

# THE JOURNAL OF AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

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# THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

Volume XXXI

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### Beyond Science

BY HAROLD E. B. SPEIGHT

*[A Lecture Before the New York Section of the A.S.P.R.]*

Whatever be the argument which appeals to a man who tries by argument to establish the validity of belief in a future life, sooner or later he has to face the materialist's proud claim that the question of survival can be dismissed because science has demonstrated the dependence of mind upon matter. Each and all of the classic forms of the argument for immortality, whether religious or philosophical, rest upon some assumption, and it is this assumption that the materialist attacks.

The thesis of the materialist is well known. He holds that man "is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms . . . that all the labors of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system". These are the words of Bertrand Russell, who calls on man to build his soul's habitation on this "firm foundation of unyielding despair".

The answer to this thesis of Bertrand Russell is found, first, in the valor which faces death. "Stimulated by the ineluctable necessity of facing death, and of living so as to face it with fortitude," says a philosopher contemporary with Russell, "man has not abandoned himself to nerveless inaction, to pusillanimous despair." (F. C. S. Schiller, *Humanism*, p. 228.) A further answer lies in certain simple questions. They are questions which seem to impair the "firm foundation of unyielding despair". What is matter? And what is it that actually links what the materialist calls a *cause* with what he calls a *product*? The cause and the product may be, and often are, as different as a bulb planted in the mud and a lily of exquisite fragrance and form. Suppose that in looking at human life we emphasize the "product" rather than the "origin". We are then beyond the measurable and the tangible, and in a region of relevance actually closed to the materialist. His theory keeps him out—so long as he acts upon it. The best the materialist can offer us is a "picture", not a structure built of "facts".

In the nineteenth century men acquired great confidence in the methods of scientific investigation and in the applicability of these methods to any question the mind might raise. They came to think of the whole universe of man's experience as under the sway of what were called "laws", and if the scientists did not forget at least the public forgot that these "laws" are only our statements of the way things happen *so far as* our observation and experiment enable us to say how they happen.

The discovery of these uniformities—described in the so-called "laws"—greatly assisted in the practical tasks of inventive men, and no one would be so foolish as to belittle the results of the knowledge that was acquired by the use of the scientific method. It was an exciting period in the history of man's intelligence, for the succession of fruitful applications of knowledge to life and the results which accrued to the western world in terms of power and con-

trol over the resources of the earth produced an exalted sense of security and a high degree of confidence in the almost inevitable progress of mankind. The attempt was made to use the scientific method in every direction. For example, people who had little interest in religion as a personal concern, and little sensitivity to spiritual values, became expert in the discