concerned indirectly with literature as such I have thought it worth while for purposes of comparison to give specimens of the work of another communicator who writes almost exclusively in verse. Mr. "X" put in his first appearance on 1st February, 1928, at one of the later M. V. sittings, when he expressed a desire to write a poem through my hand. Permission being granted he began immediately, and in a little over forty-five minutes he had produced without a pause the poem "Unfamiliar Sounds," *Miss Hunt* touching my hand in the usual way. On our questioning him he declared that his identity was of no importance to us and that he wished to be referred to as Mr. "X," the unknown, and under this signature all his subsequent verses have been written.

The poem "Unfamiliar Sounds" printed below stands as it left the pencil of Mr. "X," except for one or two quite trivial corrections which he made at the next sitting when he asked *Miss Hunt* to read the poem aloud. This sitting was the last I had with *Miss Hunt*, who was prevented by pressure of business from assisting me further with my automatic writing.

I did not resume automatic writing till May 1928, when I attempted writing one day in the presence of Mrs. Mackenzie, wife of Prof. J. Mackenzie, late Fellow of Trinity

College, Cambridge, at their house in Adelaide Road, Chalk Farm. M. V. did not manifest at this sitting, but Mr. "X" wrote the first three verses of what proved subsequently to be a very long poem called "Moel Siabod," descriptive of the Welsh mountain of that name which I know intimately through many holidays spent in the Snowdon district.

After this first sitting with Mrs. Mackenzie University examination work made it impossible to continue with automatic writing until the following October. On Oct. 10th I had a second sitting with Mrs. Mackenzie, and at this sitting "X" manifested and resumed immediately the writing of "Moel Siabod" at the point where he had abandoned it in May. The sittings with Mrs. Mackenzie were now continued weekly during the whole of the autumn term, and "X" wrote "Moel Siabod" at the rate of perhaps half a dozen or sometimes more stanzas a week. There was much re-writing and many emendations but at last towards the end of December the long poem was finished. In all there are 72 stanzas written in the metre of *In Memoriam*.

During all this time "X" had persistently refused to disclose his identity, but on one occasion he told us that during his lifetime he had visited the Snowdon district and that after his death he had "seen the Snowdon mountains through the eyes of this automatist"—presumably on the occasion of one of my many visits to North Wales.

On 19th December, 1928, "X" wrote the first fifteen lines of a new "Welsh" poem "Tryfan," which was completed at the next sitting of 2nd January, 1929.

Of the 150 lines this poem contains I have only space to print the first forty, but the level of the poem is maintained throughout both as regards imagination and finish.

Concerning "X" I think that we may justly claim that he is both a more ambitious and a more promising poet than the "M. V." of the script. His imaginative range is wider and his subject matter more modern, and at present he continues to develop in poetic power while "M. V." has apparently declined and ceased to manifest.

But the objections to his claim to be considered a "spirit" are even greater with Mr. "X" than in the case of "M. V." On one occasion Mrs. Mackenzie asked "X" if he were "Mr. V.'s" subconscious mind and he replied "Certainly not!" but in spite of this rather indignant denial he produces no evidence that he is anything else.

He writes poems about two Welsh mountains, "Moel Siabod" and "Tryfan," both of which I know in all their aspects. I have climbed "Moel Siabod" in all twenty-one times—from Dolwyddelen as well as from Capel Curig—and I have made the descent to Pen-y-Gwryd as well as to Lake Gwynant. I have stood between the two stone men on the rocky summit of "Tryfan" and I have seen them from the Bangor Road black against a sunset sky. There is no Welsh name or old allusion in these two long poems that is not known to me. All this subject matter therefore has been the food of my own senses, and there is no need to think of "X" as anything else than my own subconscious activity assimilating and transforming this raw material.

Indeed it is only a commonplace to say that all poetic creation exemplifies the same process. An impression is received by way of the senses; it is idly rejected as of no importance and works its way down into some forgotten subsoil of the mind where it lies buried for days or months or years. One day there is thrown up a jewel, a shining gem, polished by the ceaseless fretting of the mind's dark waters.

With different automatic writers this work of subconscious transformation is carried on to varied stages. In the case of "Patience Worth" the crude images, more or less striking and fine, are poured out in profusion but the poetic form which would give them a proper setting is absent, and for lack of this poetic setting the images lose much of their effect as poetry. But "X" achieves not only the poetic images and ideas but a poetic form as well. With this much introduction we may leave his verses to speak for themselves.

1st February, 1928.

UNFAMILIAR SOUNDS.

What men call silence is no more
 Than a dead blank wall of divide
 Between two worlds of living sound.
 On one side is the world we know,
 Replete with voices that abide
 In seas and streams and winds ablow :
 And in the roaring mortal tide
 That fills a city's narrow creeks
 With unremitting ebb and flow
 Of human-kind that vainly seeks
 A Pcaee only the dead may know.

But listen hard against that wall
 And listening you may chance to hear
 What lies beyond the farther side
 Of silence ; sounds too faint, too small
 Droning or shrill to make a clear
 Impression on your body's ear.

In graveyard grass one afternoon
 With ear close-pressed to earth I heard
 At first, only the worm's small word,
 Twixt mouthfuls as he strives to cram
 His maw with moist black earthen mould,
 Pushing his body's battering-ram
 Through endless realms of dark and cold.

But close on his small voice came soon
 The song of lady-bird aswoon
 A-sway upon a rye-grass stem ;
 Then the minute plaintive anthem
 Of small mites numberless that crowd
 On shady sides of leaf and stalk ;
 I heard the weevil take his walk
 And think his teeming thoughts aloud :
 I heard that hot still afternoon :—
 The song the mother earwigs eroon
 Above their babies in the egg ;

The rubbing of a hive-bee's leg
 That scrapes the pollen from its jaws ;
 The strange, sad sigh the beetle draws
 When he's benighted far from home ;
 Trowel-taps on the waxy walls
 Of bee-masons building honeycomb ;
 And the swift scurrying footfalls
 Of frightened ants that cross a stone.

But when
 Those voices into silence flown
 There came a hush as deep as death
 I held my breath and listened on—
 I hardly dared to draw my breath—
 All was so still,—and then—anon
 The voiceless vegetable earth
 That erewhile lived without a tongue
 To stammer forth its grief and mirth
 Broke into joyful woeful song.

The eagerness of growing shoots
 That seem to thrust aside the air ;
 The steady, patient push of roots,
 As downward through the earth they bear ;
 The living sap that mounts and sings
 Breathless in twig and leafy spray :
 The slow swelling of a seed's wings
 That lift and bear the seed to Day :
 And stirrings multitudinous
 In fungus, leaf-mould and humus ;
 I heard them all as plain and clear
 As though they sang into my ear.

I heard the slow-foot lichens creep
 Up and up a grey church wall,
 Morn and noon and while men sleep.
 Those slow-foot armies measure pace
 Not by steps but years of grace,
 Marking time by lives of men :
 Fighting upwards from their base
 In generations dead and gone ;
 Tireless, hasteless now as then ;

They conquer inches, spread and sprawl
And end at last by winning all
That wide empire of ancient stone.

I heard the busy shuttles ply
On Moss's wide-spread loom that weaves
Green carpets for the forest floors ;
I heard the sand-wasp seal her doors
And the black saw-fly slitting leaves.

I caught the groans of trampled grass
That bore in patience overlong
Insults from countless feet that pass
And never aired its grievous wrong.

With bitter cries from bleeding boughs
Wild blasts have torn from forest trees ;
And bitter cries from leafless boughs
When angry winds have stripped them bare ;
From herbage bitten by the cows
And hawksbit nibbled by the hare :

Thirst-ravings, sun-parched agonies
Of weeds uprooted by the ploughs
In stony furrows stacked to dry
Or smoulder on the bonfires there.

And hollow sighs from hemlock stalks
A boy has bruised in passing by
Who smites them whistling as he walks
And leaves them sagged and bent to die.

So plants have suffered patiently
In silence—inmemorially—
That day their vast unpitied pain
Took root and blossomed in my brain.

Then letting drop my thought's plummet
Beneath the grass and violet,
Below the tap-root of the fir
I sought to catch the hidden stir
And trace the devious unguessed course
Of darkling water underground,

That like a gleamless tangled skein
 Meshes and nets the whole world round—
 Water that is the secret source
 Of life to many a lusty tree
 (In lands forsaken of the rain)
 Which faring men will stop to see
 And carry pictured in their brain,
 Its goodly full-leaved greenery :
 And ponder over all their days
 Such beauty reared in barren ways.

I thought the eye of science spies¹
 What earthly eyes will never see
 How leagues beneath where water lies
 Are miles of moaning mercury ;
 A vast deep-set quicksilver sea
 Whose skyless surges ring and roar
 For ever round earth's crystal core
 Whose metall'd tumult ceaselessly
 Breaks in blind waves that feel no shore.

“ X.”

TRYFAN.

Adam and Eve the climbers call these stones.
 But they are older far than all Earth's bones.
 Of their uncharted time one cranny-space
 Old Adam's brood entire might well have hid.
 Frenzy of fire hurled them to that high place
 On awful Tryfan's wind-swept pyramid.

Like closing lids on Day's red swollen eyes
 Twin western clouds descend in purple gloom,
 Yet leave one long low slit of saffron skies
 As blinds half-drawn within a lighted room
 Leave bare a pane that opes on paradise.
 Now are those presences of stone that loom

¹I probably first got the idea of a subterranean sea of mercury from the columns of *Nature* some twenty years ago, where I remember reading of such a speculation being put forward. Note by *Mr. V.*

So sharply black against the vivid blaze
 Lot and his wife who watch old Sodoms burn
 Afresh amid the sunsets of new days ?
 Or are they dark angels that brooding, turn
 Their faces from the sorrowful world to gaze
 Afar upon remote humanities
 Whose teeming cities and tumultuous seas
 Clamour beyond the confines of our world ?

And yet not angels with averted eyes
 Or messengers from the immortal skies
 But Earth's undated denizens are these,
 Time's castaways on this desolate shore
 Left stranded from some age of old renown
 When Titans stood on all the hills and hurled
 Great boulder-stones for quoits in antique play
 From height to height across the lonely moor.
 These, Time has bowled at last like nine-pins down,
 And of those fallen comrades many a poor
 Half-buried Titan form is lying prone
 Across the wide coombe's crumpled, grassy floor,
 Where clawing Earth the mother, devours her own.

What pale Azoic eve or primrose morn
 Or blood-red dawn of Ordovician day
 Were these from Earth's dark seething womb upborne
 By what blind cataclysm who shall say ?
 Or what dire hand that swept their mates away
 Has left this pair to stand through time forlorn
 With frozen thews and sinews of cold stone ?

[First forty lines.]

“ X.”

SOME REINCARNATIONIST AUTOMATIC SCRIPT.

BY J. ARTHUR HILL.

IN March 1928 the vicar of a north-country parish drew the attention of the S.P.R. to a case of automatic writing which seemed to him interesting enough to be investigated by some member of the Society. Mr. Salter communicated with me, and I had some correspondence with the vicar, and two interviews with him and the automatist. After the first interview I brought home with me a large mass of the script, or rather of a foolscap fair copy of the original pencil writing which is difficult to read; and at the second interview I discussed the script and asked questions about the automatist's history and the like. In what follows, I give a condensed account of the case. The correspondence, with fuller extracts, may be consulted in the files of the Society. It should be said at once that there seems no need to suppose any supernormal agency, and the case is therefore on the borderline between psychology and psychical research; but such cases may throw light on the workings of the subliminal and on its relation to the supraliminal, and may accordingly help us in the study of more purely psychical-research problems. I am requested to withhold the name and location of the automatist, lest offence or pain should be caused to relatives who do not altogether approve of these things.

Mrs. Cary (pseudonym) is a woman of the working class, aged about fifty. She is of purely British stock—as is her husband—and her people have been mostly farmers, though she herself was born in London. She looks healthy and strong, with the good colour of a countrywoman. She was the seventh of a large family, and the superstitious would say that she has the gifts of a seventh child. Her home life has been happy, and she has had eight children.

Her husband knows of her automatic writing, and is not much interested, though not hostile. She lived in Russia from the age of thirteen to twenty-three, her father being employed out there. She had not much education, but is intelligent—above the average, I should say—and has been a considerable reader. She read Shakespeare pretty thoroughly when she was a girl, also Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, Harrison Ainsworth, Marie Corelli, and Theosophical writers; a rather mixed lot, as with most of us. Almost the only poetry she has read seems to be the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam. A diary which she kindly lent me shows that from youth she had a tendency to unusual experiences; “a subconscious knowledge has haunted me from earliest childhood, a knowledge that I have lived before and know much of which I could give no expression.” She also mentions a constant fear that she was never alone and that someone was just going to touch her. In the presence of fine scenery she has had something approaching a mystical experience of the Jefferies-Whitman kind: “the glories of a sunrise or sunset, and I feel my soul expand and I am on the point of flying toward that which I know lies just beyond, but this body, this cage, this prison, holds me back, and I must wait and do my duty to those who have been given into my care.” The death of a son, aged two, in 1914, coupled with the reading of Omar—according to the diary—seem to have focussed her thoughts on serious things; she attended a spiritualist meeting at which her son was described and was said to be making a gesture which she recognised as characteristic, and her grandmother was also recognisably described. But her interest turned to Theosophy rather than to Spiritualism, perhaps because of her early leanings to the idea of reincarnation.

The automatic writing began in September 1923, at first with a planchette but soon becoming easy with a free pencil. There are many communicators, but the chief of them is one Strombrunsen, Overlord of Galicia at a date not specified. He represents himself as a soul-mate of the automatist in past incarnations. He has written the story of his life, and there are other histories or biographies

concerning other characters. Three of the narratives are of the length of an average novel. The Strombrunsen story has been copied in ink from the original scripts which are difficult to decipher, and may have been touched up in the process; but the vicar says—and he has gone through much of the original writing—that when Mrs. Cary makes any “improvement” in a word or phrase, she makes it worse, weakening its force. She writes an introductory note as below :

Strombrunsen, an ego whose work on this earth is finished, but still is he held to it by strong bonds of love for his mate whom he is awaiting on the other side. Her soul is still on this earth inhabiting the body of a woman of the working class. He knows her spirit is flagging behind a dense veil of ignorance which has been imposed upon her by a higher power for this her last life on this world, and he in his love and solicitude has gained permission to unfold to her through the medium of automatic writing a glimmering of the mighty truth of life eternal by telling of the love, passion, and mistakes that has (*sic*) ruled in lives they have lived together on this world in ages long past.

He tells the stories merely to help over a difficult period that comes in every woman’s life when as often happens all aspects seem blank and hopeless.

The first readable sentence in the automatic script was : “Hast thou forgotten Strombrunsen of Strombrunsen in the forests of Galicia ?” The name was new to the automatist. The writing continued : “With me was lived a life, a life of misunderstanding sin and sorrow. Thou didst not love me, but ever from the beginning of time hast thou dwelt within my soul, my beloved” . . . “My little one, fear nothing, no harm shall come near thee, I who love thee will ever guide and guard thee. Give love and care to those thou hast in thy charge; speak no ill of anyone; do all the good thou canst; and in the fullness of time when thou hast learned all the lessons that are in that world to learn, I shall be waiting for thee, for thou art mine, my beloved.”

Sometimes no writing came when she tried, sometimes only a word or two, but sometimes twenty or thirty pages would be written without a break, and at great speed. I will quote an early paragraph as an example of style, and will then summarise the remainder.

I, Eleu Strombrunsen, was born in the castle of Strombrunsen in Galicia. My father, Strang Strombrunsen, a man mighty in stature and power, was killed whilst hunting when I was ten years of age, leaving me in the care of a most indulgent mother whose heart was buried in the grave of him who had been her life. I, being all that was left of him, in her eyes could do no wrong. Wilful, headstrong passions were allowed full sway, with never a restraining hand or voice to say that anything was wrong. My will was absolute. There was but one thing that acted as a slight curb on my unruly temperament, and that was the love I bore my mother, that tall, pale lady in whose eyes I dreaded to meet the reproof her lips never uttered.

He describes his youth—hunting, sports, succession to the overlordship when his mother died—then his disputes with rulers of adjacent territories, notably a John of “Draconfel” in “Siguria,” and an underlord of his own named Bulstanger, who lived in the north-west. (Draconfel is sometimes spelt Draconfels in the script, and probably both are drawn from recollections of the Drachenfels near Bonn, which figures in the Nibelungen Lied.) Strombrunsen describes how a maiden rescues a dog which ran under his horse’s hoofs, and he falls in love with her. She turns out to be Bulstanger’s daughter, Syhlene, who is betrothed to John of Draconfels. Strombrunsen marries the girl, worsts Draconfels in battle, and takes his bride home. She is only a girl of sixteen, she was unwilling to marry, and she is afraid of Strombrunsen and his violent passions. Some of the passages in the script at this point are rather coarse. She escapes and goes home to her father. Strombrunsen follows, and he kills Bulstanger in fight, though unintentionally, for he meant to treat him well in order to win Syhlene’s love.

After some years, and the birth of a son, Strombrunsen, unable to win his wife's love, leaves his castle and goes roving and fighting with a band of his men. He comes back after ten years, to find that his wife has become a nun. He goes after her, breaks into the convent, killing some of the attendants, and fetches Syhlene back to the castle. There is a reconciliation; she had begun to love him before his departure, but her pride would not let her say so. And now it is too late; she is ill and dying. The Church has excommunicated him for breaking into the convent, but he fetches a priest by force, to administer the last rites to his dying wife. Then he kicks the fat priest out, watches with Syhlene until her spirit passes, and kills himself with a knife-thrust in the throat. A postscript to the story, by a retainer and friend named Bolse, tells how Strombrunsen's body was found lying there. This addition by Bolse is curious, seeming to conform to mundane literary necessities. If Strombrunsen were telling the story himself, as claimed, he could finish it himself, one would think, for he would presumably know where and how his body would be found. Syhlene is of course the automatist in an early incarnation.

Other names occurring in the Strombrunsen story are: White Melten—the name of the castle—Elsa, Henrich, Karluchen, Schwartzburgenshof, Borian's Tower, Michael the Murderer, Henry of Schlangwerten, and Wensel. It will be noticed that there is much mixture of languages in the names, and that the spelling is sometimes only an approximation to the probable forms. The automatist learnt "little Russian and no German" while living in Russia, but she would inevitably hear scraps of many languages.

Another writing which describes a horrible crime in some apparently Scandinavian country, contains the names Ulef son of Errk, Elkia daughter of Roma, Matuga daughter of Offa, Olsa son of Errk. Elkia is again the automatist in an early incarnation. The story is a "thriller," with much repetition concerning "swart Errk's" "mighty shoulders" and the "rolling laughter in his chest." This story appears to have come in a dream, being written out

afterwards. Probably therefore it shows Mrs. Cary's conscious mind more or less at work, for the phrasing would be hers or would pass through her revision.

There is also an account of the last years of the island of Leonis, which was destroyed by a great tidal wave, following the eruption of a volcano called "Schehallion." The names in this story are Helga the Fair, Toarlin the Minister, Roanib the King, Foedra—a man cast ashore after shipwreck—the Priests of Orr, and Albion Mochre who is the narrator. Mrs. Cary told me that at the time of this script she did not know that there was a mountain called Schiehallion in Scotland or indeed anywhere. But of course she might have known and forgotten.

Then there is a very long story about Tyane, a son of the King of Oceane. The heroine is one Maheela, and the names of three of the nobles are Mahgruda Sehan, Teorchen Sehan, and Margior Sehan; the word Sehan being apparently a title, perhaps suggested by "sahib." There is a Temple of Aachon, and one of the officials is the "Keeper of the Jewels of the Seventh Temple." I quote all these names because they may turn out to have some linguistic interest, as in the Hélène Smith case described in Prof. Flournoy's book *From India to the Planet Mars*.

Other narratives deal with incidents occurring in Egypt and Greece. There is the story of "Rosa's son"—an illegitimate child of Strombrunsen's—and his doings during the ten years of his father's absence. Then a story of "Speridon Bliades of Ascalon." Then other stories, *e.g.* of the life of Desaria, another incarnation of the automatist. These narratives run pretty much on the same lines; they tell of wild times, hunting, fighting, and orgies of drink and passion. In each case, however, the hero is conscious that his lower self ought to be mastered by his higher self, and that love is more than passion. Each story shows the development of this consciousness in a man of rude times, and the narratives are strong and of a certain convincingness, in spite of a tendency to purple passages which do not always ring quite true. There are scraps of various languages, including Arabic, but perhaps not more than the subliminal of anyone might be able to furnish;

e.g. "nomina non sequ. . . ." "Nuncio pas Vamoria," "Salaam aleikum," and many German phrases of ordinary character.

The Strombrunsen story seems to belong to the Middle Ages; the hero uses the exclamation "Body of Christ," but also swears occasionally by the gods of his forefathers, so perhaps the time is supposed to be early in our era. I am not aware that any of the Galician or Scandinavian warriors mentioned in the script are historical characters, but I have not made any research on the point. The names were new to the automatist so far as her supra-liminal consciousness was concerned, so they are either subliminal débris or subliminal inventions—that is, if we do not assume that some of the communicators are real entities in another order of being.

A few historical characters do purport to communicate, and—as usual in such cases—they are not obscure ones. Julius Caesar appears, and the automatist feels that she is being ordered or reprimanded when he is writing; his influence is severe. A Charles writes, who purports to be Charles the Second; the automatist feels a jocular influence from him. It appears that she was his wife in her incarnation of that period. A drawing produced by the automatist, with the usual arabesques and fancy work, represents the Merry Monarch, spaniel and all. We must not forget that this appearance of great names has occurred before, along with real psychic powers, in the case of Mrs. Piper, who also produced a Julius Caesar. (Mrs. Cary did not seem to have heard of this, or of Mrs. Piper. I asked her.) Real communications from another world must come through the medium's mind in some way, and—as someone has said—the medium's dreams may "get in the way," and absurdities may result. However, in this case of Mrs. Cary's there does not seem to be anything evidential as in the Piper case. Mrs. Cary's son is certainly mentioned as communicating, but it is hardly to be expected that much evidence of identity could be obtained in such a case.

Mrs. Cary occasionally gets inspirational or automatically written verse, somewhat after the same kind as the prose, though not purporting to be written by the same com-

municators. One rather interesting example came as a sort of vision of the words, seen on the haft of a knife. One of her children had to compose some original verse as a home task, and did not know how to begin. Her mother said: "Oh, write about anything—a knife, for instance" (happening to look at a table knife on the table). She then saw a succession of words on the handle of the knife, and wrote them down:

A knife! What, a knife?
 Gramerey on my life,
 You'd have me rhyme upon a knife?

A thing which euts my loaf of bread,
 From fish and fowl oft strikes the head;
 God's life, a knife?
 Emblem of strife—a knife.

It makes me think of days long past,
 When men in hate and fury elapsed
 The haft in hand, at its command
 To slay, and did obey;
 Did slay, and blood, Oh Blood
 A erimson flood
 Dyed red the ling
 And death did sing
 A paeen of praise to the knife.
 Oh Christ, the knife,
 Enemy of life—the knife.

Again I see, with vision elear
 The ships of Roman and Viking steer
 Towards our land,
 With knife in hand, dyed red the strand,
 Of golden sand;
 And all the while the song of death
 Follows the knife with sobbing breath,
 The knife, God wot,
 Whose life is strife—the knife.

And farther yet I glanee in fear
 On Druids' altars when the sun draws near,
 A priest doth stand, with knife in hand.

A maiden fair,
 With golden hair,
 To be a sacrifice lies there ;
 And all the time the cursed knife
 Is gleaming with the lust for life.
 Oh God, the knife
 Enemy of life—the knife.¹

Mrs. Cary has strong religious instincts, and has had intuitions of the truth of Christianity. While praying, she has had visions of Christ. But she does not go to church or take an interest in any religious institution. Her religion is very individualistic. Still, there is nothing of the extremist or crank about her ; she is anxious only to get at the truth. Her automatic writing is a puzzle to her, and in spite of the pleadings of the chief communicator she does not quite accept what is told her. After my second talk with her, her doubts seem to have become stronger—though I had expressed no definite opinion and had been sympathetic—for the communicator tried to reassure her, also rather deprecating publicity :

I will repay thy disbelief by telling thee that which shall be proven. Hurt am I, my little one, that thou canst entertain doubts of that which I have told thee. Is it necessary that others should know that truth which I have told to thee alone ? For thy peace of mind did I come to thee, knowing that thou wert wearying of the last few steps along that journey so nearly finished. Believe, my beloved, believe ! How oft have I bidden thee do that, and yet dost thou doubt ? I cannot do more just yet to prove to thee that which I have told was granted to me as a reward, a little acknowledgment for the work I have done. To me was that boon granted when I asked for it, the boon to communicate with thee and to aid thee along that road thou art traversing with lagging footsteps. I begged that boon, my little one, my beloved, and thou doubttest the truth which I have told thee ! Therefore I bid thee once more, fear nothing, and believe.

¹ Cf. some verses obtained by automatic writing or between sleeping and waking, by Mrs. Verrall ; *Proceedings*, vol. 20, pp. 65-6, 362-5.

There are occasional episodes in which conflicting communicators are concerned. For example :

Aflaha Retief Refusis (or Refusis Aflaha, for the name is variously given) Lord of the Seven Stars, Master of all the Mysteries of Egypt, Ruler of the destinies of men, flung from the height of his power to the depths of impotency to wander in the dark with the full knowledge of his power and yet unable to use it. Ages have passed since the sin was committed which sent him hurling from the heights he had striven to attain, to wander ever in darkness until the time when she whom he had sinned against (sentence unfinished).

Then there came a drawing of a man in Arab headdress, and in large letters at the side was :

Refusis hlesindbah Afleehla on the banks of the Nile go back to your life if (scrawl) Alleahlegleemshabolstallenskemstaasenewishing to know

Put the book away and listen to me I will be there where you wish me to be always I love you and you must guard against allowing yourself to get in touch with undesirables I will guard you but you must help us Jn (scrawl, wavy line across paper)

Alec is here Mama with you is very bad form you must not allow to speak to you and pray to go away your friend will guard you all they can but you too must help by not allowing to speak Eleuling Strombrunsen wishes you to put this book away and give no opportunity to evil to write. All will be well, nothing shall harm you.

A curious thing is that this Refusis is represented as an Egyptian incarnation of Strombrunsen, Charles being another ; yet all communicate as independent entities, and Strombrunsen says that Refusis is wholly evil and that the automatist must have nothing to do with him. How far their memories are identical or overlapping or distinct, is uncertain. Strombrunsen seems to know all about the life of Refusis, and is indeed the chief communicator. One is reminded of B 3 in Dr. Morton Prince's case of Miss Beauchamp.¹

¹ Myers's *Human Personality*, vol. i., pp. 341-52, and *Proceedings S.P.R.*, vol. 15, pp. 466-83.

The writing is automatic in what may be called an average sense. The extreme form is that in which the automatist knows nothing of what is being written, not even the word or letter that is being formed. Stainton Moses could read a book while his hand wrote. On the other hand, some automatists are aware of the sense of what is being written. In Mrs. Cary's case the automatist is aware of each word as it is being written, but each word fades from her memory as the next is begun. She has no knowledge of the meaning of a sentence until she reads it over. She cannot get the writing at will, or when anyone else is present; it requires solitude and quiet. Before the writing begins she has no knowledge of what will come. I asked her whether she ever dreamt about the characters who had appeared in the script, and she said that this had happened only two or three times in the five years. Apparently the writing stratum is not the dreaming stratum.

As to the reincarnationist teaching of the script, it may be noted that Mrs. Cary joined the Theosophical Society in 1925, but this was two years after the script began and many years after the beginning of her interest in reincarnation, so the teaching is not the result of local influence. Indeed she is not at all an enthusiastic Theosophist, although a member.

What has been said will have reminded the reader of the case of Patience Worth, studied by Dr. Walter F. Prince.¹ Mrs. Cary's communicators are more varied, and perhaps show less originality and pungency; but in both cases there are long and well-constructed narratives, with a richness of out-of-the-way detail which is quite beyond anything that the automatist could do by conscious effort. This, however, is no proof of outside agency. Indeed, conscious effort seems to have very little to do with literary creation. F. W. H. Myers says that genius is a subliminal uprush; and anyone who has written much, whether fiction or anything else, is no doubt aware that his thoughts "come" from some source other than his

¹ *The Case of Patience Worth*, by Dr. W. F. Prince. (Boston Society for Psychic Research, 1927.)

conscious or supraliminal mental levels. They are not produced in the same way as the conclusion of a syllogism or the end of a calculation. Perhaps all creation is subliminal. Stevenson used to dream his plots. If he could have geared his subliminal to the fingers of his right hand, he might have written his stories automatically. On the other hand we must not altogether exclude the possibility of communication from some other mind, incarnate or discarnate, by automatic writing; but we must not accept that supposition without good evidence shown.

It may be provisionally held, by those who wish to theorise, that the case under review is of the nature of a compensatory phantasy; an elaborate piece of fiction composed by the automatist's subliminal and presented as fact to the supraliminal, as a set-off to the dullness of ordinary life. On this view it would have analogies with day-dreaming and with our identification of ourselves with this or that character in a novel as we read it; probably most fiction readers do this to a greater or less extent, though for the most part without realising it. It is a wholesome way of escape from the trivial round, the common task, of everyday life. On the other hand there is always danger in these self-exaltations. We are wisely warned against thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. And there does seem to be a tendency, in automatic script, for great names to appear and flattering things to be said; generally the automatist is to be the channel of a new and great revelation. The great claims and the flattering things may be true, but it is well to go slowly and to maintain a critical temper. Nor indeed is it well to accept too easily the current subliminal "explanations." In most of these cases there are features which are not thus explicable satisfactorily to the critical mind.

Perhaps the wisest course, at present, is to record these cases without attempting a theory which may be premature.

We know very little yet about the workings of the mind, particularly in its subliminal levels, or about discarnate

intelligences if such there be ; and premature theorising might block the way to real advance. It is best to accumulate data in the hope that by study thereof we may be led in the right direction and may eventually attain some true insight into these puzzling phenomena and their implications. Our thanks are due to those who supply us with such data ; and, if they are inevitably disappointed with our inability to explain the experiences, they may at least rest assured that their contribution is bringing nearer the time when such explanation will be possible.

REVIEWS

I.

“A Case of Apparent Obsession: And its Treatment on the Assumption that the Obsessing Entities are to be taken at their Face Values.” An article by Geoffrey C. H. Burns,¹ M.D., in the *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*, June-August, 1928.

A REVIEW usually serves two purposes: (1) to give the reader a fairly adequate conception of the contents of the book or article under consideration, (2) to criticize or estimate the value of those contents, according to the standards of the reviewer. Allowing that Dr. Burns has properly sifted out the basic facts, which there appears no reason to question, the present reviewer is so far in accord with his argument and conclusions as to confine himself mostly to making a digest of the case-description and discussion.

After adverting to the antiquity of attempts to cure disease by occult means, the new impetus given to such attempts in our time in connection with spiritistic beliefs, and to the general opprobrium visited upon such experimentation by the medical fraternity but defied by a very few physicians, notably Dr. Titus Bull of New York,² the author proceeds to attack the problem before him.

This is to study “the medical and spiritistic phenomena” in one of Dr. Bull’s cases, and to ascertain how far his “methods were effective or adequate to the results; in what

¹Dr. Burns served in New York State Hospitals as a psychiatrist for nearly twenty years and was in the United States Army during the war. He is now in private practice.

²Alumnus of New York University and Bellevue Medical College, member of the American Medical Association and those of the county and city of New York, member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, etc.

way these methods corresponded with, or deviated from, other similar methods, and if the results obtained were due to the ascribed methods or to some other, as yet, undetermined factor" and "to what extent, if any, the elements of fake or chance."

The "J.D." case is pronounced by the investigator (Dr. Burns) to be one of "Alcoholic Psychosis, Chronic Hallucinatory Type." Such is one of poor prognosis, although a few patients become fairly adjusted to ordinary environmental conditions. The material consisted of fifty-two records of seances, delivered *carte blanche* for examination, together with subsequent cross-examination of the patient, and miscellaneous gleanings of facts. The sittings, with a medium and the patient together with the doctor, averaged about three a month, with an interval of nineteen months beginning March 1924, and another of three months beginning June 1926.

J.D. is of Irish birth and stock, forty-one years old, and thinks he came to America in his sixteenth year, although the date given for the arrival does not agree. His work for years has been loading and delivering milk, beginning daily at 1 a.m.

He began to drink at twenty, and has been considerably addicted to the habit, and at times intoxicated. Before and since his married life, his sexual habits have been free, but the Wasserman test was negative in 1926. Of moderate ambition and without desire for self-improvement, his self-distrust has made him decline promotions which would have increased responsibility. He is inclined to lose his temper and is emotionally unstable. A Roman Catholic himself, of undevout habits, in 1906 he married an Episcopalian, with whom he claims to have lived happily, although she sometimes scolded him for drinking, but never to the point of producing quarrels. There were five children, of whom three boys survive. The wife died in 1919.

His bereavement brought about a depressed condition, and he drank heavily for more than a year. In July 1920 he decided to quit drinking. The very next morning he woke to hear faint voices apparently near his right ear. At first these gave him advice about his children. But as time went on the voices grew louder and louder, menacing, vicious and obscene. They threatened calamities to himself, his children and even

his dead wife, saying the speakers had her in their power. When about to open a freight ear, he would hear that his wife and children were inside. Finally he was hearing about seven or eight different voices, none of which he recognised as that of anyone whom he had known. At times they seemed to fight for and against him, with a babble of sounds. He became fearful of them, especially at the sleeping hour, when they were the worst. His dreams were often terrifying or of a disgusting character. Occasionally, while awake, he saw phantoms.

Shortly after his wife's death he began to go to Spiritualist meetings and to get purported messages from her. He acquired considerable interest in such and a degree of belief. Not once in four years did he go to a doctor or a clinic. In September 1924 he heard of Dr. Bull and went to him. Up to January 1925 he was treated by suggestion and medicine. During this period there was considerable general improvement; his sleep, which at the beginning of the treatment averaged but two hours in twenty-four, improved, and the voices became less annoying. At first he was sympathetic and co-operative with the physician. But his co-operation later decreased, and when experiments with the medium began he did not extend the same sympathy to her. He declares that at no time did he, directly or indirectly, give any information to her, or to anyone who could have conveyed it to her.¹ He lost his confidence in Spiritualism, mostly at least, because of the slow progress of his amelioration, although he admitted that the medium said about him many true things, which fact he ascribed to mind-reading.

Beginning in September 1926, he went four times to the clinic of the New York Neurological Institute, and claims to have received no benefit, though the records dispute this. In January 1927 he went to the Vanderbilt Clinic, and claimed to be dissatisfied with that also.

A large number of "entities" manifested through the

¹ In view of Dr. Burns's later statement that the patient's word was not entirely reliable, the character of the medium herself is a better guarantee. I knew her and others who had known her longer. She belongs to an excellent family, is a lady of intelligence who was a teacher for years, and, while some might think her fanciful or distrust her judgment, I do not believe that her veracity will be questioned.

medium. Aside from sporadic and vague appearances they were about forty-three in number thus classified by Dr. Burns: 1. Obsessors, seven or eight in number; 2. Workers, their object to help the patient, about twenty-four; 3. Relatives of the patient or his family, seven; 4. Incidentals, who can hardly be said to have any particular purpose, about nine.

The purported obsessors in the case were: 1. A "silly girl," apparently epileptic; 2. "Gyp," a criminal whose crimes and execution were described in the newspapers some years ago; 3. "Ed. Mason" of the underworld; 4. "Al," a dope fiend; 5. A male, apparently unnamed; 6. "Joe" or "John," supposed to be an Italian alcoholic; 7. a "simple woman;" 8. a syphilitic woman.

None of these was known to the patient, except that he of course must have heard of Gyp. And none of them, it appears, was identified by him as one of the producers of his obsessing voices. So far as the examples of their talk through the medium are given by Dr. Burns, it does not seem to me evident that they have essentially different styles of speech. Of course certain verbal tags are introduced to suit the presumed character. Even the imaginative child could accomplish that. Thus "Gyp" says "damned" and calls policemen "bulls" as the *Saturday Evening Post* has taught us that "yeggs" do. So "bambino" is ascribed to the supposed Italian, and "achushla" and "worrh" to the Mother, belonging to another class. But "Gyp" and "Silly Girl" and "John" and "Mother" and "Wife" appear all to talk in a like choppy, ejaculatory fashion. It may be that this is partly because only scraps could be taken down, but the fact remains that any evidence from disparate styles of speech is scanty.

It is intimated that some of the family entities, and declared that the "Mother," unintentionally hurt the patient in their efforts to remain near and ward off harmful spirits. The investigator thinks, and we shall probably agree with him, that granting the theory of obsession this could have been so. Nor is this the first time that such a claim has been made; notably, in Dr. Hyslop's experiments with Doris as a sitter, her "Mother" claimed to have discovered that her oversolicitude had been of injury. But as most probably the

medium in the J.D. case had read Dr. Hyslop's report, we are unable to give weight to this agreement.

The "workers" formed a numerous and incongruous group, "one or two" popes, "at least" nine professors, three presidents of the United States, two Indians, an Oriental physician an "atzce" (whatever that is), "Imperator" and others. If we could only isolate one medium from previous knowledge of that winged sage Imperator, and get messages from him through her! The "William James" in this case may really be the spirit of the Harvard professor, although if he is manifesting with all the automatic writers and talkers who claim him, he must possess the attribute of omnipresence in a degree only less than divine. Although, as we shall see, the characters, or some of them, appear to have given a variety of evidence related to the patient, it is not shown that any of them furnished any particular evidence to establish their own identity as persons who had lived on the earth, unless it was the wife, who gave her name, a fairly accurate description of her death, and a significant fact or two which had happened in her lifetime.

The investigator, discussing the theory that all this drama originates in the subconscious, agrees that perhaps this may be the case, but thinks it "difficult to conceive of her [the medium] carrying through so many different entities and keeping them as well separated as she has done." Although perhaps more impressed with the evidence in general for communicating "entities" than Dr. Burns, I confess that I am not so much impressed by this particular species of evidence as he. If the forty-three "entities" had been brought forward the first week, the difficulty of remembering all and keeping them distinct would be beyond question. But if one by one came forward in the course of two or more years, I do not see why they could not have been remembered and kept separate as an actor is able to remember and resume at will a multitude of rôles. There are pianists who can play many pieces, each with its individual and complicated pattern of finger-movements, while carrying on a conversation. I know one who jingles scores of them at a Boston "movie theatre," with his head over his shoulder much of the time, as he curiously scans the audience. Let there be formed in the

subconscious a picture of each character in the gradually increasing company, with a brief concept of character and characteristics attached, and each would suggest, every time it rose, appropriate tags of speech to correspond. Besides, the remark that at times entities "seemed to overlap" indicates that they were *not* always kept separate.

The investigator thinks that "should we say they [the entities] were all products of the medium's mind, conscious or subconscious, we are giving her credit for an enormous number of conflicts." Well, why not, if we are to accept the extremest psychoanalytic theory that all creations of fiction, poetry and art are determined by complexes and conflicts? If, on the contrary, the scores of fictitious "entities" who talk and act each after his own fashion in the pages of a Dickens are not thus deterministically inevitable, but are to a large extent due to free creative fancy, the same could be true of the medium.

But if the investigator is convinced that the entities "fitted so well into the moods and experiences of the patient" he is certainly right in declaring that "this is something which we have yet to explain," and in intimating that this is very hard to explain on the theory that what was going on in the medium's mind had no real relation to what had happened during the latter years of the patient's experience.

This is the point which I have found so difficult to persuade my psychoanalyst friends, earnestly bent on their well-trodden path, to glance at and discover. A purported communicator through a medium says, *inter alia*, that she had a cat named "Mephistopheles," at the same time lets slip the name "Teddy," and declares that shortly before death deceased relatives were present in her room helping her, and that after her death the secretary of the seances (whose office, as the medium knew, was in the same building with the rooms of the communicator's family) sometimes, after washing her hands, went and looked at her picture. The psychoanalyst says, "If I could have the opportunity and take the time to analyse the medium, I am sure I could account for all these mental images by her experiences in the past, that I could evoke their origins from the unconscious." And I verily believe that, give him time and patience, he would be able to present a pretty appearance of success. Some time or other, by the

lanes of free association, which can touch any of millions of little experiences of a lifetime, he might find that she once saw a cat in a fit, that "acted like the devil." That Theodore Roosevelt, popularly called "Teddy," had been much admired by her. That she cherished grateful recollections of the tender care lavished upon her by relatives when she was ill. That she had a mother-fixation. And the corroboratory and cumulative significance of the annexed allusion to water, that well-known maternal symbol! Granted that these or other plausibilities could be found by ingenuity and industrious searching, yet they would not avail in the least to explain the actual and literal (not constructive and metaphorical) correspondence of the statements to external facts unknown to the medium. The facts were that the last cat ever owned by the communicator, many years ago, *was* named Mephistopheles, that one of the only two dogs ever owned in her household was named *Teddy*, that she *did* a few days before her death tell her foster-daughter that (deceased) relatives had been in her room assisting her, and that the secretary *had* often gone up into the rooms of her family after her death, and (after performing certain services for her daughter) washed her hands and then gazed earnestly at the communicator's portrait as she passed it. Dr. Burns is logically warranted in regarding so many correspondences between the utterances of the medium and facts related to the patient as exceedingly difficult to explain without recourse to occult agencies or processes. He thus puts it: "Telepathy, television, teleaudience, may explain parts of this but neither is a logical explanation of the whole, nor will they put together be much more satisfactory. We are still left with our problem unsolved."

Leaving correspondences to "moods" aside, in relation to which category the investigator does not render much assistance, let us give a little attention to the correspondences with "experiences." But seeing that in nearly all instances we are dependent upon the word of the patient J.D., and we have been told that "he may not be considered absolutely reliable," what guarantee have we of the facts? When we learn that no grounds developed for considering him unduly suggestible, that he acknowledged the truth of statements not at all to his credit (and, I may interject, no reasons appear for ascribing

ulterior motives to his denial of other statements), that his temporary interest in Spiritualism soon waned and became distaste, that the sympathy between him and Dr. Bull was not extended to the medium, and that he became dissatisfied because of the slowness in the improvement of his health, we may agree with Dr. Burns in feeling that "he may be in nearly all instances accepted as honest."

One important set of statements, which cannot be called likely, was indeed established independently of the patient. These, scattered through scances 30 to 43, referred to a diseased genito-urinal condition. The patient denied having had such a trouble, and Dr. Bull found no reason, aside from the mediumistic statements, for suspecting it. On the strength of these statements, however, he sent J.D. to a surgeon unaffiliated with himself. The correspondences between what the "messages" had said and what the surgeon found may be thus condensed:

Medium: "Physical condition to be cleared up . . . Genito-urinary" (Verified by surgeon's examination). *M.* "Not a serious condition" (*Dr. K.* "Mild"). *M.* "A constriction" (*Dr. K.* "A slight snugness in the posterior urethra . . . I would advise 'dilatation'"). *M.* "Constriction increased by a slight inflammation" (*Dr. K.* "Urethritis"). *M.* "Insistence that this condition should be attended to" (*Dr. K.* Regarded this as advisable, and gave fifteen local treatments within the next few months).

Another class of statements is protected from the suspicion of too much acquiescence in the replies of the patient, by the disclosures he had made to Dr. Bull before the medium was called in. The medium in the early sittings declared that J.D. had been afraid to go to sleep, that he heard words ordering him to do things against his inclination, that voices also threatened him, that he had been addicted to drink, that he had been injuriously affected by his social habits, etc. Unfortunately we are not told whether or not this was the medium's first work for Dr. Bull, but even though she knew that the patient had more than usual likelihood of being subject to hallucinations or hysterical symptoms she seems, from what we are told, to have hit the nail with impressive accuracy, a number of times.

Besides the foregoing, Dr. Burns lists some fifty "examples" of true statements, regarding the patient's peculiar experiences, his relations to his children and to other persons, to his deceased wife, etc. Part of these purported to come directly from "entities" and part from "impressions" received by the medium. Some of them were very specific. That twice since the last sitting he had been influenced by other men to drink, with three or four days between. That his "boss" had complimented him, and that the same man had a bad temper and disobeyed a rule not to smoke at the place of work. That the patient heard no voices for four days, the fifth and sixth day heard voices, and thereafter no more to the date of sitting. That he had awakened feeling a whirling sensation, followed by a sense of freedom. There are many statements of peculiar symptomatic experiences, some of them assigned to the influence of particular obsessors, and often with designation of the time they occurred or the length of their duration, followed by the patient's acknowledgment. The deceased wife's name was given, the manner of her death described fairly well. It was also correctly stated that J.D. used to cry when he had done things not right, and that he no longer had her picture (it had been lost). Many facts were given about his boys, of specific and in part of fairly striking character.

Dr. Burns says that in all more than sixty impressions and upwards of a hundred direct statements of controls in reference to the patient and his contemporaneous environment proved correct, and that there were only eleven such false statements, which he lists. By letter he informs me that the impressions and statements referred to are differentiated ones.

Thus this case seems to have developed, making all allowances for possible inferences, a considerable body of evidence for the display of knowledge on the part of the medium which could not have been acquired in ordinary ways. In this respect I probably rate it more highly than does Dr. Burns, but on the assumption that the records were carefully kept and that he subjected both them and other sources to a rigid examination. On the contrary, scientific proof that the entities, other than the wife, were the persons whom they claimed to be is almost entirely lacking. In this respect the case reported in *Bulletin IX.* of the Boston Society for Psychic Research,

wherein the same medium is concerned, is in a much more fortunate position. There the mediumistic descriptions of "entities" and other statements concerning them found many correspondences with known facts regarding deceased persons and with apparitions seen by living persons.

And now as to the therapeutical results. The man is not cured. His condition is greatly ameliorated. Instead of a babel of voices he now hears but three; they no longer order and threaten him but instead seem to argue over him¹ so that only their presence annoys him; he is no longer troubled in his work or his sleep.²

What is the significance of this improvement? It is impossible not to agree with Dr. Burns that we can draw no certain conclusions from it, since patients of this type sometimes "arrive at a stage of relative adjustment" after the ordinary modes of treatment.

And I agree, substantially, with what I esteem the most important of the investigator's general conclusions, based on this case.

That it contains no definite proof that spirits were obsessing this patient, though, were spirit communication an independently established fact, there is sufficient evidence in the case to make that theory a plausible one. That there was no sufficient proof that any of the "entities" was the person that he or she claimed to be, though the mother came the closest to that point.

That "the experiment does not add anything to pre-existing evidence regarding proof of after-life and spirit return."³ It does contain sufficient indications of its possibility to warrant further effort along this line."

¹ So in the case of Mrs. Latimer (*Bulletin VI.* of Boston S.P.R.) the period of a threatening voice was followed by one of voices apparently contending *about* her, but this was abruptly ended by the declaration that she was now free, which proved to be the case.

² Thus far the printed report, but a recent enquiry develops the fact that all annoyance has now ceased, although "very occasionally" a voice is heard, and the patient may be "considered as recovered from his psychosis."

³ I should have to differ but very slightly. The most of the super-normal knowledge displayed was of a character lending it with special plausibility to the theory that it was gained telepathically from living persons, particularly the patient.

That there were an impressive number of statements made, indicative of some source of supernormal knowledge, and that the particular description of a diseased bodily condition unknown to any living person made that the most puzzling of all.

That the bringing to knowledge of concealed morbid physical conditions was of value to the case.

That "there can be no doubt of the improvement of the mental condition of the patient," but to what extent, if any, "spirits" aided to bring about improvement, cannot be determined, since "treatment along accepted lines" sometimes brings similar improvement, and the principles of such regular treatment were also applied in this case.

"That such further efforts should be carried on with the strictest care and precision." The reviewer, while agreeing that this *should* be the case, doubts if there is a single willing experimenter in the country financially equipped so that he could keep in employ five persons in addition to himself to take the designated parts in such experiments.

And that "such work deserves encouragement. Such experiments carried on with singleness of purpose but, yet, with a willingness to follow leads wherever they may indicate, will surely result in something of worth. If the study of abnormal psychology helps to solve some of the problems of mind, if the study of multiple personality teaches, then, being a variant from the normal, the phenomena here studied should be able to add its quota to solving the question 'what is mind?'"

The views expressed in the last paragraph seem to the reviewer wise. What we want is the testing of all claims which present any credentials, lest we miss a part of the truth, whether the truth is according to surface appearance or disguised. What is all-important is to experiment, as Edison tirelessly experimented in another field. Scientific experimentation even to test an unlikely theory should never be deemed disreputable. Experimentation, when it does no harm, generally discloses some item of knowledge which may be turned to good. If experimentation on the theory of obsession damaged the condition of patients, if in this case it had increased the number and viciousness of the voices, as theoretically it might have done, it would deserve abandonment and condemnation. But, so far as is known, such experiments by qualified physi-

cians or psychologists, do no harm. It is something to learn that. On the other hand, evidence is mounting that in many cases, on whatever operating principles, they have done good. The final result may at least be the discovery of improved therapeutical methods as applied to this obstinate class of morbid conditions.

WALTER FRANKLIN PRINCE.

II.

THE MARGERY CROSS-CORRESPONDENCES.

DR. MARK WYMAN RICHARDSON, one of the intimate supporters of the Margery mediumship, has recently published in *Psychic Research* (as the old *Journal of the American S.P.R.* is now called) a series of articles entitled "Experiments in Thought Transference with Margery and Other Mediums as Percipients, and Walter and Other Controls as Agents, New Evidence is Presented for the Independence of the Control Personalities." These articles appeared in the issues for May, June, July, and September 1928,¹ and in July 1928 a summary of their contents, also over Dr. Richardson's name, was published in the *Quarterly Transactions of the British College of Psychic Science, Ltd.* This last article bore the same title as the American series, but a somewhat amended sub-title.² The issue containing it was widely distributed through the post among the Members and Associates of the S.P.R. by Dr. Crandon. The publicity thus given to these records may in itself justify, apart from other considerations, an attempt to evaluate the evidence put forward in them.

This evidence, brought forward as resulting from experiments in thought-transference, presents the latest and in many ways the most interesting development in the Margery mediumship, which has become by far the most comprehensive and versatile

¹ These four articles will be here cited as respectively i, ii, iii, iv, followed by the number of the page and a letter indicating the column.

² There are some minor variations between the American and the English texts. But as the latter may have been printed without Dr. Richardson's immediate supervision, we will not take these variations into account, and will use the original articles only.

on record. This type of evidence was first brought into prominence by Mrs. Verrall in her notable paper "On a Series of Automatic Writings," forming vol. xx of *Proceedings* (1906).¹ It has therefore been before students of psychical research for over twenty years; but we believe we are right in saying that this is the first time during the whole of that period that any substantial body of phenomena, even remotely resembling the S.P.R. cross-correspondences, has been produced outside the S.P.R.² The appearance of this series of articles is therefore of considerable interest to those who believe that the S.P.R. cross-correspondences form perhaps the most important body of evidence bearing on the problem of survival. At the same time we must not allow this gratification to prevent us from examining as closely, and criticising as unsparingly, this evidence produced outside the Society, as we examine and criticise that produced within it.

It is proper to point out at the outset that the Margery cross-correspondences are very different from those of the S.P.R. The latter are taken from a mass of rambling material produced for the most part spontaneously, they straggle over years, and display many loose ends. The former are experimentally produced, they are compact, slick, and observe the unities of time. Thus the Margery phenomena are much easier to study, much easier to record, and, it may be added, much easier to plan than are those of the S.P.R. And this we certainly do not put forward as an objection; on the contrary, it would be unreasonable to expect all communicators to produce and all groups of investigators to elucidate material as full of historical, literary, and classical allusions as the S.P.R. scripts. Indeed, we welcome this simplification and the wide publicity given to these phenomena if only because they may attract a few individuals to a study of the records published by the S.P.R.

But there is another difference between the two sets of phenomena, and this time a vital difference. The case for the S.P.R. cross-correspondences rests ultimately on the *bona fides*

¹ The name "cross-correspondence" is however slightly older: see Mr. J. G. Piddington's paper "On the Types of Phenomena displayed in Mrs. Thompson's Trance," *Proc. S.P.R.* (1904), xviii. 294.

² The cross-correspondence reported by Dr. Geley were on a much smaller scale (*Contribution à l'étude des correspondences croisées* [Paris 1914]).

of the automatists and of those who study and publish the material produced by them, and it has been freely admitted that substantially similar results *could* be obtained by fraudulent collusion between the S.P.R. automatists and commentators.

The aim of Dr. Richardson, on the other hand, was to discover a fraud-proof technique for the production of cross-correspondences. Thus, he writes at the outset, after discussing the validity of any theory of fraud, that "The first requisite . . . is to furnish a device upon which Walter [Margery's control] could, in the dark, indicate a specific number, in such a fashion that even were Margery conscious she could not know what this number was. Such a device was found . . ." (i. 256*a*). The attempt to anticipate criticism, failing a general consensus of opinion as to the *bona fides* of the persons concerned, by making the experiment fraud-proof, is of course altogether praiseworthy. But the making of such an attempt is an invitation to judge the evidence produced purely on the basis of the reliability or otherwise of the methods of control used, apart from any questions of good faith. Dr. Richardson very frankly directs the reader's attention to this (*e.g.* ii. 355*b*).

Our first duty, therefore, is to inquire whether the procedure adopted was in reality fraud-proof, as Dr. Richardson claims, or rather whether the evidence as presented to the reader by Dr. Richardson demonstrates it to have been fraud-proof. We shall have occasion to indicate later certain deficiencies in the evidence as presented which are from this point of view serious.

It may be convenient at this point to remind readers who have not followed the history of the Margery case in detail, that "Margery" is Mrs. Crandon's mediumistic pseudonym, and that when in trance she purports to be controlled by her dead brother, *Walter*. Dr. Richardson explains (i. 256*a*) that it occurred to him that *Walter* should give "post-hypnotic" suggestions to Margery whilst she was in trance. Now, however convinced Dr. Richardson may be of the independent existence of *Walter*, it is not possible to say to which of two personalities (*Walter* and Margery) operating through one physical organism (Mrs. Crandon) are to be attributed any supernatural powers of cognition which Mrs. Crandon may manifest in trance,¹

¹This has been recognised in the case of the "book-tests" given through Mrs. Leonard.

and any attempt to demonstrate the influence of "hypnotic" suggestions by *Walter* on Margery is a manifest impossibility.

To return to Dr. Richardson's description of his fraud-proof device: this took the shape of a perpetual calendar, having an exposed figure which could be changed by turning a knob at the side. "If some sitter first turns this handle arbitrarily in the dark seance-room, and if the calendar is then passed over to *Walter* who turns it further, neither *Walter* nor the other person can normally know, save by pre-arrangement, what number is brought into view" (i. 256*a-b*). This is quite true, although even here, it will be noticed, we are asked to make an assumption: the absence of pre-arrangement. Such an assumption, we need hardly point out, can have no place in a fraud-proof technique. But, if the assumption be made, this device has considerable merits. Dr. Richardson, however, having made this interesting suggestion, at once drops it, and proceeds to say a few lines lower, "It was my proposal that *Walter*, himself, in the dark, turn the calendar . . ." (i. 256*b*). This calendar was abandoned altogether after the first sitting in favour of "a daily calendar with individual sheets, numbers 1 to 31, suspended on metal rings . . ." (i. 259*b*), the change being made at *Walter's* request because he "disliked to touch metal with his terminals" (i. 259*b*). Is it suggested that this change made the procedure less open to fraud?

To the calendar Dr. Richardson added six white cards, on each of which he drew a simple geometrical figure. It was proposed that *Walter* turn the calendar to any number, and that he select one of the six cards. *Walter* was then to put the calendar and the card into a box. "At the end of the sitting, while Margery was still in trance, he was to indicate *silently to her* the number and the figure which he had selected and cognised . . . downstairs, after the seance, Margery would then try, by process more or less analogous to automatic writing, to draw the figure and write the number; and the element of post-hypnotic timing was to be introduced by *Walter* suggesting to her that she do this *after the lapse of a number of minutes* indicated by the calendar number chosen by him" (i. 256*b*). We need not repeat that it is quite impossible, by any such procedure, to prove the independence of *Walter*.

Later it occurred to Dr. Richardson to wonder whether these

experiments might not be carried out with two or more mediums. The procedure adopted will emerge from a summary of a typical case. On the 17th of February 1928, Margery gave a sitting at her house in Boston in the presence of twelve persons, of whom four were "slightly back of the main circle" (ii. 354*a*). Dr. Crandon and Dr. Richardson sat at either side of Margery. "A new sheaf of calendar pages had been brought in together with a new set of geometrical cards. These were shuffled before the sitting by Miss Silsbee, and were then put in her custody in a closed box. Later, when instructed to do so, she placed this box on the scance table; and when Walter had indicated that he was finished with the contents, she put the cover on and the covered box again remained in her charge, until opened in due course after the seance" (ii. 354*a*). *Walter* announced that he "would make up a problem," to which two other psychics, Valiantine in New York and Hardwicke at Niagara Falls "would each give half the answer" (ii. 354*a-b*). *Walter* then "worked over" the contents of the box, this part of the sitting ending at 9.40, and the group went downstairs. There Margery wrote " $11 \times 2 =$ " and "to kick a dead" (ii. 354*b*): the writing began at 10.5, and at 10.38 the box was opened. In it were found, in that order, the calendar sheet bearing the number 11, a geometrical card bearing an x, and the calendar number 2. At 10.50 Dr. Crandon telephoned to New York and was informed that Valiantine, sitting in that city, had said at 9.40, "The Kid is out already" (ii. 355*a*). Between 9.57 and 9.59 he had written, "2—No one ever stops to—Walter" (ii. 355*a*). At 11.49 the Boston group received a telegram from Niagara Falls reading: "Nine forty five—H O stop R stop S E 2" (ii. 355*b*). This referred to the script produced by Dr. Hardwicke sitting at Niagara Falls.¹ It will be seen that *Walter* had thus faithfully carried out his promise, the three mediums between them having produced the equation $11 \times 2 = 22$, and the phrase, "No one ever stops to (to) kick a dead horse."

Dr. Richardson comments on this episode as follows (ii. 355*b*): "It is of some importance that this spontaneous subject matter

¹ Although the telegram seems to indicate that the script was produced at 9.45, we are told in the text (ii. 355*a*) that the medium did not go into trance until 9.50.

[the "dead horse" sentence], which *could* have been a matter of pre-arrangement between the mediums, was coupled in the same experiment with the elements chosen in the seance room, which *could not* have been pre-arranged." "Could not" are strong words; how far are they justified by Dr. Richardson's report? Supposing it *had* been pre-arranged that Valiantine and Hardwicke should each write the figure 2, all that was necessary at Boston was that one of thirteen persons sitting in a dark room, and not in a continuous circle, should be able to select a calendar page or card, or combination of pages or cards, making twenty-two.¹ We are told nothing as to the degree of accessibility of the box during the sitting upstairs, nothing as to the nature of the control (if any) to which the medium was subjected, except that she sat between Dr. Richardson and Dr. Crandon. We are not told who supplied the calendar pages and the geometrical cards. Surely Dr. Richardson, after all his experience as sitter and controller, must realise that the facts as he sets them out are a ludicrously insufficient basis for a claim that pre-arrangement was impossible.

Nor is *pre-arrangement* the only form of possible collusion. Between the time that the upstairs sitting ended, and the downstairs sitting began, there was an interval of twenty-five minutes,² and there was another interval of thirty-three minutes between the beginning of the writing downstairs and the opening of the box. Can Dr. Richardson account for the whereabouts of all the thirteen persons during the whole of these two intervals, so as to be positive that none of them had an opportunity of passing on a telephone message to New York or Niagara Falls in time to be used at the sittings in those places, and that none of them had access to the box except Miss Silsbee?

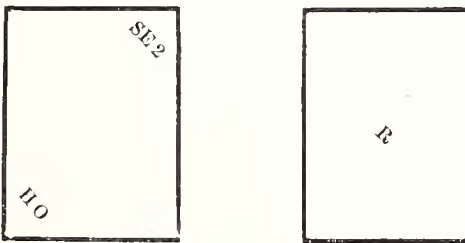
Even this does not exhaust the possibilities of collusion. Dr. Crandon telephoned to New York at 10.50. It is essential

¹ Thus, instead of 11×2 , any of the following equations would have met the case: $10 + 12$, $20 + 2$, $11 + 11$, and many others.

² This breaking up of the group and adjournment to a room on another floor is a frequent feature of the Boston sittings, and a most regrettable one in experiments designed to exclude collusion, especially when, as often happened, the sitters were numerous.

for Dr. Richardson's case that an exact account of the conversation between Dr. Crandon and his New York interlocutor should be given and attested by witnesses present at each end during the conversation, so as to be sure that no leading questions were put. But this is not done.

We do not wish to affirm that any one of these three apparent opportunities for collusion was in fact utilised; it is for Dr. Richardson to show that none of them was and could have been utilised, and this he has failed to do. As regards, however, Dr. Hardwieke's share in the experiment, there are two suspicious facts which may be capable of an innocent interpretation, but certainly require explanation of some kind. First, a telegram purports to be sent at 9.45 giving the result of a sitting which, according to Dr. Richardson, only began at 9.50. Secondly, the Niagara Falls script, which was telegraphed thus: "H O stop R stop S E 2," was in fact produced thus (ii. 355*b*), on two separate pieces of paper:



It was surely strange to communicate this script telegraphically by starting with the lower part of the first sheet, proceeding to the second, and concluding with the top part of the first? How could it have been known that *horse* was the word required? It may be urged that the object was to make sense; but how could the Niagara Falls group have known what combination of the elements of this script would make sense in combination with the Boston and New York scripts? It must be concluded that the conditions, as recorded, of this case, which is entirely typical, are very far indeed from being fraud-proof.

We now come to two experiments (ii. 356*a* and iii. 415*b*) in which *Walter* was to select the subject for the cross-correspondence in *Margery's* absence. The procedure in each case was as follows. Before the sitting a certain Captain X marked

some blank cards for the purpose of identification and gave them to his employces to paste designs on the other side. When this had been done, the cards were put in a box which was sealed and handed to Captain X, who, it is said, did not know what designs his employces had pasted on.¹ The box was opened at the sitting and the lights turned out. Captain X then picked one card "at random" out of the box and handed it to another member of the circle, who kept it concealed until the result of the Margery sitting held elsewhere the same evening was known. When the results were received from New York and Niagara Falls it was found that Margery, Valiantine, and Hardwicke had between them produced a cross-correspondence tallying with the card drawn by Captain X.

Now clearly everything turns in these two cases on the good faith of the anonymous Captain X.² As the cards had been prepared in Captain X's office it would have been prudent to have excluded him altogether from the sittings at which the cards were to be drawn. If admitted to these sittings, he was the last person in the world who ought to have been allowed access to the box when opened, access to the box *when the lights were out*. Everything recorded by Dr. Richardson is compatible with the cards handed by Captain X to his fellow-sitters never having been in the box at all. The relevant card could have been in Captain X's pocket when the sitting began. The number of cards in the box was not independently checked on either occasion, so that we need not even suppose substitution, although this would have been easy.

To turn from particular cases to the general nature of the reports submitted by Dr. Richardson, it is obvious that in experiments of this kind, designed to exclude collusion, we ought to have before us copies of the original records of all

¹ He had, however, made private marks on the cards, for purposes of identification; these marks should clearly have been made by an independent person.

² It seems a piece of needless mystification to suppress Captain X's name in these records. His real name is given in another series of records of the Margery mediumship in which phenomena quite as remarkable as these cross-correspondences also rest largely on his authority. The responsibility for these two independent types of supernormal phenomena is thus given the appearance of being divided between two individuals, who are in fact only one.

the sittings at different places, signed by all the persons present, with the exact time of the occurrences at each sitting. Reports that do not fulfil these conditions, and Dr. Richardson's reports fall far short of this, are worthless, except in so far as they throw light on the standards of evidence which satisfy Dr. Richardson and his collaborators. It must in particular be emphasised that in these particular experiments time is an essential point. Where telephonic communication admittedly occurs between the groups at the several places the time of every incident should be noted to the minute. For instance, in one experiment (iv. 502*b*) Mr. Bird, at the Boston sitting, chose a proverb, which was given the same evening at Niagara Falls by Dr. Hardwicke, and the signed record of the Hardwicke sitting is on this occasion reproduced (iv. 506, figure 22). This record gives the date ("Mar. 24, 1928"), but *not* the time in hours and minutes. Much is made of the point that eight minutes before the Boston sitting closed a telegram had been received from Hardwicke, but this telegram merely said (iv. 503*b*): "Characters stop drawing stop am mailing." It is therefore no evidence that Mr. Bird's proverb had already been given at Niagara Falls. This omission to time the records exactly is here particularly unfortunate, as the case would appear to be an impressive one but for the evidential defect as to the vital element of time.

We have finally to refer to the climax of these experiments, the Chinese scripts of Margery.¹ It would obviously be improper for one who is not a Chinese scholar to enter very closely into these phenomena. It will suffice to quote the words of Mr. R. F. Johnston, Government House, Weihaiwei, an Associate of the S.P.R., who concludes, after a long and exhaustive analysis² of these scripts, that "whoever the communicator on this occasion may have been, he was certainly not the great Chinese sage [Confucius] whose name he adopted.

¹ It is not uninteresting to note that these Chinese scripts began in March 1928, a few months after the publication of Mr. Hall's criticisms of the S.P.R. cross-correspondences, in which he suggests certain tests involving the co-operation of a Chinese. Is Mr. Hall also among the prophets? Or is this another cross-correspondence?

² Mr. Johnston's report is filed in the S.P.R. Rooms, and is available for examination by Members and Associates.

It is also too obvious to need emphasis that the style of writing is not ancient, that the whole contents of the script consist of ordinary modern Chinese written by a very poor scribe, and that both pages of script contain not a single word or line (barring a trifling exception . . .) that is not a quotation. The sentences written by Margery are all taken word for word from a famous classical work which is probably more familiar than any other Chinese book, not only to all educated Chinese, but also to all Western students of Chinese literature." After this it is perhaps superfluous to refer to the fact which emerges incidentally in a later article, not part of the series under review, that Margery has a Japanese servant, who admittedly knows a certain amount of Chinese.¹

This review does not pretend to exhaust the flaws that are to be found in these experiments, nor the criticisms, from one point of view or another, that might be levelled at them. But even such points as have been brought forward show clearly that this latest development of the Margery mediumship is still far from reaching an adequate standard of evidence. We hope, nevertheless, that these experiments will be continued, under improved conditions. At the same time Dr. Richardson would, we suggest, do well to realise that the non-American reader would be more predisposed to accept the phenomena if it could be shown that among those persons who have had an adequate opportunity in America for forming a judgment, there is a general consensus in favour of the credibility and the *bona fides* of all mediums and sitters concerned.²

THEODORE BESTERMAN.

¹ "The Chinese Scripts by Margery," *Psychic Research* (October 1928), xxii. 573b.

² Since this review was written these articles and others have been off-printed as a volume entitled *The Thumbprint and Cross-Correspondence Experiments Made with the Medium Margery During 1927 and 1928*. The references to the articles apply to the book as follows: i. 255-269 = pp. 99-113 of the book; ii. 354-361 = pp. 114-121; iii. 414-420 = pp. 122-128; iv. 496-514 = pp. 129-148. After the proofs of this review were passed for press Mr. Johnston's letter was published in the *Quarterly Transactions of the British College for Psychic Science, Ltd.* (viii. 41-45), together with a reply from Messrs. Mark W. Richardson, E. E. Dudley and L. R. G. Crandon (viii. 45-54).

REPORT OF A FOUR MONTHS' TOUR OF
PSYCHICAL INVESTIGATION.*

BY THEODORE BESTERMAN

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* This paper was read in part at a Private Meeting of the Society on February 20th, 1929.

PREFACE

By the kindness of the member who is now well known in the Society as "the anonymous donor," generously seconded by the Council, I was enabled to spend the last four months of 1928 travelling in Belgium, Germany, France, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Denmark. My chief objects in making this journey were to get into touch with the students of psychical research on the Continent, to ascertain what work was being done, and to effect an interchange of ideas between the S.P.R. and the foreign investigators. Incidentally, however, I was enabled to have sittings with a considerable number of mediums, and it is with these sittings that the present report is concerned. I do not, however, refer to all the supposed mediums I saw, but only to those who appear to have some real claim to the possession of supernormal faculties or whose phenomena¹ are of special interest. The accounts of these mediums follow in the chronological order in which I saw them.

I made two rules to govern my conduct during these sittings: (1) to obey scrupulously any conditions made by the medium or his friends; and (2) to inform the medium or his friends of any adverse conclusions I might be obliged to adopt. I believe that I did not anywhere break these two rules; but this is not to say that the medium's friends were always satisfied. I was reproached on one occasion for stating my views too soon, on another for not revealing my opinion until the conclusion of the sittings. On the other hand, it is gratifying to be able to

¹I apologise for this misuse of the word "phenomena;" the only excuse I can put forward is that the continuous iteration of "alleged supernormal phenomena" would be as painful to the reader as to the writer.

record that the mediums and their controlling spirits (if any) everywhere expressed themselves fully satisfied with my behaviour.

It must of course be understood that any opinion I express of the mediums discussed is intended to apply only to the sittings at which I was present ; I do not pretend to generalise.

At the beginning of my journey I wrote to Dr. Albert Moll in connection with the technique for clairvoyance which Count von Klinckowstroem told me Dr. Moll had devised. In reply the latter very kindly sent me two test-tubes marked I and II, one containing a message known to Dr. Moll, and the other, at my request, a message unknown to him. I had no idea of the contents of either test-tube, and am still ignorant of the contents of No. I. These tubes were so closed, with a cement mould, that Dr. Moll considers it impossible for them to be opened without his subsequent knowledge. It was my intention to ask as many clairvoyants as possible to give me their impressions of the contents of these tubes. Unfortunately, their rather fear-inspiring appearance aroused the suspicions of the mediums (as well as of the Customs officials at various frontiers), and I was able to induce only a single medium to try her faculties on the tubes. The result of this single experiment, with Frau Ignáth, is detailed in Section VIII below.

I cannot conclude this Preface without expressing my grateful thanks to the anonymous donor and to the Council of the Society for having given me the opportunity of making this, to me, most instructive journey ; and to Miss Isabel Newton for valuable criticisms of this Report.

I. MME. KAHL-TOUKHOLKA :¹ PARIS

FIRST SITTING.

THE name of this lady having been given to me in Brussels by Count Perovsky, I wrote to her before going to Paris, and eventually called on her by appointment on the 5th of October, 1928, accompanied by a gentleman who wishes to remain anonymous. We were then under the impression that Mme. Kahl was a spiritualistic medium, and a series of misunderstandings following on this and on the language difficulties (my companion knowing no French and the medium, who is Russian, only a little), led to a brief and completely negative interview. But having been very favourably impressed by M. and Mme. Kahl-Toukholka, I determined to call again, and did so on the 10th of October, 1928, without notice, and accompanied by M. René Warcollier, who had not previously seen or heard of Mme. Kahl. Mme. Kahl very kindly agreed to give us a sitting there and then.

SECOND SITTING.

At this sitting notes were taken sometimes by M. Warcollier and sometimes by myself. During a brief return to London the day after the sitting I compiled, from my own notes and from memory, a report² for submission to Council. The following account is based on this report. Subsequently M. Warcollier kindly sent me a full account² based on his notes ; his report corresponds

¹ I believe the only published account of Mme. Kahl's mediumship is a note by her husband, S. Toukholka, "Expériences de clairvoyance avec Mme. Olga Kahl," *Revue Métapsychique* (Paris, Novembre-Décembre 1922), pp. 429-433, which he has discussed since my proofs were passed (see his "Ce que la Médecine doit attendre de l'étude expérimentale des propriétés psychiques paranormales de l'homme," *Revue Métapsychique* (Paris, Mars-Avril, 1929), pp. 124-136). Dr. Osty has carried out a series of experiments with Mme. Kahl.

² These reports and all other similar papers later referred to are preserved and filed in the Rooms of the S.P.R.

very closely to mine, and I have noted the only divergence of any importance.¹

The sitting opened with a request from Mme. Kahl to me to think of a geometrical figure; I thought of an equilateral triangle, and in a few seconds a red ovaloid figure, giving the effect of a subcutaneous suffusion of the blood, appeared on her inner forearm. [M. Warcollier made a sketch of this figure, which appears to be closer to a triangle than my description of it as "ovaloid." This is M. Warcollier's sketch :

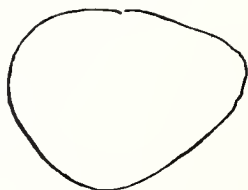


FIG. 1.

The medium asked me to repeat the experiment, this time telling her what figure I thought of, and she would again try to make it appear on her arm. I informed her that I had thought of a square, and in a few seconds there appeared on her arm, clearly defined, and, as usual, in red, three sides of a square. Mme. Kahl heightened the red colour of these outlines by rubbing them with her hand; but there was no contact before the appearance of the designs.

I was then asked to think of a common French Christian name, and to tell it to M. Warcollier. While Mme. Kahl was out of the room (which measures about 15 ft. by 20 ft.), and M. Kahl on the other side of it, I whispered "Henri." When Mme. Kahl returned to the room she walked straight up to us and said "Henri."

Mme. Kahl asked me to write down a name, to show the slip to M. Warcollier, and then to fold it. This was done while Mme. Kahl left the room and with M. Kahl some distance from us. I then wrote the name of "René

¹ In view of the striking nature of Mme. Kahl's mediumship I have thought it right to report, however briefly, the unsuccessful parts of these sittings as well as the successful ones.

Maublanc," a gentleman with whom I had recently had some correspondence (see section XIII below). After showing it to M. Warcollier I folded six times the slip of paper bearing the name and kept it in my hand. Mme. Kahl then returned and, closing her eyes, scribbled very rapidly on a piece of paper. At the second attempt she scrawled what is clearly "Maubl . . ." or "Naubl . . ." The medium then touched the folded paper, which remained in my hand, and requested me to hold her wrist. I did so, and on her forearm appeared very clearly the capital letters R E N, each about three-quarters of an inch in height, with a vague final letter showing what might have been the vertical and the lowest horizontal strokes of a capital E.

Mme. Kahl then produced a set of cards of the general size and appearance of playing cards; these cards, however, bear on the white side a large central spot of ink, usually black, though one or two have a red spot, beneath it what appear to be Oriental signs, a letter of the alphabet in one corner (so that the whole pack forms the complete alphabet), and a question in Russian, French or English. Mme. Kahl asked M. Warcollier to choose one of the questions, to concentrate on the black spot on the card bearing this question, to replace the card in the pack, and then to shuffle the latter. Then, holding the pack in her hand, Mme. Kahl answered the question. This procedure was followed in nearly all subsequent experiments with these cards. M. Warcollier had chosen the card bearing the question "Guérira-t-il (ou elle)?" [Will he (or she) recover?] Mme. Kahl did not at first succeed in determining what question had been chosen, and asked M. Warcollier to write it down, which he did in the feminine form, thinking of his wife. The medium then placed the pack against her forehead, and declared that the question was about a person who was ill, that this person was a woman, in bed, but not continuously, and that she had always been ill. This is all correct; Mme. Kahl added some details as to the nature of the illness, but these, though probably accurate, cannot be positively declared to be so.

Mme. Kahl then asked M. Warcollier to pick out the card bearing the initial of the Christian name of his wife. M. Warcollier took the card marked G and was requested to concentrate on it by itself. Mme. Kahl wrote C, then said K, and finally wrote G. She did not succeed in getting the name, which is Germaine. The medium then suggested that she might be more successful if I also knew the name. While Mme. Kahl left the room, M. Kahl remaining, M. Warcollier whispered the name to me, and I wrote it on a piece of paper which remained in my hand. The medium returned and, looking into my eyes, said repeatedly: "Genriette, Genriette," and protested that there is no such name. The name of my wife is Henrietta, which, in French, is *Henriette*, the initial H not being pronounced. Genricette is therefore G plus the name of my wife. I had not been consciously thinking of her name.

Mme. Kahl next asked me to think of a woman; I thought of my wife. She filled a small glass of water, dropped a gold ring into it, and looked into the glass. She declared that she saw in it a fair woman with short hair, which is true of my wife. Then Mme. Kahl tried to see Mme. Warcollier, and said that she saw a dark woman wearing her hair long, which is also accurate.

The medium asked me to think of a short name; I thought of Neil, as probably unknown to her. Mme. Kahl at once made several serawls, each beginning with a very emphatic N, and one continuing with an e; but she was unable to get any more. The medium explained that she was only able to perceive names which were known to her. The experiment was repeated, the name I thought of being Léon. Mme. Kahl wrote L and then Lucien.

Mme. Kahl asked M. Warcollier to draw, in pencil, a simple figure. M. Warcollier made five dots, thus:

. .
.
. .

The medium found the piece of paper too large and the

dots were remade on a scrap of paper about an inch square; I placed the first piece of paper in my pocket. The object of this change, Mme. Kahl explained, was to enable her to hold the piece of paper, when folded, between her finger and thumb without there being any suspicion that she was reading it. M. Warcollier was then asked to place his hand, containing the slip, under a rug, to take her hand under the rug, and to place her finger on the design. This proved a total failure.

Mme. Kahl asked me to repeat the test; I drew a rectangular figure, and, after completing it, produced two of the sides so as to form a cross, thus:



FIG. 2.

The piece of paper on which this design was made, again about an inch square, was folded and held by me on her forehead. At once the medium said that she saw a rectangular figure with a cross at one corner, and drew the following figure:

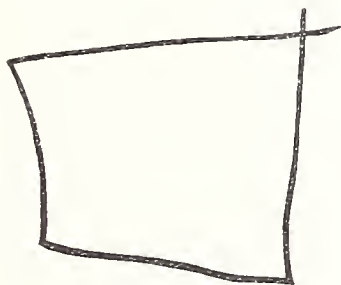


FIG. 3.

She made it clear, both verbally and in her manner of drawing the figure, that the cross was intentional, and not a mere accident.

At this point we were about to leave, when Mme. Kahl exclaimed that she could now give us an example of the manner in which her faculty sometimes very strongly "got hold of her." She declared positively that there was

now in the waiting-room a man who had come to consult her in order to ascertain whether he was to expect a letter, whether he was to marry, and to ask a question about a commercial matter. We at once went into the waiting room and requested the gentleman whom we found there to write down the questions he had come to ask. He willingly assented, and wrote the following :

trouverais-je un emploi ?
 recevrais-je une lettre ?
 dois-je faire le commerce ?
 Me marierais-je ? ¹

[Signed]

This gentleman then went into the other room, M. Warcollier and I remaining in conversation with M. Kahl. In a moment or two the gentleman returned and said that Mme. Kahl had asked him to tell us his Christian name. This, he said, was Fernand. Hard on his heels came Mme. Kahl, who exclaimed, "Your name is Fernand." This concluded the sitting.

In general, sittings at which occur whispering between the sitters, the writing down of the required information, and systems such as that of Mme. Kahl's cards, cannot be taken very seriously. I think, however, that an analysis of the present sitting will show it to contain elements of some interest. I cannot, of course, do more than assert that although I am fully conscious of the possibilities of hyperæsthesia, I am nevertheless of the opinion that on the two occasions on which whispering took place, it was done in such a way as to make it impossible for M. and Mme. Kahl to hear it, the latter, moreover, having on each occasion been out of the room. Then, although I believe that no signalling occurred between M. and Mme. Kahl after the latter's return, I should not care to guarantee this. M. Kahl's continuous presence was undoubtedly regrettable.

The writing of the slips was always done on a small pad provided by Mme. Kahl, but not, as a rule, until the

¹[Shall I find a job? Shall I receive a letter? Ought I to go into business? Shall I marry?]

sheet used had been torn off the pad. A hard surface was generally used as a support of the paper written on. When a pencil was intentionally borrowed from Mme. Kahl, it was found that she provided one with a soft lead (Faber 24) quite unsuitable for the form of fraud which consists of reading the blind marks transmitted by a sharp pencil to the sheet below the one written on. There were no mirrors in the room available for any form of reading by reflection.

Most objectionable of all is the system of cards. Neither M. Warcollier nor I was able to detect any trickery; but even a third-rate illusionist can perform such remarkable feats with cards that I, at any rate, am not inclined to put too much trust in my own senses in this respect, and others, no doubt, will put even less. Indeed, if Mme. Kahl's phenomena of this type stood alone, I should certainly not go out of my way to draw attention to them. And it must be added that Mme. Kahl has a number of mannerisms which almost invite suspicion; for instance, she often retires for a moment or two into an inner room in order to "concentrate." I can say this the more frankly as it is my opinion, in face of all these objections, that the phenomena seen by me at this sitting and at the two following ones (with a single possible exception, to be noted below) were genuinely supernormal. By this I do not intend to suggest that Mme. Kahl invariably acts with scientific scrupulousness; a clairvoyante who exploits her faculties commercially is bound to take the line of least resistance, and Mme. Kahl, no doubt, "helps" herself if her sitters give her the opportunity by carelessness or indiscretion.

Although I did not come to a favourable conclusion until the fourth sitting, even the present one had greatly impressed me; for if we take into account only those incidents which were necessarily genuine—by which I mean those in which the idea successfully transmitted had no physical existence, having been present only in the mind of M. Warcollier or of myself—the remaining results are still striking. We have, first, the impressive incident where Mme. Kahl, after having obtained the initial G of

the name of Mme. Wareollier, turned to me and completed the initial with the French form of the name of my own wife, of which I had not consciously been thinking. The odds against guessing the name Henrietta or Henricette must be well over 100 to 1; let us say 50 to 1. Next there is the correct description of my wife as being fair, with short hair, and of Mme. Warcollier as being dark and wearing her hair long. The odds against each of these successes are probably in the neighbourhood of 3 to 1; let us be conservative and say 5 to 1 for both together. Next is the correct N of Neil, to say nothing of the e. The odds against this are about 20 to 1. Next we have the correct L of Léon, which we will also value at 20 to 1. This method of assessing odds, where it is impossible to give a definite value to chance successes, is admittedly unsatisfactory. But at any rate it enables us to realise more clearly the general value of such incidents as those described. Bearing this in mind, it is not uninteresting to see that, ignoring nearly all the most striking phenomena, we get the minimum odds of 100,000 to 1 against the successes just mentioned being due purely to chance.

The success obtained was undoubtedly impressive enough to justify further experiments, and to these M. and Mme. Kahl readily assented. Consequently I returned to Paris in December with the authorisation of Council to undertake a lengthy series of sittings with Mme. Kahl. I proposed to her a few simple conditions, such as that the sittings should take place on neutral ground and in the absence of M. Kahl. Unfortunately, from the scientific point of view, Mme. Kahl has a large clientèle as a professional clairvoyante, so that her time is very fully and profitably occupied. Having thus no financial interest in the scientific establishment of her supposed supernormal faculties, and being herself quite indifferent to the scientific point of view, it is only with the utmost difficulty that she can be induced to submit to any kind of test condition. In the present case Mme. Kahl, after much discussion, was induced to agree to the absence of her husband, but refused to give the sittings elsewhere than in her own rooms. Full notes were taken at each sitting by M.

Warcollier and carefully verified immediately after its conclusion.

THIRD SITTING.

The third sitting took place on the 21st of December, 1928, in Mme. Kahl's rooms, in the presence of M. Warcollier and of myself only.

Mme. Kahl asked me to think of a close relative and to state the sex of the person decided upon. This was a cousin named Ruth. I had then to pick out from the pack the card bearing the appropriate initial. Mme. Kahl said B, then R, and finally wrote Ro. She then attempted to describe Ruth, but with little success. On being told the name thought of, the medium said that it was unknown to her, and that she was able to succeed only with names familiar to her.

I was then requested to choose one of the cards bearing a question. I selected the question: "Quel emploi dois-je choisir?" [What occupation shall I choose?]. This experiment was dropped.

M. Warcollier, in the same way, chose the question: "Toucherais-je de l'argent?" [Shall I receive some money?]. Mme. Kahl correctly perceived the question, but her answer was vague and did not correspond to what M. Warcollier had in mind. A further question: "Faut-il vendre?" [Should I sell?], failed.

Then, although I have no children, I chose the question: "Mes enfants seront-ils heureux?" [Will my children be happy?]. Mme. Kahl laughed and said that I would yet have a child, a boy.

M. Warcollier was asked to think of the name of a person, and to say whether it was a man or a woman. He did so, and Mme. Kahl said that the name began with S; on being told that this was correct, she added that it was Suzanne. This was also correct; but this latter success has only a very restricted value, for Suzanne is one of the commonest of the few French feminine Christian names beginning with S.

M. Warcollier then chose the question: "Mes affaires iront-elles mieux?" [Will my business improve?]. Mme.

Kahl correctly said that the question was concerned with business.

Mme. Kahl asked me to think of a person, to pick out the card bearing the initial letter of this person's name, and she would describe him. This experiment failed.


M. Warcollier wrote on a piece of paper: "Réussirais-je une expérience télépathie [*sic*] avec Mr. Besterman Samedi?" [Shall I succeed in a telepathic experiment with Mr. Besterman on Saturday?]. This experiment failed.

Mme. Kahl again tried to discover the name of a person whose initial card I took from the pack, and again failed.

The medium now took a glass of water and said that she would try to see in it the woman I love. I thought of my wife, but Mme. Kahl failed to see anything, although, having correctly, if only in a very fragmentary manner, described my wife on a previous occasion, it would have been easy for her to repeat the description she had given before.

M. Warcollier mentally put a question, but Mme. Kahl failed to determine its nature.

Notwithstanding this series of failures, Mme. Kahl consented to go on, and agreed to attempt a repetition of the previously observed dermographic (skin-writing) phenomena. I drew a square surmounted by a triangle. On Mme. Kahl's arm there appeared only three separate strokes, which, however, if joined, would have correctly represented the triangle of my drawing.

M. Warcollier now drew a Z, but had in his mind the idea of a cross; on Mme. Kahl's arm appeared the following figure: 

I then drew this figure:

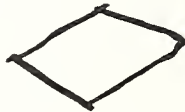


FIG. 4.

which, except for a slight elongation, was exactly reproduced on Mme. Kahl's arm.

M. Warcollier then thought of his mother, concentrating on her name, Emilie. Mme. Kahl said A, then F, and

finally wrote E. On being told that this was correct, she added that the name was Emilie. But in French there are very few feminine Christian names beginning with E.

Mme. Kahl now asked me to choose one of the English questions in the pack, and I selected one which simply bore: "Concerning politics." The medium asked whether the question was of personal or of general application, and on being given this information at once said that I had chosen a question connected with politics. I took an opportunity, later, to examine the pack and found that 34 cards bore English questions, and that of these the one chosen by me was the only one of an impersonal nature. Here, then, we have a case in which it is possible that Mme. Kahl, after a series of failures, exercised a little more or less innocent self-help. But it should be observed that if this *was* deception Mme. Kahl's use of so elementary a trick seems to indicate that she does not use elaborate fraud. For if Mme. Kahl has some means of identifying whatever card is taken from the pack or of forcing specific cards on the sitter, as would be necessary if the above-described results were fraudulently obtained, why should she descend to so crude a trick for this particular card?

I now drew the following figure on a small piece of paper:



FIG. 5.

This I folded and kept in my hand. Mme. Kahl tried to make the design appear on her arm. She was called to the telephone, and after her return this figure gradually appeared on her arm:



FIG. 6.

The telephone is in a passage, just outside the door of the

room in which we sat; Mme. Kahl remained in my sight the whole time she was out of the room. This concluded the sitting.

It will be seen that this sitting was not nearly so successful as the previous one. Indeed, on our previous system of reckoning, that is, excluding all successes in which the cards, writing or whispering played a part, we have left only three cases, of small importance, in which fraud was impossible. First, we have Mme. Kahl's correct perception that I have no children. The value of this is, of course, very slight. Next is the case where Mme. Kahl correctly gave the initial and then the complete name of Suzanne, the total value of which, with the previous incident, is perhaps 40 to 1. Finally we have the correct initial and name of Emilie, but as the initial was obtained only at the third attempt, the total value of this success ought not to be put higher than, say, 30 to 1. The total thus obtained of 1,200 to 1, though interesting enough in itself, compares very unfavourably with the 100,000 to 1 of the previous sitting. Mme. Kahl ascribed this lower degree of success to the absence of her husband, who usually slightly hypnotises her and employs suggestion to bring her supernormal faculties into play. And it was also obvious that the consciousness of being under careful scrutiny produced in Mme. Kahl an abnormal condition of nervousness and depression, probably unfavourable to the free play of her supernormal faculties. M. Warcollier and I exerted ourselves to gain Mme. Kahl's confidence, and, after a good deal of pressure, she consented to continue the series under the same conditions.

FOURTH SITTING.

The fourth sitting was held on the 23rd of December, again in Mme. Kahl's rooms, and with only M. Warcollier and myself present.

Mme. Kahl asked me to pick from the pack the card bearing the initial of a person I was thinking of. I did so, thinking of Professor Pierre Janet, whom I had recently seen and whose personality was vividly present in my mind. After making a number of incorrect or non-

evidential statements about the appearance of M. Janet, Mme. Kahl said, in quick succession, P, Pierre. I may, however, have given some unconscious indication, when Mme. Kahl said P, that this was correct; and as there are only two or three French male Christian names in general use beginning with P, the latter part of this success must not be over-valued. The medium then said that she would attempt to perceive the surname, and asked me to pick out the appropriate initial from the pack. On looking through the cards I found, however, that there was no J amongst them, and I accordingly concentrated on and replaced the I. It is interesting, therefore, on the hypothesis of fraud, that Mme. Kahl did not try any names beginning with I. On the contrary, she wrote, at the first attempt, an emphatic J, followed by an illegible scrawl; the second attempt produced Jan; Mme. Kahl then said Janot; I still expressed dissatisfaction, and was asked by Mme. Kahl to write the name; I did so, but Mme. Kahl was unable to improve on Janot. Mme. Kahl afterwards declared that the name Janet was unknown to her.

Mme. Kahl, very pleased with this success, tried to repeat it, and in order to make sure that I should think of a name known to her, asked me to think of the name of a poet. In order to see whether Mme. Kahl's conscious ratiocination would affect her supernormal faculties, I selected a poet with the same Christian name, Pierre Ronsard. The medium correctly said P, but then added Paul. I noticed, however, that Mme. Kahl's manner in saying this was a little self-conscious, and, on being questioned, she admitted that, having got the impression of P, she had added Paul because I had previously given Pierre. I now wrote the full name and showed it to M. Warcollier while Mme. Kahl was out of the room. When the latter returned she wrote automatically, in Russian script, Rou, and said Rouson, but was unable to obtain more. She afterwards said that she had never heard of Ronsard. M. Warcollier tells me that this would be quite likely, even in a Frenchwoman.

This experiment was once more repeated, and, Mme.

Kahl having repeatedly declared that the more familiar a name is to her the more easily she can perceive it when it is thought of, I determined to think of a Russian writer, and chose Nicholas Gogol. Mme. Kahl, with almost alarming promptitude, and very happily, exclaimed: "It is a Russian name! Nicholas!" I now told Mme. Kahl that she was right and that it was a Russian writer I had thought of. No sooner had I said this than M. Warcollier wrote in his notes, and passed to me, the name Gogol; and every person to whom I have put this problem since has at once suggested Gogol as the missing part of the name. Nevertheless, Mme. Kahl, a Russian, to whom, as she afterwards agreed, the name Nicholas Gogol is extremely familiar, wholly failed in her attempts to supply the missing name. She repeatedly scrawled words or names beginning with C, but was unable to get anything nearer. This incident appears to me a strong argument in favour of Mme. Kahl's honesty.

I drew a figure, which, it was hoped, would appear on Mme. Kahl's arm; the experiment failed.

I now drew this figure:

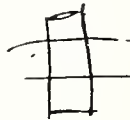


FIG. 7.

Mme. Kahl automatically drew on a piece of paper:

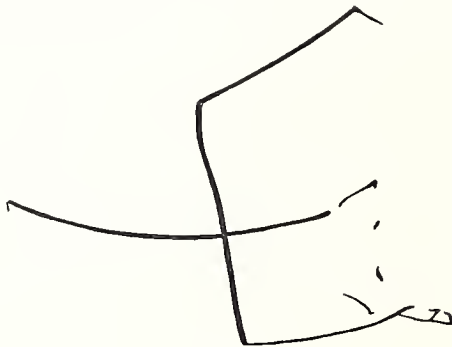


FIG. 8.

Though these two figures are undoubtedly of the same general type, the likeness is not close enough, in my

opinion, to justify the experiment being put down as a success.

Mme. Kahl requested me to write a name, for the purpose of trying to make it appear on her arm. I thought of François, but, deciding that this would be too difficult, wrote Jean. The experiment failed so far as the dermatographic intention was concerned, but Mme. Kahl repeatedly said that she had the impression of F, and suggested Fernand. Though I several times insisted that the name I had written did not begin with F, Mme. Kahl persisted in declaring that she was strongly impressed with this letter. This seems an interesting case of thought-transference; it might have been more interesting still if I had encouraged Mme. Kahl to proceed with the F, instead of declaring it to be wrong.

M. Wareollier now attempted a dermatographic experiment and drew what he thought of as the infinity sign :



FIG. 9.

M. Wareollier drew this on a small scrap of paper, and, without showing it to anyone, folded it and kept it in his hand. There now appeared on Mme. Kahl's arm, first, a square, and then this figure, about 5 inches by 2 inches in size :

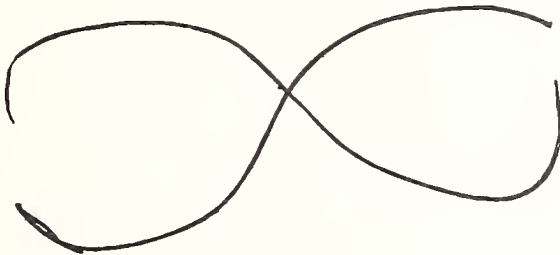


FIG. 10.
Size reduced.

Before being told whether this was correct or not Mme. Kahl was asked to write down what she took this figure to be, and she drew a large 8. This figure appeared on the inner side of Mme. Kahl's left arm, and for this reason was particularly interesting; for before its appearance, it

having been, in my opinion, as impossible for Mme. Kahl as it had been for me to see M. Warcollier's drawing, I was asked by her on which arm I should prefer the figure to appear. I first took hold of Mme. Kahl's wrists and then chose the left arm, and here, without any contact whatever, the figure duly appeared, the square having previously (but while I was holding Mme. Kahl's wrists) appeared on the right arm, and quickly disappeared. This 8 persisted rather longer than these appearances had done previously, and I took advantage of the opportunity to examine it as closely as was possible in the circumstances. The figure, so far as I could judge with the naked eye, gave the impression of being formed by a suffusion or extravasation of blood below the skin. It was not in any way affected by the application of moisture.

After the 8 had disappeared, each of us made a drawing on one piece of paper: Mme. Kahl of an X, M. Warcollier of two interlaced circles, and I of two interlaced triangles. In the same place where the 8 had recently disappeared there was now gradually to be seen, for a few moments, and again without any kind of contact, a single triangle.

Mme. Kahl now took her glass of water and, putting two rings into it, tried to see my wife. She said that she would not attempt to get her name, as, although she could not remember it, she did remember having given it on a previous occasion. This experiment failed. I was requested to write the maiden name of my wife, Birley, which I did; but Mme. Kahl was unable to "get" it.

Mme. Kahl said that the experiment of the 8 had tired her, but she would go on for a little while. I picked from the pack the question: "Me marierais-je?" [Will I marry?]. Mme. Kahl promptly said that my question was not serious, that I was already married, but only at a registrar's [*mairie*]. This is correct.

Mme. Kahl asked me to write two questions on a piece of paper, and left the room. I then wrote: "Les parents de ma femme sont-ils vivants?" [Are the parents of my wife living?], and "Que ferais-je dans six mois?" [What shall I be doing in six months?]. I folded the paper into four. Mme. Kahl returned, picked up the

paper at its open end with a pair of pincers, and burnt it. She then said that one of the questions concerned a child, and declared herself too tired to go on. She was willing, however, to try one more experiment if she could have the assistance of her husband. To this I agreed.

Mme. Kahl now left the room, to telephone to her husband, whom we had left in the lounge of the hotel, five floors below ; in her absence M. Warcollier wrote with his own pencil, and showed to me, the question : " L'affaire du pontife réussira-t-elle ? " [Will the business of the pontiff succeed ?]. M. Warcollier did not explain the question, which conveyed no meaning to me. Mme. Kahl now returned and, in the same way as before, burned the paper. It seems to have been impossible for Mme. Kahl to have obtained knowledge of the contents of the paper written by M. Warcollier ; while it was being written, and, indeed, during the whole time that she was out of the room, Mme. Kahl was continuously in my sight telephoning in the passage just outside the open door of the room ; and experiments made since, one of them with Miss Newton, have failed to reveal any way in which the piece of paper might have been read while it was being picked up, or during the process of being burnt. M. Kahl did not enter the flat until after the paper was burnt.

While awaiting the arrival of M. Kahl, the medium tried to discover whether I had any sisters, but failed to get any impressions. On M. Kahl's entry he put Mme. Kahl into a very light hypnoidal condition and then suggested to her that she should now see clearly, that she should see what had been written, that she should tell us what she saw, and the like. Mme. Kahl now said that it was a business question, but that she could not understand it ; it seemed to be " pour curé, pour grand curé, prêtre important " [for *curé*, for big *curé*, important priest]. Then, again exclaiming impatiently that she could not understand her impressions, Mme. Kahl returned to her normal state of consciousness. M. Warcollier explained that the question referred to a business transaction in which he was engaged with a gentleman whose address is at Pontifex House, London. M. Warcollier subsequently gave me the

name and full particulars of this gentleman. This was therefore a most interesting success, Mme. Kahl having correctly perceived, not the idea which M. Warcollier wanted to convey but the literal meaning of what he had written, though this meaning, of course, was also present in his mind.

Mme. Kahl now proposed to make the attempt of obtaining this gentleman's Christian name, and requested M. Warcollier to write it on a small piece of paper. This he did, showing it to nobody, and, folding it in four, handed it to Mme. Kahl below an opaque cloth. Mme. Kahl then dictated, one after the other, the letters M, A, and U, being told after each one that it was correct (the name being Maurice). The paper, all this time under the cloth, was now returned to M. Warcollier, and Mme Kahl wrote automatically what may be read as *Morus* or *Morris*, thus :



Fig. 11.

We get here, as in the Genriette incident, an interesting interplay of consciousness and subconsciousness. In the Genriette case, Mme. Kahl, consciously knowing G to be correct, and then presumably receiving the impression of Henriette, consciously or unconsciously added the two together. In the present instance, although Mme Kahl consciously knew *Mau* to be right (since she had been told so), yet, the automatic writing, being a direct expression of the subconsciousness, which had no doubt been influenced by the knowledge that the person concerned was an Englishman, transmuted the *Maurice* into what a foreigner might regard as an English or pseudo-English form of this name. This concluded the sitting.

The many interesting aspects of this sitting are even more difficult than the previous cases to reduce to a statistical basis. But even from this point of view the successes obtained by Mme. Kahl will be seen to be very

remarkable. Taking into account once more only those cases where the ideas transmitted had no physical existence, we have several striking incidents. First comes the Janot-Janet case; this comprises the divination of Pierre (we cannot count the P itself), the emphatic and accurate writing of J, although the card with I had been chosen, and the actual writing of Janot for Janet. We have seen that, given the P, a correct guess of Pierre should not be given a value of more than 2 to 1. The next incident, even if account be taken of the fact that Mme. Kahl probably knew that there was no J in the pack,¹ ought probably to be given a similar value: let us say 3 to 1 for these two minor successes together. But the Janot for Janet is much more difficult to assess. We have to assume, against Mme. Kahl's own statement, that the name of M. Janet is known to her, and we have also to assume, following the method of our present calculations, that she had some means of knowing that I had chosen the I card. Given this knowledge on Mme. Kahl's part, and also her knowledge that I was sitting with her on behalf of the S.P.R., and assuming further that she is familiar with the fact that M. Janet had been closely connected with the Society in earlier days (being still, indeed, a Corresponding Member of it), what are the chances against Mme. Kahl guessing the name of Pierre Janot? It must be remembered that the information possessed by Mme. Kahl concerning the actual name was the Christian name Pierre, and the information assumed to be possessed by her is the initial I of the name and the knowledge that there is no J in the pack. It should also be borne in mind that this was the only occasion on which either M. Warcollier or I set Mme. Kahl a name in any way connected with psychical research, and also the only occasion on which she put forward such a name. Clearly, statistics have very little foothold here, but I think it will be granted that an estimate of 25 to 1 against this

¹ It is just possible that Mme. Kahl may have noticed my failure to find the J; but this is unlikely, for I had made a practice of always going through the pack two or three times before picking the card I wanted.

success being due to chance errs on the side of understatement.

The correct P of Pierre Ronsard may, as before, be assessed at 20 to 1. In the case of the divination of Nicholas, we are again in more difficult regions. Here the only indication possessed by Mme. Kahl was that I was thinking of a Christian name. The chances against the correct selection of Nicholas from the whole range of Christian names, male and female, and, at any rate, French and English, would be substantially undervalued at 200 to 1. Then we will estimate, once more, at 20 to 1 the correct F of François. And, finally, we have the interesting statement that I was married only at a *mairie*. Failing reliable information as to the number of people who go through the civil ceremony only, the value of this success can only be guessed at. A humble 2 to 1 would certainly be no exaggeration. We thus obtain a total minimum probability of 1,200,000 to 1 against the successes obtained at this sitting being due to chance, again excluding some of the most striking results.¹

On the conclusion of this sitting Mme. Kahl was again asked whether she would not submit to stricter conditions, but she did not care to do so, and herself suggested that it seemed useless to continue the sittings. This was true enough, for I had now seen all the phenomena Mme. Kahl readily produces, and, failing better conditions, with opportunities for control and for initiating new tests and experiments, further sittings would have been merely repetitions of those already described. In these circumstances the series was discontinued for the time being.

It is hoped that the S.P.R. will further investigate this most interesting medium, and I therefore abstain, for the present, from any closer discussion of the case; but I cannot conclude without thanking M. and Mme. Kahl for having so amiably borne with what, I fear, must sometimes have seemed to them my discourteous persistence. I am also indebted to M. Wareollier for attending the

¹ I make no attempt to assess the statistical value of the series as a whole.

sittings and for taking full and accurate notes, and to Mme. Warcollier for her kind hospitality.

II. MME. BRIFFAUT : PARIS.

At the time of my first sittings with Mme. Kahl I asked to be given the names of the best clairvoyants in Paris. First on the list supplied to me by a well-known student of psychological research appeared the name of Mme. Briffaut, and remembering the very eulogistic terms in which Professor Richet speaks of this lady,¹ I called on her by appointment in company with the same gentleman with whom I first sat with Mme. Kahl. It was this gentleman who was the sitter, I merely acting as interpreter.

Mme. Briffaut does not go into trance, and explains that she sees apparitions of dead persons round the sitter. On this occasion the medium described several such figures, none of which was recognised by the sitter. Mme. Briffaut also mentioned a considerable number of names, only a few of the most common of which, such as Mary and John, had any significance for the sitter. The medium asked many questions, and followed up such as were answered, but always quite unsuccessfully. The sitting was then given up.

III. RUDI SCHNEIDER : MUNICH.

During my stay in Munich, and after the departure of the S.P.R. Committee which had had sittings with Willi and Rudi Schneider, Baron von Schrenck-Notzing very kindly invited me to participate in two further sittings with the latter. These sittings were completely negative, so that little useful purpose would be served by describing them. Baron von Schrenck-Notzing also allowed me to attend what might be called an informal preparatory

¹ Charles Richet, *Notre sixième sens* (Paris [1927]), pp. 137-141; *cp.* Carita Borderieux, "Madame Briffaut," *Psychica* (Paris 1928), viii. 8-10.

sitting with Rudi at which only the Baron and I were present. Rudi quickly passed into his trance-like condition and the Baron then had a most friendly conversation with Rudi's control, Olga, during which the latter expressed herself satisfied with the conditions of the sittings and with myself as a sitter, and promised to produce phenomena that evening. This promise was unfortunately not fulfilled.

The accompanying diagram (Fig. 12) illustrates the new system of control, designed by the late Karl Krall, recently installed by Baron von Schrenck-Notzing in his laboratory and already described by Dr. Woolley.¹ Baron von Schrenck-Notzing kindly allowed me to examine the fittings, and I was able to trace the wires for their whole length to and from the accumulators. The whole system is unquestionably within the room, distinct from any other electrical installation, and it does not seem possible for it to be interfered with from outside.

I should like to thank Baron von Schrenck-Notzing very warmly for giving me these various facilities and for his kindness and hospitality to me during my stay in Munich.²

IV. MARIA SILBERT : GRAZ.

I arrived in Graz from Munich on the evening of Thursday, the 1st of November 1928, and, notwithstanding the late hour, immediately called on Professor Walter. I had previously hoped to visit Graz in the middle of October, with Studienrat Dr. Lambert, of Stuttgart, and Dr. Tischner, of Munich. But owing to Frau Silbert's illness this visit had to be cancelled. Professor Walter wrote to me at this time that he could not undertake to arrange formal

¹ See the summary of Dr. Woolley's description in *Journ. S.P.R.* (January 1929), xxv. 3.

² Baron von Schrenck's lamented death, which has occurred since this report was set up, must increase my sense of indebtedness to him for opportunities of investigation he so kindly gave me, and I can only regret that it is now impossible for him to receive these expressions of thanks.

sittings for me, but that if I cared to come on the off-chance, the journey would probably not be wasted, as a call on Frau Silbert was tantamount to a sitting. I was unwilling, however, to pay a visit with such slender possibilities, and accordingly asked Dr. Tischner, who had expressed a desire to accompany me on my postponed visit, to write himself and to try and arrange definite sittings. I had made all arrangements to leave Munich on the 31st of October, and, no answer having been received by then,¹ I determined to take the risk of proceeding to Graz alone and unheralded. It was in these circumstances that I called on Professor Walter.

He received me in the friendliest possible way, and explained the position to me. As I had suspected, the difficulty in arranging sittings was due only in part to the medium's state of health. The chief cause was Dr. W. F. Prince's report of his sittings in Europe, in which he came to an adverse conclusion regarding Frau Silbert's mediumship.² Professor Walter promised, notwithstanding Frau Silbert's alleged unwillingness to give further sittings to English-speaking investigators, to do what he could to obtain some for me; and, in fact, until the end of my visit, he made all possible efforts on my behalf.

On the morning of the 2nd of November 1928 Professor Walter and I called on Frau Silbert; she was out, but on paying another visit later in the morning we were able to have a talk with her. Professor Walter did his best to give Frau Silbert a favourable impression of me, and I exerted myself to the same end. Frau Silbert, without making difficulties of any kind, promised me sittings; but, the previous day having been All Saints', she intended to visit her parents' graves, either that afternoon or the next, and undertook to give me a sitting on whichever

¹ I ought to explain that no possible blame attaches to Professor Walter for his delay in replying, this having been due to the fact that Dr. Tischner, through a misunderstanding, had written to him of a proposed visit on the 4th of November.

² [W. F. Prince], *Experiments with Physical Mediums in Europe* (Boston Society for Psychic Research, Bulletin VII: Boston 1928), pp. 70 *et seq.*

evening remained free. This was to be decided by a telephone call to me at my hotel. I accordingly said that I would leave my card and write the name of the hotel on it. As I was about to do so, Professor Walter, knowing that my card bore, as my London address, that of the S.P.R., and fearing that this might prejudice Frau Silbert against me, intervened to say that I had better write the necessary information on his card, which I did. This incident, which scarcely occupied a second or two, did not escape the notice of Frau Silbert, and the hitherto cordial atmosphere now cooled. During our call I several times heard raps, which seemed to be made on the wall behind the medium, and on the table. I knocked three times in a particular rhythm, and this was reproduced.

The arranged telephone call did not arrive, and on the morning of Saturday, the 3rd of November, at about 11.15, I called again on Frau Silbert. The door was opened by her little grandson, who informed me, after inquiry, that his grandmother was still in bed, but that I would be telephoned later. I returned to the hotel to await this call, which also never came. In the afternoon I called on Professor Walter, explained the situation to him, and we decided to go out again that evening. I suggested that these difficulties might be due to the unfortunate impression made on Frau Silbert by the visiting card incident, and that something ought to be done to counteract it. Accordingly, during our evening visit, when we were received by Frau Silbert's daughters, Ella, Paula and Mitzi (Marie), I succeeded in bringing the conversation round to eccentric visiting-cards, and producing my own by way of illustration, left it on the table. Before we took our leave, Fräulein Ella, the eldest and most influential of Frau Silbert's children, definitely promised, on behalf of her mother, a sitting for Monday evening at Professor Walter's flat. We were told that it was impossible to have one sooner owing to the medium's health; on Monday it transpired that Dr. Maner had had a sitting on Sunday evening. The suggestion that the sitting should take place at his home came from Professor Walter himself, I having feared to make such a proposal. The final details were to

be settled on Monday morning, by telephone, between Fräulein Ella and Professor Walter. During Monday morning accordingly, Professor Walter telephoned me to say that the sitting was fixed for about 8.30 that evening, but that the Silberts had asked that it should take place in their own home, and that Dr. Auer should also be present. To both these changes I readily agreed.

On arrival at the Silberts' flat at the appointed time, we were informed that, in addition to Dr. Auer, a Dr. Maner was also to be present. When the latter arrived, he brought an uninvited friend, a Dr. Wunsch, with him.¹ At 9 o'clock the sitting began, but before proceeding to an account of it, it will be as well to give a sketch and a brief description of such features of Frau Silbert's sitting-room, which is that used for her mediumistic purposes, as are relevant to what follows. Frau Silbert always sat at A, and thus had the large window at her

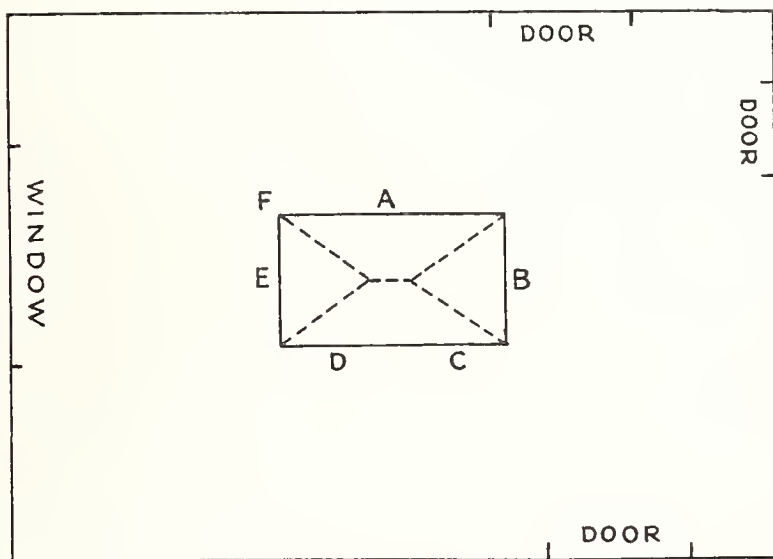


FIG. 13.
This sketch is not to scale.

right, the door leading to the entrance hall facing her, the door leading into a large bedroom at her left, and

¹I could not help wondering what would have been said if I had ventured to introduce a stranger in this way!

another door (that of a cupboard, I believe) behind her and to her left. The distance from position A to the wall behind it, ignoring an intervening sideboard, is approximately 6 feet; and this distance will show, with sufficient accuracy for our present purpose, the general measurements represented on the sketch, which does not pretend to be exactly to scale.

At the present sitting, then, the sitters were disposed round the table (with reference to Fig. 13) as follows: Frau Silbert at A, Professor Walter at B, Dr. Auer at C, myself at D, Dr. Wunsch at E, and Dr. Maner at F. Immediately, I felt a touch on the left knee, and heard raps; these two classes of phenomena occurred throughout the sitting, which lasted about $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours. As nothing occurred which would make a purely chronological record valuable, and in view of the method of observation about to be described, I will discuss separately the raps, the touches, and the other phenomena. I will begin with the raps.

The table in Frau Silbert's room (as shown in Fig. 13) has a flat wooden cross-piece, about 3 inches from the floor, connecting the four legs. Immediately on taking my place I pressed my feet tightly beneath the central part of this cross, thus controlling, from my position, the whole of this junction of the four radiating spokes. Each time raps seemed to come from the table, I felt on my feet that pressure had been exerted on the cross-piece. This pressure was not synchronous with each rap, as would reasonably be expected were the sounds produced by an outside force coming into contact with the table, thus producing the rap, and then withdrawing before making the next contact and rap. On the contrary, the pressure persisted throughout each series of table-raps, and ceased at their completion. This suggested the possibility that the table-raps were produced with the toes, the sound of these raps, as if made on wood, being produced by placing the foot or feet on the wooden cross-piece.¹ And this hypothesis of course bore as a corollary the further

¹I can vouch for the *possibility* of this as I have succeeded in reproducing these raps myself in the manner suggested.

possibility that other types of raps might be produced by placing the foot in other positions.

This theory, clearly, could only be tested by the most careful observation. I therefore determined to devote a continuous period of time exclusively to the raps, and from 9.15 to 10.30,¹ I carefully noted everything that appeared to have some bearing on them. Unfortunately, I was unable to continue observation of the phenomenon—the pressure on the cross-piece—on which this decision rested, for soon after the beginning of the sitting the table rapped out instructions to the sitters to change their places. For the rest of the evening we sat as follows: Frau Silbert, as always, at A, Dr. Wunsch at B, Dr. Auer at C, Professor Walter at D, myself at E, and Dr. Maner at F. From this position I was no longer able to control the whole of the central cross, but only one of the narrower sides; and although I placed my feet under it as before, I no longer felt confident that I could correctly interpret the various pressures I felt from time to time.

From another point of view, however, the change in my position was most advantageous. For my new line of sight enabled me to obtain a better view of Frau Silbert's body, and I soon noticed that the medium, as is of course perfectly natural, sometimes sat with her feet under her chair, sometimes with her feet in front of the chair in an ordinary seated position, sometimes with her legs stretched out before her, and with the appropriate variations, as, for instance, one leg stretched out and one under the chair. Careful observation soon showed that it was possible to see quite clearly whenever the position of the legs was changed. However quietly the change was made, it involved slight movements of the hips, and, to

¹The times given throughout this report are only approximate. I witnessed no phenomena in which exactitude as to the time of their appearance seems to be of much importance, though I saw many the *sequence* of which is vitally important. That is, it is of little use to know that the medium X made a given movement of the foot at 4.33 and that at 4.33½ one of the sitters felt a touch. It is enough to record the sequence, namely, that the movement was immediately *followed* by a touch. And the constant examination of a watch, often in very poor light, is a dangerous distraction of the attention.

a less degree, of the upper part of the body; in fact, the more quietly the feet were moved, the more noticeable became the bodily movements. For a silent change in position of the feet, involving, as it does, not merely a sliding backwards or forwards, but also a raising of them from the floor, naturally involves greater muscular effort than does a careless movement. In view of my notion that Frau Silbert's feet might be on the cross-piece when raps were heard from the table, this possibility of knowing where the feet were placed at any given moment was of the greatest value.

I now noted the changes in position of the medium's feet in connection with the direction from which the raps seemed to come, and observed that the situation of her legs always¹ corresponded with the apparent source of the raps. That is, whenever Frau Silbert's legs were under the table, the raps seemed to come from the table, whenever her legs were in front of the chair, the raps seemed to come from the chair, and whenever her legs were under the chair, the raps seemed to come from the chair or from the wall behind the medium. I heard raps from no other source, although Frau Silbert and the other sitters frequently pointed to the ceiling, to the other walls, and to various objects, as sources of raps. I have very little doubt that, so far, at any rate, as the sitters were concerned, this was simply auto- or hetero-suggestion.

Further, series of double raps, sometimes of considerable loudness and rapidity, were several times heard on the table: but only when *both* Frau Silbert's legs were under the table. And a further series of raps was heard, which seemed to come alternately from the wall and the table, and from the chair and the table: but never when both Frau Silbert's legs were under the table or under the chair. It is noteworthy that these raps never alternated between the wall and the chair, perhaps because the difference in the quality of the sounds is not sufficient to

¹ Or, to be perfectly accurate, with a single exception out of a series of 18 to 20 observations, at the first sitting. On this single occasion raps came from the table when I thought that both Frau Silbert's feet were under the chair.

make the phenomenon effective. Again, although I sometimes heard raps at the same moment as I felt a touch, at no time did I feel a touch during one of the series of double or alternating raps. Finally, throughout this time I repeatedly rapped on the table in various *tempi* and rhythms; when these raps were made openly they were nearly always reproduced; but when done privily, or without first drawing Frau Silbert's attention to them, they were never reproduced.

At this point, rightly or wrongly, no doubt remained in my mind that the raps were produced by Frau Silbert's feet; and for approximately the following hour I concentrated my attention on the touches and on the kindred phenomena. These consisted, strictly, of two kinds: (a) light touches, pressure, and even blows, and (b) pulls of the trouser-legs; but with these phenomena may be conveniently classed movements of objects performed, and engravings of objects placed, under or in the immediate neighbourhood of the table. We have already made the crucial observation that no touches and the like were felt when double or alternate raps were being produced. The decision to concentrate observation on the touches was made in the following circumstances. At 10.5 Frau Silbert said that she would try to get her controlling spirit, Dr. Nell, to perform once more the now famous feat of engraving his name on articles placed on the cross-bar below the table. She asked Dr. Auer to go into the bedroom and bring a certain small medallion and chain. While he was out of the room and the sitters were animatedly discussing what they hoped they were about to experience, Frau Silbert leaned back and placed her feet with considerable pressure on the cross-bar. At a given moment this pressure was relaxed and immediately after I felt a blow on the right knee. At 10.15 the medallion and chain was placed on the cross-bar, and Frau Silbert, referring to the allegations brought against her in connection with her alleged prepared shoes, stockings, and so on, rose and tried to take off her shoes.¹ She declared,

¹ These were bar-shoes, that is, with a single strap buttoning across the arch.

however, that they were too tight to get off herself, and her daughter Mitzi, who had entered from the bedroom at the same time as Dr. Auer returned, had to remove them for her. Frau Silbert showed that her stockings and shoes were quite normal, and then put the latter on again, stamping on each shoe to get it on.¹ After a little time, the light having in the meanwhile been turned down, though by no means quite out, Frau Silbert flung her hand above her head and, opening her clenched fist, produced the medallion and chain, the former bearing a roughly scratched N. I now put my watch under the table, and during the next half-hour the watch moved backwards and forwards, a distance of some four or five yards in all, sometimes on the cross-bar, and sometimes on the floor, but never more than a foot or so away from the cross-bar. When the watch was eventually recovered it had on the lower curve of the outer case a mass of small scratches and one long scratch right across the case. During this half-hour I saw the watch twelve to fifteen times, but never in movement; other sitters, however, declared from time to time that they saw the watch move without contact.

At about 11.15 I felt on my left knee a touch which gave most vividly the impression of being made by a foot; that is, I had the impression of being in contact with the ball and heel of a small stockinged foot. I moved my knee forward, and now came into additional contact with a third object between the previous two, which gave the impression as of the inner side of the arch of a foot, and which then withdrew. A moment later Frau Silbert asked the sitters to look under the table. They all did so in a perfunctory manner, and everything seemed to be in order; immediately after we had all looked up again, I glanced under the table once more and now saw Frau Silbert's feet out of her shoes and sufficiently far above them to enable me to see the floor between the feet and

¹ In view of what follows in this connection I may add that I subsequently questioned Professor Walter and Dr. Auer on this point, independently of course. Both were quite certain that Frau Silbert had put her shoes on again, the latter having even seen her do so.

the shoes. During these last happenings the light above the table was very dim, and beneath the table it was consequently quite dark; had Frau Silbert's feet at that moment been an inch or two nearer the floor, so as to make it impossible, from the line of sight of one bending down and looking under the table, to see between her feet and the shoes, it would have been impossible to know whether her feet were in or out of the shoes.

In the above two series of special observations all relevant phenomena have been brought together, but of course there took place at intervals other phenomena, and these I must now describe. From time to time throughout the sitting, various messages were rapped through the table; of these I need only mention the two referring to me personally. The one requested Professor Walter to proceed rapidly with the book he is writing about Frau Silbert's mediumship, that German and English editions should be arranged to appear simultaneously, and that I should undertake the English translation. The other came a few minutes after I had observed Frau Silbert's feet out of her shoes; it ran thus: "Niemals werden Doctoren geistige sphaeren degradieren" [Doctors will never degrade spiritual spheres]. As I am the only one of the five sitters who is not a doctor, we naturally took this to apply to me, and, on inquiry, the table confirmed this supposition. It should, perhaps, be also recorded that during the sitting Ottokar Kernstock, a poet very popular in the Steiermark, who had died some hours before the sitting, announced himself through the intermediary of the table, and gave the name of one of his lesser-known poems. But it is quite likely that news of the poet's death had reached Frau Silbert, for it was known to two or three of the sitters, and even to myself; in any case, Frau Silbert admittedly knew of the poet's serious illness.

At about 9.30 and again at about 9.45 a brilliant flash, accompanied by a faint hissing sound, was seen in the corner of the room to Frau Silbert's left. I am prepared to vouch for the fact that neither of these flashes was produced by Frau Silbert's hands, which were on the table throughout these periods and, indeed, throughout most of

the sitting; but as they occurred at a point only a few inches from the door of the room in which were Mitzi and Paula, it would be wrong to attach too much importance to it. At the same time, these flashes were the most interesting phenomena I observed in connection with Frau Silbert, and I am bound to add that if they were fraudulently produced I am unable, failing inquiry and experiment, to say how. Unfortunately, these flashes were in each case of very brief duration, and, unlike most of the other phenomena, totally unexpected. Careful observation was therefore impossible.

At about 10.20 and again at 12.0, in complete darkness, one of the sitters, the same in each case, reported phantasms. On the second occasion Frau Silbert had apparently fallen into a trance accompanied by stertorous breathing, gasping, and the like. The above-mentioned sitter, badly disturbed by Frau Silbert's abnormal behaviour and by the darkness, exclaimed hysterically, and in rapid succession, that he saw lights, three phantasms, felt first the touch of a hand, and then of a child's hand, and so on. No other sitter saw anything, except that one of them, when directly appealed to by his friend, said "Ja, ja," and that I saw a vague shape on Dr. Wunsch's arm (at B), the nature of which I was unable to determine owing to the distance and the darkness.

During the latter part of the sitting Dr. Auer described the apparently supernormal movements, often observed by other sitters, of the drawer of the table, which opened towards Frau Silbert, at A, and therefore away from Dr. Auer, at C. He put his hand under the table in order to imitate for my benefit the kind of movements seen, and at this moment the drawer shot out, to Dr. Auer's great embarrassment. The drawer, though urgently pressed to do so, refused to close itself, and at last had to be pushed back by Frau Silbert. This was the only time the drawer moved in my presence.

Finally, brief reference must be made to certain incidents that are not precisely "phenomena" (rather the contrary, indeed), but which are equally instructive. There were three occasions during the sitting on which I accidentally

touched, or was touched by, the foot of the sitter on my right or on my left, and on which the sitter so touched asked the other whether that was his foot he had just felt. On each of these occasions, before the person questioned had time to reply,¹ Frau Silbert said "Yes, yes, that was no phenomenon." It must be noted in this connection that when seemingly supernormal touches were reported in the ordinary course, Frau Silbert declared ignorance of them, and was as pleased as the sitters concerned. Now, Frau Silbert must necessarily be ignorant of any accidental contact that may occur between two sitters; and, being likewise ignorant of the occurrence of supernormal touches, one is bound to ask how she distinguishes between them. The sitting concluded at 12.20.

During discussions with Professor Walter, Dr. Auer, and a number of other gentlemen to whom sittings with Frau Silbert are almost everyday occurrences, I was repeatedly told that Frau Silbert produces the best phenomena when her mind is distracted, and her imagination and emotions are in play. I therefore considered, without coming to any quite satisfactory conclusion, how these conditions could best be produced; but when I was later told that Frau Silbert often went to the cinema, and that supernormal phenomena had frequently been observed in her presence at theatres and cinemas, it seemed to me that the solution of my problem had been found. During the afternoon of Thursday, the 8th of November, I called on Frau Silbert, finding Dr. Auer already there. We conversed nearly two hours, during the first few minutes of which the table made one or two small movements; raps were heard at intervals throughout. To my great satisfaction, Frau Silbert then excused herself, as she was going to the cinema; I begged to be allowed to accompany her, and, from a dark private box, we witnessed a most

¹ It is only fair, however, to add that on the third occasion, having become rather suspicious of these replies of Frau Silbert's, I set her a little trap, though not, I hope, an unfair one. On being asked by Dr. Maner whether I had touched his foot (which I had), I paused as if doubtful and glanced questioningly at Frau Silbert, who promptly made the usual reply.

melodramatic film, in which Frau Silbert was completely absorbed. Here, then, were the ideal conditions: privacy, darkness, quiet, absence of all suggestion of a sitting or of experimental conditions, the medium's mind far from thoughts of the supernormal, and her emotional and imaginative life aroused. But, to my disappointment, not a single phenomenon of any kind occurred. Before we parted a special sitting was arranged for the following day, at which only Dr. Auer and myself were to be present.

The sitting duly took place at Frau Silbert's, at 4 o'clock, with Dr. Auer, Herr Köck, and myself as sitters. Frau Silbert pointed out that she was wearing soft slippers and rose to change them to shoes. I begged her not to do so, in order to ascertain whether the slippers would make any difference in the quality of the raps; but I was unable to come to any definite conclusion on this point: the raps were as numerous as at the previous sitting, and, although there were no double and alternate raps, there were a few which seemed quite as loud as before. At about 4.45 I felt the same touch as at the previous sitting, of an object like the ball and heel of a foot; I again pushed my knee forward and again felt what seemed to me the complete impress of a foot. As the object withdrew Frau Silbert's chair creaked. A few minutes later the medium changed her chair for one that did not creak. During the sitting, which lasted a little over three hours, raps and touches occurred intermittently, but I was unable to observe anything new, merely confirming, so far as possible, my previous observations.

An interesting development took place in connection with the messages rapped through the table. I had given an account of the apparently telepathic and clairvoyant phenomena I had recently observed in Paris with Mme. Kahl-Toukholka (whom I did not name), and this seemed to arouse a sense of rivalry in Frau Silbert. For about an hour after, the table rapped a series of messages connected with my Paris experiences. Their substance was that I was not to separate the Paris phenomena from those I was observing with Frau Silbert, that I was to adopt a critical attitude in Paris, and that Frau Silbert's

supernormal mental powers were only partially dead. I said that I could not quite understand the instruction about adopting a critical attitude, and asked the table whether I was to understand that the Paris phenomena were not genuine; Frau Silbert shook her head, and *then* the table replied in the negative. Finally, at 5.35, came the message: "Sage dort ein Wort das sie hier zeichnen wird" [Say there a word which she will draw here]. This was interpreted (and the supposition was confirmed by the table) as a proposed cross-correspondence to be attempted by me between Frau Silbert and Mme. Kahl-Toukholka. I very much regret, however, that Professor Walter and Dr. Auer refuse to inform me whether Frau Silbert performed her part of this test. They take up this attitude on the quite mistaken ground that, having come to an adverse conclusion as to the physical phenomena of Frau Silbert's mediumship, I cannot be sincerely interested in the success of this mental experiment.

During this long series of rapped messages, it sometimes occurred (seven times in all)¹ that mistakes were made in counting or interpreting the raps, so that a word or sentence could not be understood, and that none of the suggestions of the sitters was approved by the table. In each of these cases the missing or incorrect parts were supplied or corrected at Frau Silbert's initiative.

The following afternoon I called on Frau Silbert to say good-bye, and we parted with the friendliest feelings, which, speaking for myself, were and are perfectly genuine. Before I left Graz I thought it right to inform both Dr. Auer and Professor Walter of the observations I had made, but asked them not to inform the medium for the time being, so as not to spoil the possibility of carrying out the proposed cross-correspondence, and to this they agreed.

After a review of my first sitting and my informal conversations with Frau Silbert, I found it impossible to resist the conclusion that the phenomena I had witnessed were fraudulently produced. I did not come to this conclusion

¹This number is exclusive of the incident noted in the previous paragraph; there were of course many more mistakes which were at once corrected by one or other of the sitters.

willingly, nor without a good deal of internal struggle. For Frau Silbert, who has a most sympathetic personality, had made a decidedly good impression on me; and one does not like to put down as a fraud an elderly woman, the mother and grandmother of a large family, a widow in poor circumstances who has never accepted payments for her sittings, even in times of acute difficulty. If, therefore, I had any leanings away from the strictest impartiality when studying the notes of my sittings, it was distinctly a leaning in Frau Silbert's favour. But, as I have said, it was impossible to resist the facts; nevertheless, though I felt bound to adopt the hypothesis of fraud, I still hoped that it might be possible to ascribe the fraud to some aberrant impulse, unconsciously carried out. For instance, how, I reasoned, can one accuse of conscious fraud a woman, who, with tears in her eyes, and taking one's hand in hers, refers, in tones trembling with indignation, to the accusations brought against her? How can one so suspect a woman who points to her white hairs, her ripeness for the grave, and speaks of the sole inheritance she wishes to leave her children, since she has no wealth to give them, that of a white and spotless honour? How can one so suspect a woman who alludes to the temptation of a medium who, at a critical moment, confronted by an investigator, finds that his phenomena fail to appear, and fraudulently helps himself out of his difficulty: a thing that she could never under any circumstances do?

I put on record these specimens of Frau Silbert's conversation, unusual though it may be to do so in a report of this nature, because I have found on inquiry that the same type of emotional appeal is exercised on all the investigators who come to inquire into Frau Silbert's mediumship. And it is important to know this, for I must frankly admit that the state of feelings thus produced in me, as, no doubt, in other investigators similarly treated, was one in which I was not able to disallow the mitigating theory of unconscious fraud until a further analysis of the facts, and a further sitting, left me with so clear a conviction that I could no longer honestly reject

it. To take a single instance, an instance of direct observation and not of inference, can one reasonably describe as unconscious fraud the process of elaborately pretending, in complicity with a daughter, that a shoe is extremely tight, whereas the shoe is of a style which, however tight, is easily removed, and which, in fact, was later so removed under the table without the assistance even of the hands? And this without going at all into the reasons for removing the shoe in this way.

It may, however, be argued that if one rejects the hypothesis of unconscious fraud, and with it the existence of an abnormal state of mind in the medium, it becomes difficult to understand the psychology of a person who makes speeches such as those I have summarised, and at the same time¹ conducts a flagrant fraud. This is not a real difficulty: any lawyer experienced in the examination of interested witnesses will vouch for the possibility of such conduct in persons of perfectly normal mentality, and there are few private individuals who are fortunate enough not to have had similar experiences in their own lives. But then there arises, of course, the question of motive: this is a delicate subject, into which I do not propose to enter very far. I will merely observe that financial advantages are not the only ones which require consideration.

My indebtedness to Professor Walter is clear from many references in the previous pages; and I should also like to thank Frau Silbert and her daughters, particularly Fräulein Mitzi, for the uniform kindness and hospitality with which they met me.

V. F. A. RONDON-VERI: GRAZ.

During my visit to Graz I had the opportunity of attending a meeting of the Grazer Parapsychologische Gesellschaft. I had been told that a young painter, Herr

¹This expression is to be taken in the most literal sense: it was actually during one of the speeches quoted that I felt one of the pressures on my knee which seemed to me to have been made by Frau Silbert's foot.

F. A. Rondon-Veri, had recently developed remarkable mediumistic powers. The account I was given of the astonishing phenomena he had produced made me very anxious to meet him, and Dr. Welisch, the President of the Parapsychologische Gesellschaft, to whom I was introduced by Professor Walter, very kindly gave me this opportunity of doing so. During the course of the evening one of the members gave an address summarising the literature about Theresa Neumann. During the part of the lecture that dealt with her stigmatisations Herr Rondon-Veri left the room for *a few seconds* and immediately after his return complained of pains in his left palm. The palm being examined, it was found to bear on one of the lines a slight wound, or rather, a subcutaneous congestion of the blood, as if the skin had been rubbed with a blunt instrument. This appearance, which was interpreted as an incipient stigmatisation, was the only phenomenon I was able to see in connection with this medium.

VI. TIBOR MOLNÁR AND LAJOS PAPP: BUDAPEST.

Very promising reports had been received by the Society from Hungary concerning two physical mediums, who, it seemed, were being investigated in a most scientific manner. And the Society having been asked to investigate the phenomena of these mediums, the task of doing so was delegated to me. During my stay in Budapest I had the pleasure of being the guest of Mr. Károly Röthy, one of the Society's two members in Hungary.

I learned that these two mediums, Tibor Molnár, a painter, and Lajos Papp, a skilled turner, customarily sat together. But on my representations it was arranged that in the three sittings I had with these mediums the first should be held as usual, the second with one of the mediums alone, and the third with the other medium alone.

It will be convenient to begin with a brief description of the room in which the first two sittings took place. This

PLATE I.

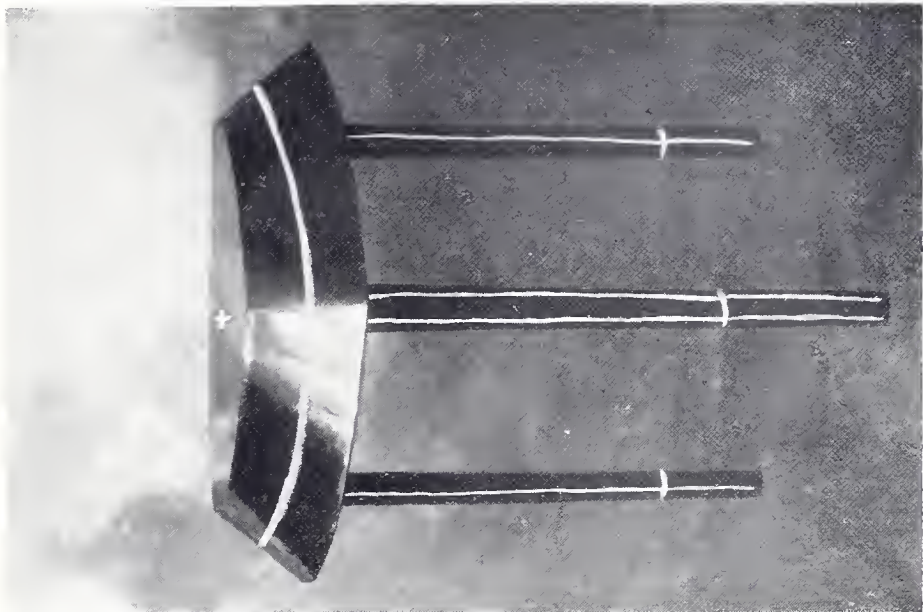


FIG. 15.

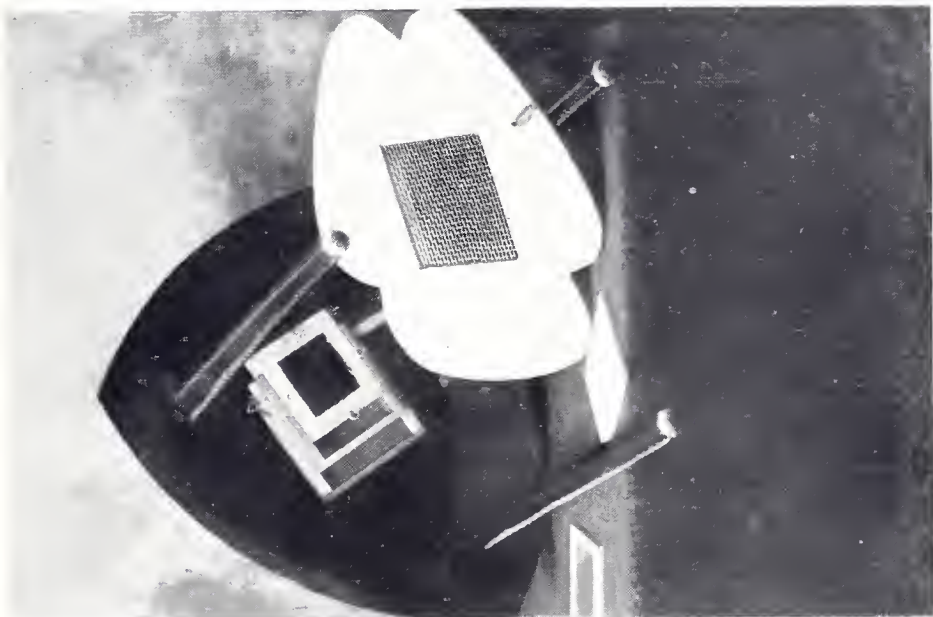


FIG. 14.

ground-floor room, the studio of Molnár, is about 30 feet square, with one corner cut off by means of a light partition which does not reach to the ceiling. The table (illustrated in figs. 14 and 15) used at the sittings has a kind of box, containing a slab of sculptors' clay fixed to its under surface, and closed with wire-netting which forms the central part of a thin piece of wood which, when in position, prevents access to the whole under-surface of the table (see fig. 14).¹ This table was placed a couple of yards from one of the walls, near the position shown in fig. 16, except that in the illustration the table is rather nearer the wall. The medium² was given his place between the table and the wall, so that there was a distance of about a yard (exactly the length of my outstretched arm) from the back of his chair to the wall. Behind the medium and to his left stood a light table on which was placed a box similar in appearance and contents to that under the experimental table, but larger and of simpler construction (fig. 17). On the wall behind the medium there hung several canvasses, most of them tacked or nailed to the wall, but one in a comparatively heavy frame, the lower edge of which was at about the height of the medium's shoulder when seated. I asked Molnár to make a ground-plan of his studio, and in this he exaggerated the distance between the table and the wall to such an extent as to show them separated by half the length of the room, which is itself also exaggerated in relation to the width. This is a point of some importance, as will be seen from what follows.

I now give a literal translation (with comments in the right-hand column) of the German text of the official record of the first sitting; this record was dictated by Dr. von Pap in Hungarian, and translated into German by Mr. Röthy; I then signed the original version subject to its being in agreement with the German text. Anyone

¹ Figures 14-19 are reproduced from photographs very kindly given me by Dr. von Pap.

² Throughout this sitting, by "the medium" is to be understood Molnár, whom I controlled. Papp sat at the other side of the table, largely invisible to me, and appeared to take an active share in the sitting in only one slight instance.

who has taken part in sittings for physical phenomena will recognise the great difficulty of framing a report which shall not only meet with the approval of all the sitters but also convey a fair impression to persons who were not present. The record printed here is, in fact, better than many documents of this kind, as much time was spent in compiling it, and it embodies suggestions from various sitters, including myself. It is quite accurate, indeed, so far as it goes. But much is omitted, and I think that the impression a reader would gather from the report, if it stood alone, would be misleading. Accordingly, I have added some comments of my own.

FIRST SITTING: MOLNÁR AND PAPP.

Record of the sitting in the studio of the painter Tibor Molnár, on the 14th of November [1928].

Present: Tibor Molnár, Lajos Papp, as mediums, Dr. Elemér von Pap, Messrs. Ludwig Herkélyi, Karl Röthy, Devecis del Vecchio, Theodore Besterman, the two last as controllers of the left and right of the medium Molnár. At the gramophone: Kellner, Jun.

The sitting began at 8 o'clock in the evening, and concluded at 9.30.

With the exception of young Kellner, who worked the gramophone, all the sitters took their places at the table, forming a chain and placing their hands on the table. Previously all pockets had been emptied, and the sitters

The presence of this boy cannot be regarded as satisfactory, but I am inclined to think that he did not assist in the production of the phenomena.

The object of this search is not very clear; external

PLATE II.

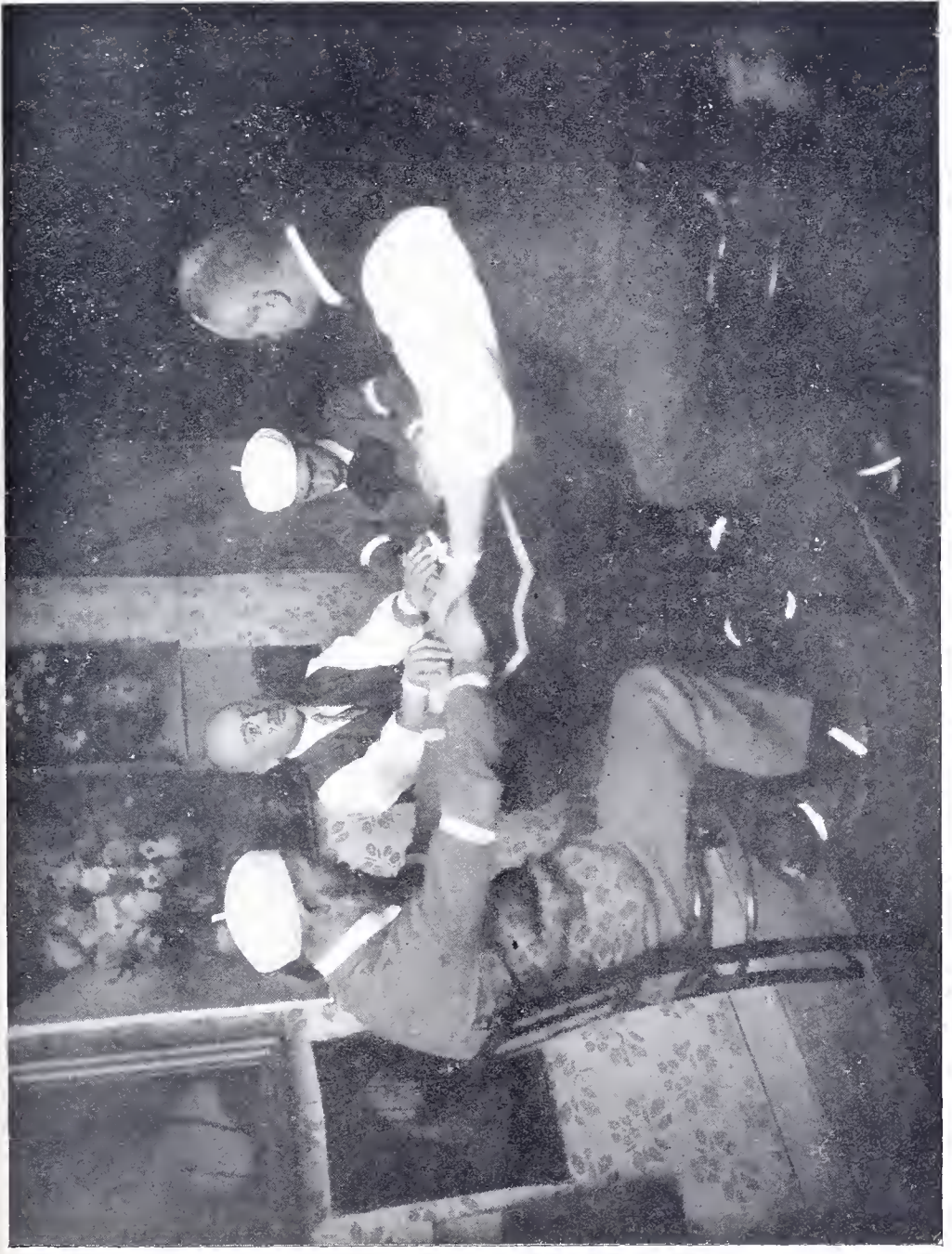


FIG. 16.

PLATE III.

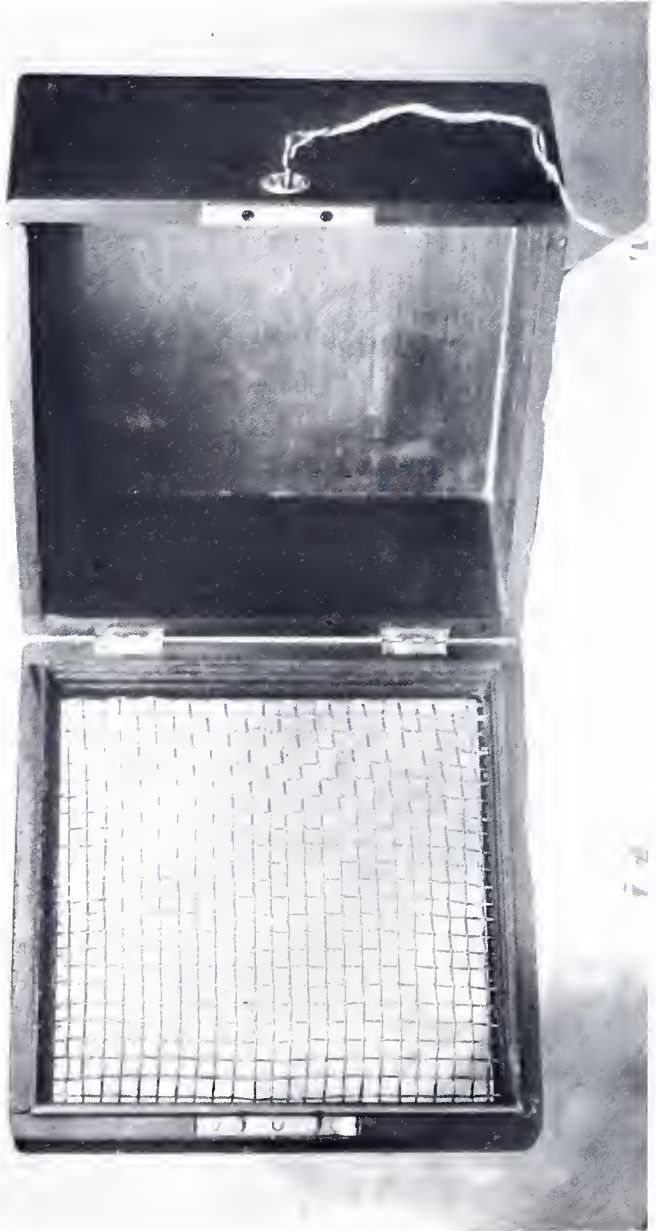


FIG. 17.

searched by one another, in order to establish whether all the pockets were really empty. The hair of both mediums and also the beard of the medium Papp, and their pockets and clothes, were particularly examined and found empty. The medium Molnár was particularly searched by Mr. Besterman, who found nothing on him beyond his pocket-handkerchief.

All those present had phosphorescent bands placed on their wrists and feet (shoe-caps). During the sitting there was continuous control. The light-bands on hands and feet were capable of being continuously observed and consequently the phenomena could apparently not have been produced by them [that is, by the hands and feet].

The ten phosphorescent discs [on the walls]. (40-50 [square] centimetres [in area]) and the phosphorescent strips on the table, provided so much light that observation was always possible. Mr. Besterman was repeatedly stroked from the knee to the armpit, received blows and attempts to tickle, and also touches on the left breast. As all stood about a metre from the table, repeated raps in the *tempo* of the gramophone were heard, then

pockets are the last places in which the medium or an accomplice would hide incriminating objects.

That is, I perfunctorily tapped his pockets. No suggestion was made that I should undertake a real search and the kind of examination proposed was clearly useless.

The light-bands on the feet were not worn on the shoe-cap but rather further back on the shoe, as shown in figure 16. The words in brackets, "light-bands on," and "apparently," were inserted at my request.

The record omits to state that before the formal beginning of the sitting, and while the two mediums and the boy Kellner were in the partitioned-off corner, a number of beans fell in the room.

These touches felt distinctly as if made by the toe-cap of a shoe. Consequently I determined to concentrate attention on the light-bands round the medium's feet. I soon observed that the left band behaved in the manner that

the table rose without being touched and made shaking movements at a height of about 15 to 20 centimetres.

A box, closed with wire-netting (aperture 8 mm.), the key of which was in Mr. Besterman's possession, and in which, 8 cm. below the wire netting, a sheet of clay had been prepared, was placed on the table. All had to place their hands on the box, upon which, to the accompaniment of heavy pantings and convulsive twitchings on the part of the medium, the controlling spirit explained [verbally] that it was "finished," whereupon a pause was made. Immediately thereupon there were observed on the clay in the still unopened box, six scratches from 2 to 5 mm. deep and about 2 mm. wide [see Plate IV, fig. 18].

would normally be expected in a human foot. That is, it made slight movements of various sorts. The right foot-band, however, was absolutely still: it was impossible to detect any movement in it, and it became quite clear to me that there was no foot in the band.

After the series of touches had been proceeding for a considerable while, the medium began stretching backwards on his tilted chair, pulling the controlling hands with him. At the same time he brought his left hand, which was controlled at the wrist only, over to my side and tried to push my left hand, which was controlling his right hand round the fingers, down to his wrist. I refused to allow this, and after three failures the medium resumed his normal position, calling out: "Weak, no power." In a few minutes Molnár again started leaning back and pushing my hand down to his wrist. This time I permitted him to do so. Immediately there followed, in that order, scratching sounds on the wall, as if the heavy frame had been moved, knocks on the little table, movements of the box containing the clay, and scratches on its wire-netting. During the whole of

this time there had been proceeding movements and levitations of the larger table round which we sat, and I felt touches on the right side of my chest. These were, of course, all reported at the time. The placing of the box on the table did not occur until 10 to 15 minutes after the medium had resumed his normal position and further raps and touches had taken place. It was then that Molnár asked for the change in position of the box. The convulsive twitchings of the medium consisted largely of violent blows with the palms of his hands on the box, and as my hand was round one of the palms in question, I did not particularly enjoy this part of the phenomena.

After a pause of about 15 minutes, all, including Kellner, took their places at a distance of about one metre from the table. In response to the wish of the controlling spirit the gramophone had to be played again. On the table behind the medium were heard raps in the *tempo* of the music. The light-bands at hands and feet were now particularly observed. During the raps it was observed that the light-band at the edge of the table was obscured, as if by a shadow

That is, the boy Kellner had to leave the circle.

This shadow seemed to me

which seemed to come from the direction of the medium's body. After this all had to move to this table, on which, after heavy blows on the table, Dr. Pap (leader of the experiments) asked whether an impression on the clay had been made, which the controlling spirit answered in the affirmative. In the meanwhile was heard the sound of the falling of small objects on the other table. Later six beans and a pebble were found in the locked room. In the sculptors' clay placed at the underside of the table were observed several scratches [see Plate IV, fig. 19].

to have exactly the shape of a shoe. At the moment this phenomenon occurred there were no raps and no touches.

These blows were, of course, produced by the medium's hands.

Molnár would probably have had some difficulty in producing these "apports," but it must not be forgotten that Papp, a specialist in apports, as we shall see in the account of the sitting with him, was present all this time, under problematical control.

On the conclusion of the phenomena the medium violently tore his hands out of control and collapsed in a heap on the floor with his hands and feet under his body. The control was resumed in a few seconds and the sitting brought to a close.

(Signed by all present except the medium Papp.)

My conclusion after the sitting was that the medium withdrew his right foot from the light-band, which remained on the floor. These light-bands have both sides luminous, but only half of their circumference, so that whether on or off the medium's foot, the same semi-circle of luminosity is always visible. The only difference is that

PLATE IV.



FIG. 18.



FIG. 19.

the light-band, when on the medium's foot, has a slightly more filled-out appearance than when off the medium's foot. I was not able to detect the difference with certainty until after about half-an-hour's close observation. It may be worth adding that these bands are fitted with press-buttons, and that the medium wore pointed shoes.

Having thus obtained the free use of a leg the medium in my opinion produced with it the table raps and touches. A distant touch, as on my shoulder or on my right side, was always preceded by the medium stretching backwards and sideways away from me. It is said that sitters at the side of the table opposite to that of the medium have sometimes felt touches, but this did not occur at my sittings. The scratches on the clay in the box were produced, in my opinion (as formed during the sitting), either by means of one of the nails with which several canvasses were fastened to the wall behind the medium, or by means of a pencil-like piece of wood hidden behind the heavy frame or elsewhere. After I had seen the scratches it was clear that their size and their depth below the wire-netting precluded the use of a nail, and this made me conclude that the hypothetical piece of wood was the instrument used. In the light of this theory, it became possible to understand the medium's behaviour before the scratches were made. It seemed to me that he pushed my hand down to his wrist in order to free his right hand; and that he then stretched back and pulled out the piece of wood secreted behind the frame, which was somewhat to his right, and thus necessitated the use of his right hand. This would explain the scratching sounds on the wall; these were followed by knocks on the table, which appeared to me to have been caused by investigatory pokes with the "pencil" until the top of the box was found, thus producing the scratching sounds on the wire-netting. (It will be remembered that when Molnár was asked to make a plan of his room, he altered the proportions in such a way as to make it seem quite impossible for him to reach the wall while seated at the table.) During the whole of these manœuvres the medium had the free use of his right leg, and, supporting his tilted

chair with his left leg, there was nothing to prevent him touching me or moving the central table with the other.

The scratches in the clay below the table I considered to have been clearly produced by means of a similar instrument held by the toes of the foot, the object used being in this case probably secreted in the medium's shoe. In any case, the medium would have had ample opportunities during the pause, no search being made after it, to provide himself with such an instrument. This theory would explain the foot-like shadow against the leg of the table (at which time there were no raps and touches), and the violent withdrawal from control seemed to me intended to provide the medium with an opportunity for putting on and lacing his shoe.

After the sitting I made discreet inquiries, at a meeting of the Budapest Society for Psychical Research and elsewhere, from gentlemen who had attended sittings with Molnár, and elicited the following facts. It seems that some time before my visit a local notability who had been invited to a sitting had suddenly switched on a torch and had declared that he had seen Molnár's foot out of its light-band. The other sitters had denied his assertion. I was told, further, that some months before Molnár had announced, during the course of a sitting, that in addition to the marks in the clay in the larger independent box, he would materialise the object with which Consuelo (his controlling spirit) had produced the scratches. And, in fact, when the box was examined there was found beneath the wire-netting, lying on the clay, a thin piece of wood some inches in length. (Dr. von Pap had shown me at the time of my sitting a series of envelopes, carefully arranged and numbered, in which he was preserving the apports produced in Molnár's sittings. I did not recollect having seen the described piece of wood amongst these objects, and, on inquiry, was told by Dr. von Pap that he had not preserved it.) Finally, it transpired that Dr. von Pap himself had commented, at a sitting some time before, on the curious resemblance between the feel of the ectoplasmic terminal and the toe of a shoe.¹

¹ This fact should perhaps make it unnecessary to point out that there

These facts not unnaturally removed my last doubts as to the validity of my hypothesis, and I informed my host, Mr. Röthy, of my views. I gave Mr. Röthy a demonstration of how the actions which I ascribed to the medium could be performed, and was fortunate enough to win him over to my way of thinking. Having thus secured his assistance, I suggested that we should propose at the next sitting that the medium should wear his light-bands round the ankles; I ventured to prophesy that the medium would refuse this change in the position of the light-bands, or his controlling spirit would request to have them removed, or there would be no phenomena.

SECOND SITTING: TIBOR MOLNÁR.

I now reproduce, as before, a literal translation of the German text of the official record made of the second sitting.

Record of the sitting on the 17th of November, 1928.

Place and sitters as on the 13th of the month, with the exception that Lajos Papp (the second medium of the previous sitting), left before the sitting owing to ill-health. To the sitters has to be added Dr. Gezá Ujlaki. Medium: Tibor Molnár alone.

The sitting began at 8 o'clock in the evening, and concluded at 9. The conditions were the same as on the 13th, except that at the wish of several sitters the medium wore an additional light-band below the knee and that the

Dr. von Pap consented very willingly to the alterations proposed by me and supported by Mr. Röthy and by another gentleman to whom he had communicated my views.

is not the slightest reflection in these proceedings against Dr. von Pap's absolute integrity.

light band on the shoe was fastened at the ankle.

The controlling spirit demanded that the previous arrangement of the light-bands should be resumed, but he was begged to allow the new arrangement to remain at least during the first part of the sitting. On this the phenomena failed to appear. In the pause Tibor Molnár explained that he was ill and complained of pains in the region of the stomach. After a pause of about 10 minutes the trance condition did not return. As the right hand of the medium made movements as of writing, a sheet of paper was placed on the table, on which the following words in Hungarian were then to be read: "Gyenge vagyok; gyomormérgezésem van" (I am weak, have stomach poisoning).

(Signed by all present.)

Molnár objected strongly and had to be reminded several times to place the light-bands in their new positions.

The words were, of course, written by the medium.

It will be seen that all three forecasts were thus realised: the medium refused to have the light-bands in the new positions; when these were insisted upon, the controlling spirit tried to have them removed; and when this failed, no phenomena appeared. Further comment seems useless.

THIRD SITTING: LAJOS PAPP.

On the evening of the 18th of November took place a three hours' sitting at the flat of Dr. János Toronyi, with the medium Papp alone. The eight or nine sitters formed a chain, with their hands on a light table, in total dark-

ness.¹ I controlled the medium's right hand, and, observing that there were three lines, hardly of light, but of lesser darkness, at the edge of one of the windows on his left, I sat in such a way as to have the medium's head intercepting my line of sight to these three faint lines. The palms of the sitters were placed on the table and I controlled the medium's right hand by placing my hand over his fingers and thumb, and his foot by placing the sole of my foot on his toe-cap. I arranged with the controller of the medium's left side to adopt the same methods. Almost immediately after the lights were extinguished, the table began moving and tapping out messages by means of which, during the course of half an hour, some twelve spirits announced themselves. One of the sitters made a joke about this large influx from the spirit world, and the medium, supposed to be in deep trance, laughed loudly.

Soon followed levitations of the table, each such movement being preceded by a backward movement of the medium's head. This suggested the possibility that the medium was producing the movements with his left leg, for I had his right foot under good control. Accordingly, from time to time I asked the gentleman controlling the medium's left side whether he was guarding the latter's hand and foot, and was always met with an emphatic affirmative. But when the lights went up at the interval, I saw that this gentleman was "controlling" the medium's left leg by bringing the side of his own knee into contact with that of the medium. In these circumstances—it has been noted that the medium was always in movement, often quite violent—he had the free use of his leg from the knee down, and considerable freedom of the whole leg, quite enough to account for all movements of the table observed so far.

But even this control, amounting, in effect, to freedom of one side, did not satisfy the controlling spirits, who carried out at this point an elaborate series of changes in the positions of the sitters. Among other changes, a

¹ I was unable to note the exact number owing to changes, late arrivals after the beginning of the sitting, etc.

young man who was present in order to develop his mediumistic powers, was expelled with a good deal of emphasis, and the medium's left side was now to be controlled by a certain gentleman of an uncritically spiritualistic type. Several sitters were told to leave. On the resumption of the sitting, the same unevidential table movements recommenced, and three objects, which were later discovered to be beans, were heard to fall on the table. Even if the probably too conservative assumption be adopted that the medium had not succeeded in getting his left hand out of control, it must be noted that Papp is an abnormally silent man, and could easily have secreted the beans in his mouth. We shall have occasion to return to this point in connection with similar occurrences at a later stage of the sitting.

The medium is a large and very powerful man, and after he had repeatedly tried and failed to pass off my left hand on the left controller as his own (the medium's) left hand, he began, and continued for about five minutes, a series of most violent contortions and constrictions of his massive hands. The controller of the medium's left hand simply let it go, and I myself, in order to retain control, had to rise and circle round the medium. On this Papp redoubled his extraordinary convulsions, until I began to suspect that these, to me, painful manœuvres, were performed in order to oblige me to release control of his foot; and, indeed, in order to avoid this, I fear that in the acrobatic evolutions necessary in the darkness to retain control of the medium's hand and foot, I was obliged from time to time to step pretty hard on the latter, though not, I trust, to the extent of causing the medium any inconvenience. My own hand, at any rate, was stiff and sore for two days afterwards.

Half-way through the sitting a short pause was made, during the whole of which the medium was out of the séance-room. In the second part of the sitting there was a nominal red light, but this was so faint that its presence was only realised when it was looked at. I had been informed that it was customary for the more important apports to be produced in the second portions of these

sittings. I therefore observed the medium very carefully and noted that up to the time when three stones, the largest of which was afterwards found to be about two inches across, fell with a clatter on the floor, the medium had uttered no word of any kind. It was unfortunately impossible to examine the apports for moisture, for the sitting did not conclude until an hour after their arrival.

Immediately on the resumption of the sitting there began a scene of the utmost violence. All the sitters were told to rise, and the table, with the hands of the "sitters" and of the medium on it, moved rapidly all over the room. It made a determined effort to get into an adjoining room, an effort which unfortunately failed. The medium then resealed himself, and there followed a series of violent simultaneous movements of the table and of his chair. These evolutions kept the sitters in rapid and continuous movement all over the large room for about half an hour. But the more violent the movements of the table and chair became, the less the medium was able to control himself, and the more noticeable became his own movements. At last his heavy breathing, the movements of his head or shoulders (according to his position) against the strips of light at the window, the muscular tensions of his hand and of his body (a leg control was out of the question) enabled me to form what appeared to me an exact picture of the manner in which the medium was producing the table and chair movements. As I was unwilling, though greatly tempted, to abandon my rule of obedience to the prescribed conditions of procedure, which in this case included an injunction against breaking the circle,¹ I was only once able to put this to the test. On this occasion I had visualised the medium dragging his chair behind him with his left foot, pushing the table with his chest, and from time to time stopping and knocking it up with his right knee in order to give the appearance of a levitation. During one of these

¹ I should like to say, however, that at practically all the sittings I have ever attended these prescribed conditions were being constantly broken by the mediums' friends themselves, and the present sitting was no exception.

knocks the sitter at my right let go my hand; I took advantage of this rapidly and lightly to pass it over the medium's body, the position of which I found to correspond exactly with what I had supposed.

At a given moment the medium, by now thoroughly exhausted and perspiring profusely, flung himself at full length on a couch which stood against one of the walls, and at the foot of which lay a number of cushions. I now stationed myself by the side of the couch, kneeling with my left leg on it and against the side of the medium's left leg, and still holding his right hand. On either side of me the sitters re-formed the circle, with the table in their midst. I now saw, against the light strips at the window, the medium's left hand, quite free, reaching out towards the table. I immediately took hold of it with my right hand, and henceforth I controlled both hands during the whole time that the medium was on the couch. Later the medium's left hand was also held by the sitter on my left, and my left hand, holding the medium's right, was similarly held by the sitter on my right. Under these conditions it was impossible for the medium to come into normal contact with the table; and during the twenty minutes or so that this position was maintained, the table made not the slightest movement.

But this period was by no means free from phenomena, for the cushions at the medium's feet, one of which it was unfortunately impossible for me to control, leaped into the room one after the other. Whenever they were replaced (always at the medium's feet!), they were again flung off the couch. Later, the medium groped with his hands for the table and, laying them on it, pushed himself off the couch with his full weight and strength. Now the table came to life. The sitters and the medium resumed their previous decorous places around it, and movements and messages recommenced. At this point I was practically certain that the whole performance was fraudulent; consequently, with less fear of offending the medium's feelings, I placed my left foot between and in contact with both his feet. At the same time I categorically requested the gentleman controlling the medium's left side (though at

this moment he was certainly not controlling his left foot), to inform me whether he had the medium's left hand under proper control. I repeated this question several times, at intervals, and was always met with an indignant affirmative. Nevertheless, during this period, when, it must be remembered, I had full control of the medium's right hand and of both his feet, and when I was able to see his head and any object that might occupy the space in front of it, against the lines of light at the window, there occurred movements and levitations of the table. These phenomena were thus very impressive, and had it been possible to feel confidence in the other controller's notion of control, it would have been necessary to admit that these movements were not produced by the medium. My fears as to the nature of the control of the left hand were, however, verified by a fortunate accident.

During the sitting one of the ladies present was taken by an epileptoid seizure, with characteristic flapping movements of the hands. With one of these movements she struck against the electric light button which hung over the table. The sudden light revealed the medium, with his left hand controlled at the wrist only, grasping one of the legs of the light table, which was in partial process of being levitated. The medium, thus discovered *in flagrante delicto*, immediately flung himself on the floor at full length, and with great violence turned and twisted himself round and round like a giant top, until repeated magnetic strokings, administered by two sitters at the cost of severe kicks on the shins, had counteracted the injurious effects of the sudden illumination. As soon as the medium had recovered and I had assured myself that he had received no permanent injuries, I informed one of the sitters of my views and took my leave.

VII. ZAKARIÁSNÉ PAPP: BUDAPEST.

While in Budapest I was strongly advised to visit a Frau Papp, who, I was informed, was a clairvoyante of such remarkable powers that on the last occasion she had been

summoned by the police, the latter had been unable to obtain a conviction owing to the quality of the evidence put forward on her behalf. Such an opportunity naturally was not to be missed, and in company with a police official, who translated the medium's Hungarian into German, I took the opportunity of calling upon Frau Papp. I was not favourably impressed by her methods; she made considerable use, for instance, of the well-known formula:

“Is your grandmother living?”

“No.”

“Just so. I saw an old lady by your side.”

From the point at which I politely refused to answer questions, the medium made 37 specific statements referring to family, professional, and financial matters. Of these thirty-one were incorrect, and six partially or wholly correct; the whole of these six related to matters which were quite or largely obvious, such as, that I was interested in psychical research, and had recently made a long journey.

VIII. LUJZA IGNÁTH: BUDAPEST.

In Budapest I also had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Frau Lujza Ignáth. I had previously been given a great deal of information about this lady by Mr. Röthy, who has had a considerable number of sittings with her, and particularly by Frau Lujza Lamacz-Haugseth, who has had the opportunity of studying Frau Ignáth during a long period of time and on intimate terms, and who has written an account of her in the publications of the Norwegian Society for Psychical Research.

It appears, then, that Frau Ignáth presents a case of multiple personality, one of these personalities being apparently endowed with supernormal faculties, both of a mental and of a physical type, but chiefly characterised by clairvoyance. On the evening of the 15th of November I was present at one of the rare sittings now given by Frau Ignáth, who is fully occupied with her business. I formed part of an audience of nineteen persons, nearly all women, some of whom were called to her side by *Nona*,

as the clairvoyant secondary personality is named. I was unable to observe any substantial differences of expression or of psychic characteristics between Frau Ignáth and *Nona*, whose appearance was preceded by a rubbing of the eyes. At first sight the clairvoyant, or at any rate the telepathic, phenomena shown by *Nona* seemed very impressive, for written questions were answered in a seemingly satisfactory manner without being read. But it appeared, on inquiry, that all those who had been called up, with one exception, were old friends of Frau Ignáth. The questions answered and the information given to the lady forming this exception, appeared veridical, but as the proceedings took place exclusively in Hungarian, and as I was dependent on whispered translations, I scarcely feel competent to pronounce an opinion. This exceptional case, however, has some interest from another point of view. I had naturally hoped to be among those called upon by *Nona*, only to be informed by her that she never undertook to give information to people at their first sitting, and this though she had a few minutes previously called upon the lady just mentioned.

During the course of the sitting *Nona* hypnotised, in excellent professional style, a young girl of slightly hysterical type, and gave her the common post-hypnotic suggestion that she was to ask for a glass of water on awakening, which she duly did. At the conclusion of the sitting both *Nona* and Frau Ignáth were good enough to say that they would be very happy now to give me a personal sitting.

This was arranged for the evening of the 16th at Frau Lamac-Haugseth's hotel. Owing to the illness of her child and other reasons, Frau Ignáth was unfortunately obliged to be very late, and during the short time that she was able to remain, *Nona* did not manifest, to Frau Ignáth's great regret. However, she expressed great anxiety to satisfy my interest and a further appointment was made for the afternoon of the 19th, at the same place.

On my arrival I learned with regret that Frau Ignáth had met with a slight accident and was laid up. She had

warmly invited me, however, to come to her flat, which I was very glad to do. I enjoyed a two-and-a-half hours' conversation with her, during which I learned of many of her striking feats of clairvoyance. Before my departure I left with Frau Ignáth the test-tube II provided by Dr. Moll,¹ and being requested by her to put three questions, I asked: "What is in it?" "Who has put it together?" "Whence has it come?" together with a request to *Nona* to add whatever she pleased.

The following morning Frau Lamacs-Haugseth telephoned to say that a few minutes after I had left the previous evening, *Nona* had appeared and had made a statement about the contents of the tube, but that this was only of a preliminary nature. I therefore decided to leave the test-tube with Frau Ignáth, Frau Lamacs-Haugseth kindly undertaking to forward it to me as soon as *Nona* had completed her determination of its contents. The test-tube has since been returned to me and by me to Dr. Moll, together with the clairvoyant statements made by *Nona*. Dr. Moll considers this experiment to have been a total failure, and with this I agree. Several persons, however, to whom I have shown the papers, consider this view mistaken, and that *Nona* was partially successful. I therefore give a literal translation from the German of the reports of Frau Lamacs-Haugseth and of Dr. Moll.

On the 22nd of November 1928, Frau Lamacs-Haugseth wrote to me as follows: "According to our arrangement, on the 20th of November I showed to Frau Ignáth's *Nona*-individuality the phial II left by you in Budapest on the 18th of November, and now communicate to you the following:

I asked *Nona* the questions formulated by us on the 18th of November in the presence of Frau Ignáth, who was then unwell:

[Here follow the questions printed above.]

But first I must repeat what I told you on the 19th, that *Nona* appeared on the previous day after we had both left because you had another engagement and we could therefore

¹ See page 412 above.

not wait until the *Nona*-consciousness manifested. *Nona* told Herr Ignáth and Herr Olah, briefly, that in the phial there is not only writing, but also something else, something that concerns many people, and which is at present followed by few, though later many will follow it; she would say more about the matter later.

On the 20th she said the following about the phial II, about 15 cm. long, about 2 cm. in diameter, closed with a solid white substance. *Nona* spoke Hungarian, I translate her words :

‘I answer all the questions together, as I see it in pictures.

‘A man has made this, three men saw it. This thing originates from a wise head who is honoured by many people, and whose words are attended to by many people. He is led by love, which he would like to introduce into human souls. But at heart this will be more believed in if convincing information comes from the other side.

‘The meaning of that which is in the glass plays an important rôle for mankind. I see pictures before me; writing, dust, flowers, wood, stone, bones; all this comes together, I do not know why, but I see it so.

‘Those who open this glass will be convinced of a thing which hitherto no one knew with certainty, the immortality of the soul, a thing which interests all men. A few who have come to it through personal experiences recognise it, but the mass of mankind will recognise it more after the passage of much time. I see many, many people whose happiness depends upon this recognition. This is a great, eternal thing; so long as there will be men, this will also exist. Love, love, love over all, as much here on earth as on the other side, whence come this information and this inspiration. This inspiration and this wish *shall* be believed in and followed.

‘This glass and its contents come from far, far beyond the home of the man who brought it here; lands and water and languages lie between.

‘What have I myself to add? When these my words are read it will be said that I am unsystematic. This is true. This is my failing since the beginning, since I am, since the creation of the world, as I also was there. But if my words are read and correctly understood, and compared with the

essence of the contents of the phial, then it will be seen that my words agree with the essence and the meaning of its contents. And then one can oneself introduce system into my answer.' ”

I sent this report, together with the phial, to Dr. Moll, who replied :

The test-tube contained black paper, such as that used for the packing of photographic plates ; within this was placed a part of the cover of a work ; on this part appears the following title :

PROF. M. LEVI BIANCHINI
DIRETTORE DEL MANICOMIO DI TERAMO (ABRUZZI-ITALIA)

Presbiogenesi
disfrenie e displasie presbiogeniche
(Generazione tardiva e malformazioni
somatopsichiche del fenotipo)

What *Nona* said is for the larger part mere verbiage ; it is quite certain that the description is not correct.

[*Nona*]

A man has made this.
Three men saw it.

[*Dr. Moll's comments*]

That is correct.
Four people were present with me. I cut the piece from the cover. At the cutting my secretary and my technical assistant were also present ; but they did not see what it was ; during the packing there was also the housekeeper.

This thing originates from a wise head.

As to whether I am wise I should not like to express an opinion, nor concerning the continuation ; compliments nearly always form the introduction.

That which is in the glass plays an important rôle for mankind.

I see pictures before me; writing, dust, flowers, wood, stone, bones.

Those who open this glass will be convinced of a thing, etc.

The glass and its contents come from far, far beyond the home of the man who brought it here; lands and water and languages lie between them.

I do not know whether it plays such an important rôle.

At any rate there were neither flowers, nor wood, nor stone, nor bones in it.

I do not believe that the contents have made so deep an impression on anybody as is here described.

This must no doubt refer to you, Mr. Besterman. But if so, the description does not apply to Germany [the test-tube was originally sent to me from Berlin to Munich, and Frau Ignáth knew that I came from England]; for the glass would have had to have come from America, perhaps from Greenland, or the Arctic regions.

I think that it is hardly worth while to discuss the matter further.

It is difficult to imagine that any experiment could have a less positive result than this one; the contents are obviously not recognised at all. Not even the statement about the three men is accurate, none of those present saw the contents, nobody had previously read the leaf; I had taken it at random from a quantity of printed matter and had cut it without seeing it myself.

However, the experiment is very instructive from a negative point of view. We had to smash the glass in order to get at the contents.

I have to thank Frau Lamacs-Haugseth for the time and trouble she took to make this experiment possible.

IX. ANNA KARLIK : BERLIN.

While I was in Berlin I made inquiries as to available mediums, and was informed that the only physical medium with any reputation is Frau "Volhardt." This medium is studied by Professor Schröder, who was unfortunately unwilling to give me facilities for making her acquaintance. Among the mental mediums, I was informed by several psychical researchers, Frau Karlik and Peter Johanson are the most successful. By the kindness of Herr Rudolf Grossmann, I was enabled to have a sitting with each of these mediums.

Frau Anna Karlik is an elderly woman who has a considerable reputation in Berlin.¹ She does not go into trance, but gives information as to character, the future, and so on, while in a more or less normal state of consciousness. I called on her in company with Herr and Frau Grossmann and Herr von Brentano. In view of the very favourable reports made to me of Frau Karlik's supernormal faculties, I have thought it right to put my sitting with her on record. But to give an account of this lengthy sitting would be superfluous. Not a single one of the statements made to the four sitters was correct or, if correct, evidential. In these circumstances it seems scarcely worth while to do more than record the bare fact.

X. PETER JOHANSON : BERLIN

Johanson specialises in psychometry and has a large following. He is a man of striking personality and physical appearance, and he makes use of the latter to hypnotise (using this word in its popular sense) his more impressionable clients. I paid a visit to him accompanied by the same lady and gentlemen as above. Johanson was

¹ Cp. *Anna Karlik. Anerkennungen und Kritiken über hellseherische und psychometrische Sitzungen, sowie Auszüge aus Sitzungsprotokollen* (Berlin [1928]).

a little more successful than Frau Karlik, for he analysed Herr von Brentano's character in a manner that seemed somewhat to impress the latter. Subsequent discussion, however, showed that all the statements made by Johanson could easily have been deduced from facts known to him. Johanson was quite unsuccessful in all his statements referring to the other three sitters.

XI. LUDWIG KAHN : BERLIN.

Herr Grossmann also very kindly made an appointment for me in his own flat with Ludwig Kahn, who has been very well known for many years as a clairvoyant. Quite recently the results produced by him at sittings in Paris greatly impressed the French investigators.¹ I was therefore gratified at this unexpected opportunity of meeting him. Unfortunately Kahn was over an hour late at our first appointment, at which Dr. Dessoir was also present, and when he arrived said that he was too tired to undertake any experiments. He made another appointment for the evening of the same day, which he subsequently cancelled. And no efforts would induce him to make another appointment during the remaining day that I was to be in Berlin.

Later, however, a sitting was arranged for Dr. Dessoir (under an assumed name, as before), and of this sitting Dr. Dessoir has kindly sent me a report, with permission to publish it. A literal translation of this report follows :

"Sitting on the 7th of December at the home of Rudolf Grossmann.

Present : Ludwig Kahn, Herr von Brentano, Professor Dessoir, Rudolf Grossmann.

Kahn takes a sheet of paper brought by Dessoir, tears from it three pieces of equal size, and asks one of the three gentlemen to write something on his piece of paper and to fold it while he [Kahn] is out of the room. From

¹ See E. Osty, "Un Homme doué de connaissance paranormale, M. Ludwig Kahn," *Revue Métapsychique* (Paris 1925), pp. 65-79, 132-143 ; Charles Richet, *Notre sixième sens* (Paris [1927]), pp. 178-190.

the remaining part of the sheet Kahn tears a part and leaves a piece of exactly the same size as those distributed to the sitters. After he has left the room, the folder containing this piece of paper is removed at Dessoir's request. Kahn returns, asks to be shown the three pieces of paper, held by Dessoir, and requests that they be uniformly folded. Then he asks Grossmann for paper and pencil. He now receives a piece of paper of totally different appearance and has no chance to effect the substitution which he had perhaps planned. He demands that the three gentlemen should sit in a row, and against the light, requests Dessoir to remove his glasses, and asks to be given one of the folded papers for a short time. He then returns this paper and begins a conversation, after Dessoir has given the other two papers to the gentlemen sitting by him. So passes a quarter of an hour, then Herr Kahn explains that he cannot arrive at the necessary concentration and begs for a new sitting for Tuesday, the 11th of December, at 11 o'clock. This sitting he afterwards cancelled."

From Berlin I proceeded to Copenhagen, where I hoped to have sittings with the physical medium Einar Nielsen. Unfortunately, however, notwithstanding the appeals of Professor Winther and of two of his supporters, Nielsen refused to give me a sitting.

XII. PASCAL FORTHUNY: PARIS.

On my return to Paris for further sittings with Mme. Kahl, I had the opportunity of sittings with several other mental mediums. Chief amongst these was Pascal Forthuny, with whom the French investigators have obtained very remarkable results.¹

I made M. Forthuny's acquaintance during the course of a public demonstration given by him of his supernormal faculties. Some of the phenomena then witnessed were distinctly impressive; but all the persons concerned being

¹ See E. Osty, *Une Faculté de connaissance supra-normale: Pascal Forthuny* (Paris 1926).

unknown to me, I could attach but little evidential importance to phenomena thus publicly obtained. Fortunately, M. Forthuny very readily agreed to give me a private sitting, which duly took place.

At this sitting, which lasted about an hour, M. Forthuny made a number of statements, about half of which were accurate. Amongst these were two which appear to be excellent examples of thought-transference, and one of them even contains what seems to be an element of prevision. Unfortunately, both these cases are of a private nature, and cannot be published. I have, however, put them on record and submitted them to Mrs. Salter, whose opinion is as follows: "I have seen Mr. Besterman's report of the two incidents which occurred during his sitting with M. Forthuny. Both of them seem to me to show good evidence of knowledge supernormally acquired, being quite beyond chance-coincidence. In the second case it seems all but impossible to suppose that M. Forthuny should have acquired the knowledge by any normal means, and this is very improbable in the first." This record has been filed in the Society's Rooms.

Among the remaining incidents may be mentioned M. Forthuny's very emphatic assertion that I am totally unmusical. This is quite true. M. Forthuny's statement impressed me the more as every previous medium with whom I have ever sat, who has touched on this point, has described me as musical. Nevertheless, the odds against a chance success are of course very small.

Later in the sitting M. Forthuny said: "At last you've got the rooms as you wanted them . . . no, it's two rooms . . . at last you have the desk as you wanted it . . . at last the electric light has been changed . . . how pleased you are!" All this applies with complete accuracy to the recent reorganisation of the Society's Library. It is quite likely that M. Forthuny had heard of this; but it is extremely unlikely that he should have known about the desk and the light, for in order to see that changes have been made in these respects it would be necessary to have a clear recollection of the Library's appearance before the alterations. M. Forthuny has never

been in England, and anyone likely to mention the re-organisation of the Library to him would be most unlikely to have such a recollection, and even if so, would hardly go out of his way to mention these details.

The Society hopes to have further sittings with M. Forthuny, and in the meanwhile I have to thank him for having so readily given me an opportunity of witnessing his supernormal faculties in action.

XIII. RENÉ DAUMAL: PARIS.

I took advantage of my presence in Paris to make the acquaintance of M. René Maublanc, who has repeated M. Jules Romains's experiments into an alleged "paroptic" faculty.¹ M. Maublanc kindly allowed me to participate in one of his sittings with a young student, M. René Daumal, with whom he is at present experimenting, and also to arrange one sitting with him myself. I now give a literal translation of the record of the former sitting.

"Paroptic experiments—Thursday, the 20th of December 1928, at 15.30, in the flat of René Maublanc, 9 Avenue de l'Observatoire, with René Daumal, in the presence of Mr. Th. Besterman and of André Cuisenier, Professor at the Lycée Rollin.

First series. Daumal, his eyes bandaged, lies down on a couch. His face is covered with a red cloth.

1. R. Maublanc puts into his hands a book of very small format chosen by Mr. Besterman [chosen, that is, from among a number of volumes in the same series offered to me] (*La belle et la bête*, Payot, Collection Miniature). The cover of this book is of cloth: background old gold, with small flowers in white, mauve and pink, with very small green leaves and black stalks. The light is very bad.

Answer: 'The general colour is mauve. I also see yellow and black. I see rather vague designs in mauve outlined in black, and within longish yellow spots. The

¹ See L. H. Heyn and R. Maublanc, *Une éducation paroptique* (Paris 1926); cp. *Journ. S.P.R.* (April 1928), xxiv. 234-239.

black lines, which are fairly thin, form a rather sinuous network.'

2. Fly-leaf of the same book. It is an irregularly marbled paper, in the following colours: blue-green, light green, sap-green (*vert de vessie*), and reddish brown, the whole rather dull.

Answer: 'A yellow background with rather light mauve spots. A few smaller and triangular red spots. I see green lines outlining a red spot.'

3. Mr. Besterman chooses another book of the same collection and format: *Cent épigrammes grecques*. Cloth cover: very dark blue-violet background, round and oval red spots, with black lines in the middle, grey-green leaves.

Answer: 'In general, dark violet with some red and yellow spots. The violet is very dark. Some lines rather lighter than the violet.'

4. Fly-leaf. Wine-red background, regular blue-grey spots, the larger spindle-shaped, the smaller round. The latter surrounded by gold dots.

Answer: 'I see green, pale blue, orange-yellow. The whole is slate blue.'

The light being very bad, R. Maublanc projects the light of an electric lamp [on to the fly-leaf].

Answer: 'Thin red and yellow lines forming large curves, and some blue-grey. The yellow is in rather irregular round spots. The grey is in large strips.'

5. R. Maublanc returns to Daumal the cover of *La belle et la bête*, illuminating it with the electric light.

Answer: 'I see a brighter red on a blue background. The red is perhaps a very bright yellow forming large spots between a vague circle of blue spots, with toothed contours.'

6. Fly-leaf of *La belle et la bête*.

Answer: 'Obliquely elongated green spots on a yellow background. The green is greyish and rather dull. The yellow is rather pale and dull, it is more like beige or very light brown.'

Second series.

1. In a wooden box open on one side only and lighted with an electric lamp placed inside, R. Maublanc places

two playing cards chosen by Mr. Besterman: on the left the three of diamonds, on the right the ten of spades.

Answer: 'On the left a red card; on the right a black one. The red is diamonds, the black spades. On the spades there are many spots; it is the ten. On the left is the eight of diamonds, but I am not quite sure.'

All these answers are made rapidly, nobody else saying a word. R. Maublanc then said: 'If you are not sure, look again more carefully.' Daumal, who has so far been using his left hand, now puts his right one near the cards, and says: 'I now see the spades on the left, with few spots. It must be the five. No, the six or the three.'

2. Mr. Besterman chooses two other cards which R. Maublanc puts in the box [this is incorrect, they were put in by me]; the two of diamonds on the left, the ten of clubs on the right.

Answer: 'It is again diamonds on the left, and clubs on the right. I am no longer sure whether it is diamonds or hearts; in any case it is a two. The clubs is the five or the eight; probably the five.'''

It may be added that these cards are placed side by side in a slit provided inside the small box; they are outside the medium's line of sight. These results were interesting enough to justify a further sitting, and M. Maublanc and his subject kindly came to my hotel the following day. A series of colour and card experiments was tried with the medium's eyes securely bandaged, but without any apparatus. The results were as follows.

Object.

Percipient's Answer.

Red,	Green, green or red.
Green,	Red, or rather orange.
Yellow,	Blue.
Blue,	Very dull red, purple, dark brown.
Terracotta,	Yellow, it first seemed blue.
Grey,	Red.
Green,	Yellow, pale blue.
Blue,	Green or red.

6 spades, diamonds, 2.

<i>Object (cont.).</i>	<i>Percipient's Answer (cont.).</i>
10 hearts,	clubs, 8.
8 hearts,	spades, 9.
10 hearts,	spades or hearts, 3, 3 spades.
2 hearts,	diamonds, 5
6 spades,	clubs, 6 or 8, 8.
8 clubs.	diamonds, numerous pips, red, 10, 8 or 10 diamonds, 10.
8 clubs,	spades, 7, 6, diamonds, 2, does not feel very certain.
6 spades,	hearts, 5.

I then handed to the medium, one after the other, a number of letter-cards I had prepared with written and coloured contents. With these M. Daumal was quite unsuccessful. Nevertheless, I feel that experiments with this subject should be continued, and I am glad to say that M. Wareollier has agreed to collaborate with M. Maublanc in doing so.

XIV. THE DOG ZOU: PARIS.

During my stay in Paris I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of Mme. Carita Borderieux, who has been studying psychical phenomena for many years. This lady has recently taken up the study of so-called "thinking" animals, and has herself trained a "calculating" dog, a mongrel spaniel named Zou.¹ Mme. Borderieux kindly invited me to witness some of the feats of this dog. She told me that he is able to answer such questions as lend themselves to a simple affirmative or negative reply, and that he is able to perform simple sums in addition, subtraction and multiplication.

The procedure is as follows: Zou is placed in close proximity to a box of biscuits, Mme. Borderieux seats herself opposite him, addresses a question to him or states the problem to be solved, puts out her hand, and on this

¹ See C. Borderieux, *Les nouveaux animaux pensants* (Paris 1927), and the same writer's periodical *Psychica* (Paris), *passim*.

Zou taps his answer with his paws. Thus, on being asked to multiply six by four, Zou tapped on Mme. Borderieux's palm twice with one paw and four times with the other (=24). On observing that Zou, though very friendly and good-tempered, refused to tap on any other hand but that of Mme. Borderieux, I watched the above-described procedure rather more attentively. I soon noticed that Zou knew which paw to pat because Mme. Borderieux placed her hand nearer that paw than the other. He also knew how many times to pat because when he had brought down his paw the necessary number of times, Mme. Borderieux made a slight movement of her hand. Zou's intellectual abilities are thus restricted to the ability to recognise the two signals just indicated, a feat not beyond the average capacity of a dog.

I should like to add that I consider it quite possible to make such signals unconsciously. I have to thank Mme. Borderieux for the opportunity of making Zou's acquaintance.

ON THE ASSERTED DIFFICULTY OF THE SPIRITUALISTIC HYPOTHESIS FROM A SCIENTIFIC POINT OF VIEW.¹

BY SIR OLIVER LODGE.

PART I.

THE interesting communications in *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. xxxviii, pp. 281-374, by Mr. W. H. Salter and an anonymous writer *Mr. V.*, respectively, on the communications coming through *Mr. V.*'s hand and purporting to be inspired by a little-known deceased poetess, Margaret Veley, will, I expect, attract attention from several points of view. I limit myself to some remarks on a passage in *Mr. V.*'s well-informed and critical paper, p. 366, which runs as follows :

“... Regarded as a scientific working hypothesis, spiritism does not seem to me to be a very hopeful avenue of investigation. The spirit hypothesis has a delusive appearance of simplicity, but so also had Kepler's hypothesis of guiding angels. And how remote this was from the complex reality of Einstein's description of gravitation! In fact, if these supernormal mental phenomena depend on the whims and caprices of departed spirits, then I for one despair of ever being able to discover any law and order in them.

Undoubtedly there is some difficulty, in our present state of comparative ignorance, about specifying or formulating the spiritistic hypothesis in any precise and so to speak scientific manner ; for it is an appeal to the activity of unknown agents, acting by unknown methods, under

¹This paper was read at a General Meeting of the Society on May 6th, 1929.

conditions of which we have no experience, and by means of which we are unaware. We get into touch, or appear to get into touch, with these agencies only when they have affected material objects, for instance someone's brain, thereby stimulating muscles so as to produce results which appeal to our normal senses.

But the admission that we cannot understand how agents work does not justify our denial of the existence of such working. A good deal of modern mathematical physics is in the same predicament. We do not really understand how the properties of the ether, or of what it is now the fashion to call "space-time," act in producing the material effect we call weight or gravitation. We know a good deal about it; we can specify with precision the law of "weight" in so far as it imitates the resultant of an independent and unscreened attraction of every particle for every other. We can say that the earth acts nearly as if its whole mass were concentrated at its centre, that the law of force is different inside and outside, so that it changes abruptly when the surface is penetrated, and that the force attains a peak value at the surface, sloping down differently on the two sides. We can speak of the state of strain or "potential" to which the force is due, say that it is continuous across the boundary, give the law of its variation with distance, and so on. Newton, in fact, correctly formulated the whole theory of gravitation considered as action at a distance, but the true mechanism of what seems like a condition of strain or warp in space brought about by the very existence of matter, was beyond him, just as it is still beyond us. In philosophic mood, Newton was never satisfied with his mode of specification. It merely gave the resultant effect of something that simulated the direct attraction of one body for another across apparently empty space; he had to leave the inner meaning of such mysterious action for future discovery.

Einstein discarded the attraction or force exerted by a body at a distance, and replaced it by a geometry of space which would account for, or at least express, the observed behaviour in a more intimate and so to speak

less magical manner. When a registering thermometer, with a steel index, is "set" by means of a magnet acting through the glass, the index is really moved by the analogous but different modification of space (or ether) that we call a magnetic field. An inert body can only be perturbed or guided by something in immediate contact with it; even though the particular modification of that "something," which enables it so to act, may be due to the neighbourhood of a distant mass of matter, for reasons which remain to be explored.

The fact that we sometimes have to postulate an unknown agency does not justify our attributing anything capricious to that agency. We are ignorant of how the gravitational agent acts, but we know that it acts in accordance with law and order, so that the results can be duly predicted. Einstein's view (if we may call it Einstein's, though in one form or another it must have been vaguely held by many) is after all *not* so very different from Kepler's asserted hypothesis. What Kepler meant by "guiding angels controlling the planets" (assuming that he used that phrase) I do not know; but I am sure he meant nothing capricious. He must have meant that an unknown something guided the planets in their path; and that is a paraphrase of the modern view. The something is now often spoken of as a warp in space—acting as a sort of groove. In so far as Kepler postulated something in immediate touch with a planet and acting directly on it, he had what now appears to be truth on his side; his thesis being perhaps nearer the ultimate truth, though far less practically useful, than Newton's delightfully simple quantitative expression for the indirect action of a distant body.

In order to illustrate direct guidance by contact action, we may cite the familiar example of a gramophone needle, which automatically reproduces a prearranged tune, simply by following the path of least resistance. What else, after all, can an inert thing do? That is the meaning of inertia. Animated things are not inert: they need not take the easiest path. A man may climb the Matterhorn for fun. But inanimate unstimulated matter never

behaves with any initiative or spontaneity: it is strictly inert. Atoms never err or make mistakes, they are absolutely law-abiding. If they make an apparent error, if a locomotive engine leaves its track, we call it a catastrophe. All machinery works on that principle; every portion takes the easiest path. It is true that to get a coherent result there must have been planning and prearrangement. Certainly! In all cases of automatic working, whether biological or other, that must be an inevitable preliminary. But explorers of the mechanism will detect no signs of mental action by their instruments or their senses. To infer a determining or controlling cause they must philosophise. Indeed, we may go a step further and emerge from the past into the present:—A wireless set talks like a gramophone, and to one accustomed only to gramophones it would seem barbarously superstitious to urge that in the wireless case some (possibly whimsical and capricious) operator was actually in control. Statements may be unpalatable, and yet be true.

Now return to gravitation. Planets behave as if they were attracted by the sun. That is certainly true. But what is attraction? A train is not attracted to its destination; lightning is not attracted to a chimney; but it gets there none the less, by continually taking the easiest path. So it is with a planet. Indeed, one might say that everything inert takes the only path open to it, it has no option. The law is a sort of truism. But the principle, once recognised, has been formulated into a clue; the Principle of Least Action can be expressed mathematically. Once postulate that, and the behaviour of the inanimate portions of the cosmos can be accurately deduced.

The modern statement that the planets move along the line of least resistance, or the easiest path, makes their case rather closely analogous to that of a railway train guided by the rails. The path and destination of a train are determined by the continual direct influence of the rails, which make it easier for the train to travel in the right direction than to jump them and go astray. We

might, if we chose, admit that the path was laid down or determined by the mentality of the surveyors and designers of the route; but a Martian spectator with partial information might still wonder at the apparent intelligence which guided one part of a train to Manchester, and another part to Liverpool, in accordance with the wishes of the passengers or the labels on the coaches. If told that an invisible guardian angel switched over the points to produce this result, he might resent the suggestion as absurdly unscientific and preposterous; as on a purely mechanistic view it would be.

After having studied trains for some time, our spectator might begin to notice the novelty of a motor-car. His first tendency would be to look for the rails in that case also; and, finding none, he might superstitiously but correctly surmise that a guardian spirit was guiding the car to its destination. In this case, moreover, further experience would soon persuade him that he had to allow for an element of caprice. But even that is not fatal to the truth: he need not throw up his hands in despair. As soon as we introduce the activity of life and mind we get out of mere mechanism and the results are not easily formulated or predicted. The activities of an animal cannot be expressed in mathematical terms, and yet animal instincts and behaviour are subject-matter for scientific investigation. It is assumed that they obey laws of some kind. *Science is not limited to the accurate data and laws of mathematical physics*: and to claim that a hypothesis is unscientific because we cannot formulate it completely, or because we do not understand the method of working, or even because there is a certain amount of capriciousness about it, is more than we have any right to claim. Anthropology and sociology are less advanced sciences than physics and chemistry: they have to get on as best they can, with a profusion of data, and with the inevitable complications appropriate to live things. Let us not be put out of our stride by the fear of retaining, in modified form, some of the animistic guesses of primitive man. Experience may lead us, as it led him, to contemplate stranger modes of existence, and more whimsical

phenomena, than our long study of mechanism has led us to expect. We must put aside prejudice, be guided by the evidence, and strive for truth. The superficial simplicity of materialism has served us well, as a comprehensive covering, for many centuries, and we have made good progress under its protection; but it is beginning to get threadbare and inadequate, it is not coextensive with reality, and unsuspected influences are peeping through.

To sum up. A working hypothesis can be followed up and developed rationally without being metrically exact in its early stages. The important question about the spiritistic hypothesis is not whether it is simple or complicated, easy or puzzling, attractive or repellent, but whether it is true. Its truth can only be sustained or demolished by the continued careful critical and cautious method of enquiry initiated by the S.P.R. under the Presidency of a guiding spirit or guardian angel called Henry Sidgwick, with the active (and I believe continuing) co-operation of Edmund Gurney and Frederic Myers.

PART II.

And now, having finished what I have to say in connexion with *Mr. V.*'s critical remark in the paper alluded to, I propose to develop a theme of my own: first asking the reader to consider what the spiritistic hypothesis really is, and why there should be so much trouble about even provisionally accepting it as a reasonably scientific working guide or clue among the maze of phenomena. I suggest that the trouble is mainly caused by our philosophic views. If we are unwilling to admit that we are spirits here and now, utilising material bodies which we have automatically constructed for the purpose, then probably any form of spirit hypothesis is unwelcome and perhaps meaningless. If we are nothing but material mechanism—if a collection of organic molecules, merely by reason of their chemical complexity, can develop certain functions and reflex actions characteristic of what we call life—if such mechanism can become awareⁿ of itself, can admire, and plan, and acquire a sense of controlling

its own actions, if in fact matter constitutes our essential existence—then the hypothesis of an animating spirit may well be considered unscientific and grotesque, and one which ought to be abolished from the scientific vocabulary.

But many philosophers now urge, and I think reasonably urge, that materialistic philosophy has broken down, and does not cover the whole ground. Materialistic mechanism is true as far as it goes, but it is not the whole truth. The attempt to make it the whole truth is a natural outcome of the astonishing success of mathematical physics during the last three centuries. This powerful science at first dealt completely with moving particles exerting mechanical forces upon one another according to any prescribed law, then extended itself to rigid bodies on the one hand, and perfect fluids on the other, and so gradually included elasticity, viscosity, the theory of the conduction of heat, and the molecular movements associated with gaseous and other states, including all the vibrations responsible for sound. This science, penetrating to the actual forces at work and analysing every detail of their action by a marvellous method of mathematical deduction, seemed to form a complete and satisfactory and ideal scheme. It began by reducing astronomy to an admirable system of law and order; indeed Newton and Laplace seemed to be initiating the last word on the detailed elaboration of the solar system, and events could be predicted centuries ahead. Astronomy seemed approaching a kind of perfection. The complacency of nineteenth-century physics was remarkable. Naturally an attempt was made to explain all phenomena in the physical universe in terms of molecular interaction: that was the ideal set before himself by Newton, and that ideal has been followed up ever since. So far as the inorganic world is concerned we might hardly expect to dive deeper, for though the explanations really leave a good deal of mystery from the philosophic standpoint, it is the kind of mystery to which we have grown accustomed in daily life, and usually ignore.

The most advanced sciences throughout the nineteenth century flourished on this basis, and set an example which

other sciences tried to follow. The ambition of physiologists has been to apply these same laws to organic and living structures, and to work out the behaviour of the animal and vegetable kingdoms on a physico-chemical basis, and no other. Certainly there were experiences which constantly suggested difficulties, and seemed to demand something more; but it was hoped that these difficulties were of the kind that could be overcome by further study, and by a still closer understanding of the chemical and physical processes involved. There seemed to be nothing in the universe but matter in various forms of motion; and by a thorough study of matter and motion it was hoped that the whole of nature might be understood and explained.

To quote and abbreviate from Professor Whitehead's book, *Science and the Modern World*, Chapter IV. :—

The eighteenth century was the age of reason; healthy, manly, upstanding reason; but, of one-eyed reason, deficient in its vision of depth. . . . Voltaire was typical of the virtues of his century; he hated injustice, cruelty, repression. . . and he hated hocus-pocus. . . . But if men cannot live on bread alone, still less can they do so on disinfectants. So the age had its limitations; yet some of its main positions are still defended in the schools of science. . . . The seventeenth century had provided a perfect instrument for research. The triumph of materialism was chiefly in the sciences of rational dynamics, physics, and chemistry. . . . Nothing fundamental and new was introduced in the eighteenth century, but there was an immense detailed development. Special case after special case was unravelled. It was as though the very Heavens were being opened, on a set plan. . . . In this century the notion of the mechanical explanation of all the processes of nature finally hardened into a dogma of science. The notion won through on its merits by reason of an almost miraculous series of triumphs in mathematical physics. Newton's *Principia* was published in 1687, Lagrange's *Mécanique Analytique* in 1787, and Clerk Maxwell's *Electricity and Magnetism* in 1873. Practically a century between each. Each of these three books introduces new horizons of thought affecting everything which comes after them.

Fifty years later, however, there has begun a revolt; a revolt, strange to say, led by the mathematical physicists themselves. It had been perceived that a study of matter alone was inadequate, and that the behaviour of even the simplest molecules could not really be understood without attention to the properties of the space around them. In fact it was found that empty space was endowed with physical properties. Those properties cannot be investigated directly: we still have to attend exclusively to matter in all experiments and observations, but the material behaviour is found to be secondary and subordinate to the behaviour of empty space. Newton seems to have strongly suspected something of the kind, but at that time he could not make much headway in this apparently more speculative direction; and his theory of matter particles acting on each other by unexplained forces at a distance was so satisfactory from the mathematical point of view and gave such exactly verifiable results that any further treatment in the philosophical direction seemed unnecessary, and at any rate had to be postponed.

The revolt against the concentration of attention on matter alone was effectively begun by Faraday during the first half of the nineteenth century, and has been going on at intervals ever since. Throughout the whole of his masterful treatment, and so to speak creation, of the science of electricity, Faraday insisted on the subordinate part played by material bodies, especially in the phenomena of electrostatics and the electric field. He pointed out that charged conductors were merely the terminals or boundary of an electric field, that inside them the field was non-existent, that it ceased at the boundary, and extended unbroken throughout apparently empty regions between the visible and tangible bodies on which alone experiments could be made. Their behaviour was a sign or token or consequence of the unknown reality which was going on in the space between them. The intervening space might indeed be full of insulating material, but might equally well be entirely devoid of matter. Space itself had what he called a specific inductive capacity or dielectric coefficient,

of a nature and value unknown: unknown to this day. Space is modified by the presence of matter, but its properties are not material properties. The primary happenings occur *in vacuo*. I gather that Epicurus and other ancient atomists were the first to discover and emphasise the importance of what they called 'the void.'

Much the same idea had already been promulgated in the case of light or radiation. Light is not transmitted by matter, but by space. Matter plays quite a subordinate part. Light travels with the greatest ease and simplicity through the emptiness of space, and is only retarded or interfered with by the most transparent matter. All matter contains some trace of opacity; and by opaque matter light is merely destroyed, and its energy turned into heat; but space is perfectly transparent. The radiation which reaches us from the sun and stars has traversed millions of miles of empty space without the slightest loss of energy. We only *detect* it by its effect on matter when it has arrived: it then affects the retina of our eyes, our photographic plates, and the surface of our skin, setting up the chemical and other changes with which we are all familiar. In particular it operates on the green parts of plants, and thereby renders possible the whole of vegetation. All that we see in a wooded landscape is due to energy which has arrived through empty space, and represents a storage of that energy in visible and tangible form. The energy has as it were become incarnate in matter. A plant or a tree is an incarnation of solar energy; and the complete understanding of vegetative processes is impossible without taking this space energy into account. Just as a charged body was to Faraday the termination of an electric field, so a vegetable organism is the termination of a luminiferous field. (One cannot say a "luminous" field; for space itself is not luminous: it only becomes luminous when it encounters matter. It may properly be called luminiferous or light-bearing, for it conveys radiation without displaying it.) Space itself is dark. It may be full of what we sometimes call ether tremor, but nothing is exhibited, nothing is perceptible, unless a particle of matter is introduced.

It is only matter which appeals to our senses, and it is only material objects that we see.

Thus it is through matter that we become aware of the universe; but we need not allow ourselves to fall into the blunder of therefore considering that matter is its most essential feature, or of confusing a phenomenon itself with its index and result. That would be rather like imagining that the deflection of the needle of a galvanometer was the essential thing about an electric current. It would be confusing the manifestation or sign of a thing with the thing itself. The movement of a piece of iron may demonstrate the existence of a magnetic field, and the field can be explored and investigated by the kind of material motions which it causes, but moving iron is nothing like a magnetic field: it is only the sign or index of it. We shall never understand the nature of the field by attending to its demonstration alone; and we should merely stultify ourselves if we supposed that we understood magnetism or electricity by merely studying the movements and rearrangements of matter. Yet that is what we are tempted to do when we are studying the behaviour of living organisms. All we can observe is the motion of matter; and we are liable to imagine that some of those movements constitute life. They are the sign or manifestation of life: they are not life itself. Movement of particles in a brain are very different from "thought."

Essentially the same order of ideas holds even in gravitational astronomy. The movement of the planets demonstrates what is going on in empty space; those movements are the index or sign of the real phenomenon. A gravitational field exists between the worlds, and we should know nothing of it except for their motions. We can attribute those motions to a mysterious force which they exert one upon another; but Newton more than suspected, and Einstein has elaborated, the idea that that force is merely a sign or index—some might say a simulacrum—of some unknown condition existing in space, and that it is to variations in that space condition that their regulated movements are really due. Each particle moves

from instant to instant along the line of least resistance or easiest path open to it. It is the space in immediate contact with the particle that guides it; and though we may truly say that it moves *as if* it were attracted by a distant body, we know that that is only a mode of expression—there is much virtue in an “if,”—and that it is the state of the gravitational field in touch with each particle which controls its motion and thereby demonstrates its own existence. Some of what Faraday claimed for an electric field can be extended to a gravitational field also, though there are many important differences.

To step from these long-known and comparatively simple examples to the spontaneous movements of a living organism, say an animal, is a very big step, and not one to be undertaken lightly; nor can we treat live things with anything like the same satisfaction or fulness of knowledge. For the science of biology is comparatively in its infancy, notwithstanding its immense range and the enormous field open to its classification and investigation. I would, however, direct attention to the possibility that in so far as an organism surpasses mere mechanism, in so far as not all its actions are reflex, in so far as it thinks and contrives and plans, and is guided by anticipations of the future and memory of the past—instead of being immediately obedient to present impulse like a planet or a molecule—I suggest that the organism is the index or demonstration of something beyond itself, something which, though it may be said to be incarnate in matter, has its more real and permanent existence in some other region. Whatever this animating essence may be, it makes no direct appeal to our senses, and is only displayed or demonstrated by its effect on organised material.

In all the cases that I have dealt with it is matter that we observe. The underlying cause or motive power is beyond our immediate apprehension, and is a matter of inference. We infer the properties of an electric field from its effect on what we call charged bodies. We infer and investigate a magnetic field from the behaviour of iron and other substances. We try to arrive at what an electric current really is from its various influences on matter. And

Einstein is leading us to infer a curious warp or modification of space from the effect it has on the perceptible sensuous portions of the universe. So also I would hope that we might gradually infer and investigate the nature of an animating spirit from the behaviour of the organism on which we presume it acts. For that there is something more than material mechanism in the universe is now claimed by the leading mathematical physicists themselves;—a claim which I will presently illustrate by some quotations from the writings of that profound mathematical physicist Professor Whitehead.

Deficiency of a purely materialistic view.

Matter has no initiative. Every particle moves as it is impelled, without plan, aim, or intention, just a thoughtless drift—though the result may be satisfactory or beautiful when appreciated by an intelligent spectator. It is instructive to stand on a bridge and contemplate a brawling stream flowing below; for one can realise that every particle is accurately obedient to external forces, and that the whole pattern is consistent with the equations which mathematicians have laid down and worked out. The mental satisfaction in such complete comprehension of an intricate mechanical pattern is very thorough, and has an æsthetic value of its own. To a purely scientific mind this grasp of a problem has partially taken the place of the more superficial enjoyment of light and shade and colour and gleaming brightness and glowing depths, which an artist takes delight in and transfers to canvas. The abstract point of view, the not inhuman but ultra-human contemplation of the scientific man, strikes deep into the prevalent view of the universe. As says Whitehead, in *Science and the Modern World*, page 24:—

The particular conception of cosmology with which the European intellect has clothed itself in the last three centuries . . . presupposes the ultimate fact of an irreducible brute matter, or material, spread throughout space in a flux of configurations. In itself such a material is senseless, valueless, purposeless. It just does what it does do, following a fixed routine imposed

by external relations which do not spring from the nature of its being. It is this assumption that I call 'scientific materialism.' . . .

And then he goes on to say that the assumption is entirely unsuited to the scientific situation at which we have now arrived. It is not wrong, if properly construed. . . . It expresses certain facts to perfection. But when we pass beyond the abstraction, either by more subtle employment of our senses, or by the request for meanings and for coherence of thoughts, the scheme breaks down at once.

The joy of scientific contemplation is not derived directly from the concrete entities observed, but from the way they fit into an abstract scheme. That is well enough, but the abstract must not be allowed to scorn or deny the concrete: a thinker should be tolerant and open-minded. "The intolerant use of abstractions is the major vice of the intellect."

There are two methods for the purification of ideas. One of them is dispassionate observation by means of the bodily senses.

The apparently trivial things all fit in as part of a whole, and by faith may be fully appreciated by those who grasp science in no narrow and exclusive spirit, but in the spirit more usually associated with poetry. The human mind contributes something to the processes of nature, and deduces from them a depth of reality not superficially apparent in the observed concrete facts and extending far beyond them.

The faith in the order of nature which has made possible the growth of science is a particular example of a deeper faith. . . . To experience this faith is to know that in being ourselves we are more than ourselves: to know that our experience, dim and fragmentary as it is, yet sounds the utmost depths of reality: to know that detached details, merely in order to be themselves, demand that they should find themselves in a system of things: to know that this system includes the harmony of logical rationality, and the harmony of aesthetic achievement: to know that, while the

harmony of logic lies upon the universe as an iron necessity, the aesthetic harmony stands before it as a living ideal moulding the general flux in its broken progress towards finer, subtler issues (p. 26).

We cannot deduce things mentally without a basis of observation, neither can we generalise from observed facts without a mental operation. Neither method without the other is fruitful, though there have been times when one method only was emphasised and the other largely neglected. Whitehead for instance (page 55) rather surprisingly speaks of

the unbridled rationalism of the thought of the later Middle Ages. By this rationalism I mean the belief that the avenue to truth was predominantly through a metaphysical analysis of the nature of things. . . . The historical revolt was the definite abandonment of this method in favour of the study of the empirical facts of antecedents and consequences. . . in science it meant the appeal to experiment and the inductive method of reasoning.

But it is possible to exaggerate in this other direction, and by over-emphasising the inert and the mechanical to lose the larger view which embraces life and mind and the immaterial processes of organic nature.

The scientific philosophy of this age [Harvey's or the seventeenth century generally] was dominated by physics. . . . These concepts are very unsuited to biology; and set for it an insoluble problem of matter and life and organism, with which biologists are now wrestling (p. 58).

The biological sciences are essentially sciences concerning organisms. During the epoch in question, and indeed also at the present moment, the prestige of the more perfect scientific form belongs to the physical sciences. Accordingly, biology apes the manners of physics. It is orthodox to hold, that there is nothing in biology but what is physical mechanism under somewhat complex circumstances (p. 144).

One unsolved problem of thought, so far as it derives from this period, is to be formulated thus: Given configurations of matter with locomotion in space as assigned by physical laws, to account for living organisms (p. 58).

If this turns out impossible, then living organisms can no more be accounted for or explained on purely mechanical principles than can the ether or the properties of space. We may have to explain mechanism in terms of organism—not *vice versa*. Animation seems likely to be a fundamental thing, not reducible to something else. It may be that animation when properly understood will turn out to be of fundamental importance. Already it has begun to invade the physico-chemical field. During the latter half of the nineteenth century many processes thought to be due to molecular changes in inert matter were traced to the agency of life, *i.e.* of minute creatures operating in accordance with biological laws. Everyone now knows how the work of Pasteur revolutionised the theory of fermentation, of putrefaction, and disease generally, by showing that operations which had been thought to be purely chemical or molecular were really biological and organic. The activity of ultra-minute organisms was found responsible for all these phenomena, and the notion of organism as more generally representative or typical of the processes of nature began to attract philosophic attention.

The whole of nature might be likened to an organism of which we study the functions. On this view, the vital thing is not the structure, but the function. An organism guides and controls its own workings; it operates on and uses matter, and in that guidance the secret lies. The working of the whole is analogous to the working of our own bodies controlled by an animating principle which may be called soul or spirit. But such terms seem alien to present-day science. As says Whitehead, p. 94:—

The world of science has always remained perfectly satisfied with its peculiar abstractions. They work, and that is sufficient for it.

But, as he goes on,

The point before us is that this scientific field of thought is, in the twentieth century, too narrow for the concrete facts which are before it for analysis. This is true even in physics, and is more especially urgent in the

biological sciences. Thus, in order to understand the difficulties of modern scientific thought and also its reactions on the modern world, we should have in our minds some conception of a wider field of abstraction, a more concrete analysis, which shall stand nearer to the complete concreteness of our intuitive experience. Such an analysis should find in itself a niche for the concepts of matter and spirit, as abstractions in terms of which much of our physical experience can be interpreted.

Sketch of the spiritistic hypothesis.

Very well, then, the spiritistic hypothesis in its simplest and crudest form is that we are spirits here and now, operating on material bodies, being, so to speak, incarnate in matter for a time, but that our real existence does not depend on association with matter, although the index and demonstration of our activity does. We demonstrate ourselves to our fellows only by means of the material organisms that we have unconsciously constructed and utilised for the purpose; hence if the organism is damaged our manifestation becomes imperfect, and if the damage is serious we may have to quit the organism and remain normally dissociated from matter. Our activities, on this theory, are supposed to go on as before, but now presumably in space; and only when we manage to re-establish some temporary connexion with matter are we able to make any sign, or supply any demonstration, of our continued activity. This is the spiritistic hypothesis, called into existence to account for a large number of otherwise inexplicable facts of observation and experiment, *i.e.* of concrete experience.

Without such demonstration and observation the truth might not have been known; and such demonstration might have been impossible. For even if some such view of our essentially spiritual nature be granted,—as at any rate plausibly analogous to the other examples of dematerialised activity,—the truth might have been, what many religious people seem to think it is, that once we have lost connexion with matter, that loss was irrecoverable. People holding this view seem to think either that

the dead are asleep, or that they are transported or transmuted into a totally different kind of existence, far beyond mortal ken, from which they can make no sign to those still in the flesh. They assume that departed spirits have lost interest in those left behind, and are wholly absorbed in higher things.

I say the truth *might* have been that once the connexion with matter was terminated, it was terminated for good and all; that the consequences of terrestrial action alone survived; and that just as the dead were no longer accessible, so neither could they be assisted by our thoughts or our affection, nor could they have any guiding or helpful influence on those left behind. So completely do some good people think of the departed as in a state of passive rest, that they might as well be in the grave. There are, indeed, some who think that any kind of revival and reunion will only be possible when in some extraordinary way those mortal bodies are resuscitated. "On the resurrection morning soul and body meet again." Those physical instruments seem to them so important that the particles are supposed to be stored until they can be again utilised in some future embodied existence, a millennium, perhaps a million years, ahead. This old, almost superseded, but traditional belief in the resuscitation of the discarded mechanism only serves to show how deep-rooted is the tendency to confuse the indicator with the phenomenon itself, and to imagine that apart from matter existence is impossible. Whether the physical analogies now adduced are of any use to people capable of such beliefs is doubtful; they know too little about space to be impressed; the popular idea of empty space is sheer emptiness and nothing else.

Yet we have learnt that matter is acted on wholly by the influences which reach it from space. Inert matter would never show any sign of activity, nor could it change its state of motion if left to itself. The changes that we observe are wholly due to the action of space upon it. I want to extend this idea, derived from gravitation, cohesion, electricity, magnetism and light, and include the less known and yet familiar activity called animation.

That matter can be animated we can most of us admit, though we know not how it is animated, or what the process of animation is: that space may be animated, too, must be regarded as a new idea. But it is not unreasonable; for just consider:—Long ago it would have seemed absurd to say that space had any physical properties, that light was a function of space, that electric, magnetic and gravitational fields were demonstrations through matter of something going on in space, that the very cohesion between the particles of a solid is due to some entity in space. But to physicists these various properties of space are becoming commonplace; and for myself I venture to extend the conception to animation also. I do not venture to define spirit, save as the animating principle on a higher grade. On a lower grade it might be called soul or mind; and on a still lower grade merely life, which to me seems the rudiment of mind. But whether we are able to define it or not, we all know in some rough sense what we mean by the term. It is the basis of Descartes' philosophy "*cogito ergo sum.*" Whatever else he knew or did not know, he knew that he could think. And it is that thinking, idealising, aspiring, hoping, loving part of ourselves which I wish to suggest by the name of spirit.

My doctrine at present is that this transcendental, immaterial entity needs and always will need something physical—physical, not necessarily material—for its manifestation, that it never is really without a "body," even though it be discarnate. The mechanism of flesh which was utilised here was indeed temporary, but that was never its primary mechanism. The primary physical mechanism associated with spirit is not gross matter, spirit can only interact with matter under difficulties for a time; its real permanent existence is in the freedom of space, with an ethereal mechanism, whose properties do not appeal to the senses, and therefore are at present beyond our ken. Our only mode of investigation at present is limited to the occasions when spirit may for a time re-establish communication with matter, in defiance of the popular prejudice that such re-establishment is impossible.

I said that truth *might* have lain in that direction,—the direction of impossibility of communication,—but in my opinion our experience shows that it does not. For those who have studied obscure phenomena know that under certain conditions utilisation of a borrowed existing organism, or even apparently the reconstruction of a temporary material body, is possible, and that through this singular use of a discarded method of manifestation, demonstration of continued existence has become real. Communication is not entirely cut off, the departed do not soar entirely out of our ken. By special effort and under special conditions connexion with matter can be re-established, and thus effects are produced which do appeal even to our bodily sense organs. One would not have expected that: but we must be guided by the facts. That the facts point in that direction is obvious. Whether they conclusively prove that deduction,—in the sense that they can be explained in no other way,—is what remains for us to enquire into and make sure of. If other hypotheses are successful, then by all means let them be tried. But to be successful they must meet *all* the facts; and to my mind every other hypothesis sooner or later breaks down.

Basing my conclusions on experience, I am absolutely convinced not only of survival but of demonstrated survival, demonstrated by occasional interaction with matter in such a way as to produce physical results. These effects may be accomplished through the loan of other organisms, submitted to the temporary control of an alien intelligence; that is the commonest way. Communion may be and apparently is achieved in more directly mental telepathic fashion also. There are doubtless limits to the possibility of interaction with matter after our familiar organism is left behind; but those limits are what we have to ascertain: we cannot lay them down *a priori*. It may be that naïve experience will lead us nearer to the truth than the most recondite speculations of philosophy. The truth may not be so complicated as some would have us think. Complications are probably due to imperfect knowledge. A simple hypothesis may be quite near the truth, even if we cannot formulate it completely.

We cannot formulate our own activities completely, yet it is common enough to adduce the activities of an incarnate spirit: for instance, it is considered quite simple to say that some person has brought a message, or that some other person has removed an object, or that yet another has obeyed a request, and done us a service, and given us a helping hand. These occurrences are familiar enough, though how they are accomplished we should find it hard to express in detail. Philosophers puzzle over the simplest actions. The utilisation of vibrations of the air for communicating ideas is not really a simple process; it ought to be surprising, instead of commonplace. In our daily life we trust to naïve experience, and we are not misled. We often do not understand facts, we just grow accustomed to them. Understanding comes later; and not to all. If the facts indicate communication and continued mental activity, then let us not be afraid of accepting them. If we had waited to deal with electrical phenomena until we understood the nature of an electric field, we should be waiting still. If Newton had declined to consider gravitational astronomy till he understood the nature of a gravitational field, we should still be in the Dark Ages of science. We have not to wait, before planning things, until we understand the interaction of mind and body.

The spiritistic hypothesis, pressed to the full, probably involves far more than we can in our highest flights imagine. It leads us into the region of aesthetics and genius and inspiration and theology. But our ordinary daily life is conducted on lower levels, and for them the simple primitive ideas suffice. Struggling and bereaved humanity seeks to learn something of the fate of its loved ones, seeks to be assured that affection continues, that they are not far removed from us, and that reunion will not be postponed to some absurdly distant date. My hypothesis is that they are all round about us, in what we call the ether of space rather than in matter; that inter-communication is still possible; and that simple souls may derive comfort from their intuitive perceptions and naïve experiences, without being deterred by the difficulties which

successful concentration on material mechanism for the last two or three centuries seems to raise in their path. After all, it is now found that that material mechanism itself contains more mystery than had been conjectured, and that the full explanation even of it, if ever such explanation is forthcoming, will lead, and already is beginning to lead, towards an idealistic view of existence, not at all dissimilar from the animistic or spiritistic view of the real and permanent universe here and now.

In brief, we are immortal spirits in temporary association with matter. Probably it is through this bodily restriction and isolation that we become individualised and acquire a permanent personality, which hereafter is able to adapt itself to new surroundings, in accordance with the well-studied biological adaptability of the rest of animate existence.

Conditions of future existence.

Why do people decline to face continued existence of the same general kind as that which corresponds with our experience now? The world as we see it is largely our own interpretation. To a different grade of being the same things might have a totally different aspect. Our apprehension depends on the way we interpret sense indications; and if our interpretative faculty continues, we shall be likely to interpret other surroundings in much the same way. The interpretation and even the kind of perception of nature depend a great deal on ourselves; and an interpretative faculty is likely to continue. But hitherto science has declined to contemplate an immaterial existence, and only a few are willing to suppose that it may be full of concrete reality in which we can feel at home.

This disinclination to face possibilities of a concrete kind in another order of existence may be partly due to deference to the science of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which seldom contemplated concrete and commonplace surroundings, and mainly dealt with abstractions. It was the poets who faced concrete existence. Literature as a whole is full of it, for it concerns

itself with natural objects in their full display of colour and vivacity, as well as with the caprices and behaviour and responsible or irresponsible actions of human beings in general. Whereas science busies itself with the abstract, and mainly prides itself on metrical abstractions of a non-human character. Even the classifications and generalisations of science are abstract. But life does not consist of abstractions and generalisations. Life consists of full-bodied reality and concrete instances. It finds room both for the dignified and the undignified, the frivolous as well as the serious; thimble-rigging and sweepstakes on the Derby find a place in it. It is not high and dry at all. Humanity can be whimsical and seek odd experiences, and can disport itself, as in novels, in the most unscientific manner. As scientific men we can ignore these eccentricities, but we cannot eliminate them from nature. The world would be poorer and more prosaic without them.

Perhaps the next world is not the remotely dignified, continuously religious place we have been inclined to think. All the gloom and blackness associated with it—aye and the blazing brightness—may be inappropriate. Death is solemn undoubtedly; but so is birth. Entry into a new state of things cannot but be an important adventure. The world of matter on which we enter at birth is wonderful enough, but it has its moments of frivolity; and I see no reason to suppose that any existence in which we share shall seem to us entirely different in that respect.

Content of Messages.

On the hypothesis that we can ever enter into communication with those in that order of existence, we ought to learn from them something of what it is like. I consider that we have learnt something, not very much, but sufficient to carry on with. I do not expect to be much surprised when I get there. So far as it goes, the testimony is in favour of a still continuing full-bodied existence, not indeed of matter, but of something else, which though it does not appeal to our present senses, is otherwise equally real, equally substantial; freer and less hampered it seems to be, but not revolutionarily different. We

appear to remain ourselves, and the conditions around us are of somewhat the same order. That at any rate is the testimony, for what it may be worth. And it seems to me fairly reasonable that it should be so. Whatever it may be that has produced this world, has produced that also; and the mere fact that it is of a kind which does not appeal to our present animal senses is really no argument for its completely different essential character. In so far as we remain ourselves, we might expect other things to remain themselves too, or at least to be capable of a somewhat similar interpretation in the light of whatever faculties we then possess.

So fully are we dependent on mental interpretation for our detailed apprehension of existence that some have not hesitated to hold that the beauties of nature are put into it by ourselves, that all its secondary qualities are constructions of the mind. Whitehead expresses, and seeks to expose, this view on p. 77 :

The mind in apprehending [secondary qualities] also experiences sensations which, properly speaking, are qualities of the mind alone. . . . Nature gets credit which should in truth be reserved for ourselves: the rose for its scent: the nightingale for his song: and the sun for his radiance. The poets are entirely mistaken. They should address their lyrics to themselves, and should turn them into odes of self-congratulation on the excellency of the human mind. Nature is a dull affair, soundless, scentless, colourless; merely the hurrying of material, endlessly, meaninglessly. However you disguise it, this is the practical outcome of the characteristic scientific philosophy which closed the seventeenth century. . . . It has held its own as the guiding principle of scientific studies ever since. It is still reigning. . . . it is without a rival. And yet—it is quite unbelievable. This conception of the universe is surely framed in terms of high abstractions, and the paradox only arises because we have mistaken our abstractions for concrete realities.

So says Prof. Whitehead, who complains of modern philosophy thus :—

The enormous success of the scientific abstractions yielding on the one hand *matter* with its *simple location* in space and

time, and on the other hand *mind*, perceiving, suffering, reasoning, but not interfering, has foisted on to philosophy the task of accepting them as the most concrete rendering of fact. Thereby modern philosophy has been ruined. It has oscillated in a complex manner between three extremes. There are the dualists, who accept matter and mind as on equal basis, and the two varieties of monists, those who put mind inside matter, and those who put matter inside mind. All this inherent confusion is due to the ascription of *misplaced concreteness* to the scientific scheme of the seventeenth century (p. 79).

I suggest that a unification will never be accomplished until the ether be taken into accord as a *tertium quid*. Animated ether is like an organism, and the workings of that organism are what we really observe. Admittedly there are difficulties about the conception of an ether, especially an animated ether, but we must be patient, and give the idea time to soak in :

There is a danger in refusing to entertain an idea because of its failure to explain one of the most obvious facts in the subject matter in question. If you have had your attention directed to the novelties in thought in your own lifetime, you will have observed that almost all really new ideas have a certain aspect of foolishness when they are first produced (p. 67).

Meanwhile we can bethink ourselves that matter itself has an etheric aspect, and it may be that aspect which hereafter will appeal to us. The difficulty of apprehending existence apart from matter is after all a natural result of our limited experience now.

We cannot well imagine what an enlarged experience is exactly like ; but if the testimony is in favour of some similarity, there is no *a priori* reason for rejecting it. In default of any other clue, "testimony" is the source of information open to us. We may have to treat the statements somewhat like travellers' tales about a new country. Some of those tales have been incredible at first, but have subsequently been proved true. The whole point is whether any trustworthy information is forthcoming. Meanwhile a working hypothesis is legiti-

mate. And that my hypothesis is not altogether repugnant to or out of harmony with modern science may be illustrated by the following passages from Whitehead :—

We now find a movement in science itself to reorganise its concepts, driven thereto by its own intrinsic development. . . . I hold that the ultimate appeal is to naïve experience and that is why I lay stress on the evidence of poetry. . . . Some people express themselves as though bodies, brains, and nerves were the only real things in an entirely imaginary world. . . . We have to admit that the body is the organism whose states regulate our cognisance of the world. The unity of the perceptual field therefore must be a unity of bodily experience. In being aware of the bodily experience, we must thereby be aware of aspects of the whole spatio-temporal world as mirrored within the bodily life. . . . (p. 128).

One of our ideas is that of a field of physical activity pervading all space even where there is an apparent vacuum (p. 138).

So physical conceptions have greatly changed of late, and the explanations in vogue during the nineteenth century are felt by physicists themselves to be inadequate. The time has come for a more open mind, receptive of things strange and out of accord with ordinary commonplace experience.

The middle period of the nineteenth century was an orgy of scientific triumph. Clear-sighted men, of the sort who are so clearly wrong, now proclaimed that the secrets of the physical universe were finally disclosed. If only you ignored everything which refused to come into line, your powers of explanation were unlimited (p. 142).

But now the very terms used by science are in process of re-examination :—

Energy is merely the name for the quantitative aspect of a structure of happenings ; in short, it depends on the notion of the functioning of an organism (p. 144).

The various physical laws which appear to apply to the behaviour of atoms are not mutually consistent as at present formulated. The appeal to mechanism on behalf of biology

was in its origin an appeal to the well-attested self-consistent physical concepts as expressing the basis of all natural phenomena. But at present there is no such system of concepts. Science is taking on a new aspect which is neither purely physical, nor purely biological. It is becoming the study of organisms. . . . A thoroughgoing evolutionary philosophy is inconsistent with materialism. . . . The emergence of organisms depends on a selective activity which is akin to purpose (p. 145).

The new situation in the thought of to-day arises from the fact that scientific theory is outrunning common sense. . . . The eighteenth century opened with the quiet confidence that at last nonsense had been got rid of. To-day we are at the opposite pole of thought. Heaven knows what seeming nonsense may not to-morrow be demonstrated truth (p. 161).

Modern physics is perilously approaching metaphysics, just as psychology is perilously approaching metapsychics. Scientific men of the last century immersed in the splendid abstractions of mechanical science and the brilliant elaborations of mathematical principles—like Professor Tait, for instance—were apt to be contemptuous of philosophy. He spoke once of a line of argument which must be abandoned because it “led straight to the den of the metaphysician, strewn with the bones of former explorers, and abhorred by every true man of science.” I cannot now find this [inexact] quotation. Tait’s British Association lecture on “Force” in 1876 was unfortunately expurgated before publication, but I find in that lecture, as reported in *Nature*, Vol. XIV., page 460, the following:—

As he [a student] gradually gains knowledge by this—the *only*—method [observation and experiment and mathematical deductions from data so obtained] he will see more and more clearly the absolute impotence of all so-called metaphysics, or *a priori* reasoning, to help him to a single step in advance.

He goes on to emphasise the abundant fruitfulness of the senses and reason working together; either without the other being barren; and he illustrates this point by several examples. With this we may well agree, without necessarily acquiescing in his apparent dislike of intuition

and innate mental perception. Indeed he himself limits his dictum to the acquisition of knowledge about the purely physical world; and that he took no narrow view of this is shown by the book for which he was partly responsible, *The Unseen Universe*. In that book (it may be said) was begun the heralding of some of those conceptions about the ether which I am working at now.

Difficulties in the verification of the spiritistic hypothesis.

Any hypothesis which aims at becoming a theory ought to lead to results and if possible predictions of a verifiable kind which can subsequently be tested. The difficulty about the spiritistic hypothesis is that we can only test its assertions by observations and experiments on matter. Only in so far as discarnate humanity can still deal with matter can it make any direct appeal to us. Now humanity already possesses a certain power over matter; and it is solely by their effect upon matter that we are normally aware of other human beings. Hence any display of material happenings may have to be hypothetically attributed to extended powers of known humanity.

It is true that our faculties are not limited to material or sensory experiences: we have ideas and intuitions and aspirations, and can frame conceptions of an immaterial kind. Science for the most part ignores these vaguer powers of humanity; but poetry and literature do not; these immaterial things loom large in poetry. They constitute a considerable part of our real experience: and in a survey of existence they should by no means be ignored. To narrow ourselves down to the conceptions of metrical science is an undue limitation of our faculties. It would mean a shutting of our mental eyes to perhaps the greater part of our experience. Immaterial conceptions are not abstractions, but are real concrete mental experiences of which we are primarily aware. And it is a continuation of these experiences that we mean by survival.

But when we talk of *verifying* survival, we usually mean verification by means of a continued action of

spiritual entities, even though now discarnate, on the material world. It might have been that such action and such verification were impossible, but there is a good deal of testimony in favour of the possibility that under certain conditions we can continue to act on matter. The main difficulty in establishing it is what I hinted above, namely that we are spirits here and now, and already possess some of the faculties that presumably we shall possess then; so that it becomes difficult to discriminate between the activity of discarnate personalities and those of the incarnate. If an effect is produced on matter, it may be due to some unexplored faculties which we already possess without knowing it. Suppose, for instance, that an object is moved, or some speech or writings produced, in an unfamiliar way. How do we know that we are not doing or producing that movement unconsciously, or perhaps fraudulently, ourselves? How can we verify the assertion that it is accomplished by a discarnate entity? If ultra-mundane agencies could do things impossible to us, that might constitute a proof of their existence. But who is to say what is really impossible to us? And again, Why should their power of acting on matter be superior to our own?

The study of psychical research has led us to perceive the existence of many unexpected faculties. Telepathy is one of them. What is called clairvoyance is another. The finding of hidden water, or what is called dowsing, is a faculty for which there is much evidence. The reading of sealed letters is a second branch of the same faculty. The perception of events going on at a great distance is a third. On one view, all these things are accomplished by our own supposed extended faculties; unexplained and problematical in execution it is true, and the fact that such things actually occur is one that has to be established. But suppose they do occur. It is the fashion to cite them as instance of cryptesthesia, some unknown sensitiveness of the human organism. This is a vague and not well-founded hypothesis, but it has to be tried: for only when we find it impossible to attribute such faculties to our own subconsciousness or

enlarged activity need we feel constrained to bring in other intelligences and to regard these extended powers of receptivity as in some way due to the action of intelligent entities not normally associated with matter.

Assertions are made, however, about certain phenomena which can only with great difficulty be attributed to the enlarged powers of living people. Things are moved beyond muscular reach, without magnetism or other methods of acting at a distance to which we have grown so accustomed that we call them "ordinary." Temporarily materialised organisms or parts of an organism are testified to; produced not slowly as in the customary operations of biology, but quickly, and liable also to rapid dematerialisation. The bringing of an object into a closed room is said to be an occurrence that really happens; as if matter were not only porous in scientific doctrinal reality, but absurdly permeable to ordinary observation. Immunity from fire, and many other physical phenomena, are taken as indications that some intelligences of greater knowledge or experience than our own are operating. In that respect we seem to be like savages beginning to get into occasional touch with a more experienced white race. So various physical phenomena, as well as the materialisation and direct voice and photographic evidence, are appealed to as demonstrations of a power altogether supernormal, and from the purely mechanistic or materialistic point of view supernatural. These things, if they occur at all, do not occur in the ordinary course of nature, the kind of nature contemplated by the Royal Society. Their investigation has only been carried on by Societies formed for that purpose. Nevertheless they seem to form the actual experience of certain individuals. So on the principle that no experience should be overlooked, the growing body of testimony in their favour ought not to be ignored.

It may be hard to define the limitations of extended human faculty; the objection that we do not know the extent of our own faculties is a valid objection. Meanwhile undoubtedly the dramatic semblance of these occurrences strongly suggests outside agencies; and it may be that that suggestion is a true one. We would not have

anticipated that discarnate intelligencies, even if they can send messages, have the power of performing miracles; that is to say, of producing effects which so far as we are concerned would be miracles; but if they are able to do these things, we should not ignore them as impossible, but take pains to examine and verify them. The first need is verification of the phenomena; consideration of how they are accomplished must follow in due time. At least they would form an expansion of psychology; and the expansion to which they certainly seem to point is that the psychical entity responsible for our daily and commonplace actions is not limited to its association with any particular temporary organism, but is capable of sporadic activity even when that organism is discarded.

On the whole, however, the verification of this hypothesis, or our willingness to regard it as the beginnings of a theory, must depend largely on our philosophic view. Attempts are already being made by mathematical physicists at an enlarged view of existence. A concentration on matter which served well enough the eighteenth and much of the nineteenth centuries, is turning out insufficient. The abstractions of science clearly do not cover the whole of concrete experience. And the revolt has begun by diverting attention from matter to the properties of space, or to the properties of whatever substantial entity fills space.

A plea for a wider conception of science.

The new philosophic position gradually being attained by modern physicists is of a complex order not easy to put into words. It has a bearing on our conceptions of space and time, two abstractions very different from matter, and yet effectively very important. It is said that what we experience directly and instantaneously is an "event," a technical term much used by Einstein, Eddington, and other mathematical physicists. Every real entity has what is called a "world line." It is not a point in space, it is a line in time; and an event is typified by the crossing point of two world lines, the event being the interaction of one entity with another. But as Professor Whitehead

urges, an event is not an isolated, self-contained and complete thing, like the crossing of two lines. It is related to and may be the outcome of the past, it is related to and may have consequences in the future. It has a much wider significance than a mere point has. An instantaneous existence has no particular meaning. Every event is the outcome of the past, and has an influence on the future; it is a part of a process, a process of becoming. In that respect the universe is like an organism, the whole meaning of which is not given by its instantaneous existence, but must involve memory and anticipation. It is part of an evolution, and in its evolutionary significance its importance lies. Moreover, an event is related to other events in space as well as in time. It has contemporaries, and apart from them its full meaning is not apparent. To quote from Whitehead (p. 102):—

Nature is a process of expansive development... a structure of evolving processes. The reality is the process... The realities of nature are the events in nature. Nature is not a mere assemblage of parts or of ingredients. It is a whole. The events are united both in space and time. Reality attaches to the whole complex. Space-time is nothing else than a system of pulling together of assemblages into unities... An event has contemporaries... An event has a past... An event has a future... These conclusions are essential for any form of realism. For there is in the world for our cognisance, memory of the past, immediacy of realisation, and indication of things to come...

He goes on to say that:—

The strength of the theory of materialistic mechanism has been the demand, that no arbitrary breaks be introduced into nature, to cke out the collapse of an explanation.

Whitehead says that he accepts this principle, but that if you start from the immediate facts of our psychological experience, "as surely an empiricist should begin," you are at once led to an organic conception of nature.

It is the defect of the eighteenth century scientific scheme that it provides none of the elements which compose the

immediate psychological experiences of mankind. It is in literature that the concrete outlook of humanity receives its expression. Yet the most deterministic man of science must be aware of organisms in process of development. A scientific realism, based on mechanism, is conjoined with an unwavering belief in the world of men and of the higher animals as being composed of self-determining organisms. . . . For instance, the enterprise produced by the individualistic energy of the European peoples presupposes physical actions directed to final causes. But the science which is employed in their development is based on a philosophy which asserts that physical causation is supreme, and which disjoins the physical cause from the final end. It is not popular to dwell on the absolute contradiction here involved (pp. 104 and 106).

When we come to ordinary literature we find, as we might expect, that the scientific outlook is in general simply ignored. So far as the mass of literature is concerned, science might never have been heard of. Until recently nearly all writers have been soaked in classical and renaissance literature. For the most part, neither philosophy nor science interested them, and their minds were trained to ignore it (p. 107).

But he goes on to say:—

There are exceptions to this sweeping statement, especially in Wordsworth and Shakespeare. Wordsworth in his whole being expresses a conscious reaction against the mentality of the eighteenth century. It was not so much intellectual antagonism as a moral repulsion. He felt that something had been left out, and that what had been left out comprised everything that was most important. Tennyson is the mouth-piece of the attempts of the nineteenth century to come to terms with science. . . . The problem of mechanism appals him,

‘The stars, she whispers, blindly run.’

Thus

a dilemma is presented by a thorough-going mechanism. For if volition affects the state of the body, then the molecules in the body do not blindly run. If volition does not affect the state of the body, the mind is still left in its

uncomfortable position. . . . Either the molecules blindly run or they do not. If they do blindly run, the mental states are irrelevant in discussing the bodily actions. . . . The traditional way of evading the difficulty—other than the simple way of ignoring it—is to have recourse to some form of what is now termed ‘vitalism.’ This doctrine is really a compromise. It allows a free run to mechanism throughout the whole of inanimate nature, and holds that the mechanism is partially mitigated within living bodies.

This tenet is to me tempting, provided instead of “mitigated” we read “supplemented”; but Whitehead holds that a dualistic theory like that must be an unsatisfactory compromise.

The gap between living and dead matter is too vague and problematical to bear the weight of such an arbitrary assumption (p. 111).

He holds that:—

the whole concept of materialism only applies to very abstract entities, the products of logical discernment. [Whereas] The concrete enduring entities are organisms.

He means presumably to assert this in every case, animated or not. So that the plan of the *whole* influences the character of every subordinate ingredient; and this view of the whole in every one of the parts he proceeds to develop.

Now all this philosophy may seem, perhaps, disjointed from our main theme. But some philosophy of the kind is essential to it. There are two questions about mind. First, Does mind act on matter at all? And next, Can mind supply for itself any experiences other than those provided for it by the body? If our philosophy enables us to answer these questions in the affirmative, then we can proceed. We are no longer limited to the action of incarnate mind. Mental experiences other than those given by our senses are permissible, and mental actions on matter need not be limited to those we are accustomed to. For getting accustomed to things does not explain them; our own actions on matter are just as mysterious

as any of those of which we have doubtful testimony. Are we spirits here and now, utilising and acting on matter, or are we mere mechanism simulating the functions of mind. If the latter is true, as some scientific men hold or try to hold, then the greater part of real experience has to be ignored. Literature and poetry become nonsensical. But if we appeal against the abstractions of science to concrete reality as perceived by us, then the former alternative is inevitable, and a great step towards survival is already taken.

We are apt to forget how strange and paradoxical is the view of nature which orthodox science imposes on our thoughts.

Wordsworth, to the height of genius, expresses the concrete facts of our apprehension, facts which are distorted in the scientific analysis. Is it not possible that the standardised concepts of science are only valid within narrow limitations, perhaps too narrow for science itself? . . . Berkeley, Wordsworth, Shelley are representative of the intuitive refusal seriously to accept the abstract materialism of science. . . . Philosophy is the critic of abstractions. . . . It confronts the sciences with concrete fact . . . (pp. 118, 122).

Caution.

In thus quoting Professor Whitehead, let it not be supposed that he would agree with my contentions, or that he is in any way responsible for the use to which I have put his philosophy. He is a mathematical physicist of great knowledge and high eminence; he is able to take a comprehensive survey of existence and of the historical progress of humanity throughout many centuries. He has been led to his philosophy by a study of existence as a whole, and has been able to combine the most abstract science with the concrete experiences set forth in literature. I find in this philosophy some clue, some indication, some correspondence with the path which I myself pursue. I want to push some of his conclusions further than he himself has yet done. I have no knowledge that he has ever studied the subject which interests psychical investi-

gators, and it may be that he would resent some of the deductions I draw from his material. I hope not; but I want to emphasise his irresponsibility for any claims or contentions of my own. I regard it as instructive that one whose studies must have lain at least chiefly in mathematical physics should have been led in so idealistic a direction, and to a philosophy which, though expressed in difficult and technical terms, may be utilised by those who like myself have gone beyond the limitations of materialistic mechanism in other ways and mainly for other reasons.

My doctrine involves the primary reality of mind in association with whatever physical mechanism it may find available. Matter constitutes only one of those mechanisms, and indeed only constitutes it in secondary fashion; and by a study limited to matter alone we shall never get the full reality of existence. I hold that all our actions on matter here and now are conducted through empty space, or rather through the entity which fills space; and that, if our activity continues, it must be continued in the same sort of way and through the same sort of etheric mechanism that we already unconsciously utilise now.

That in brief terms is the spiritistic hypothesis which I proclaim and work on. I cannot but rejoice when a philosophic physicist, full of the higher scientific knowledge of our time, has been led in anything like the same direction, without any study of those peculiar and rather inexplicable facts on which presumably some part of my own philosophy has been founded.

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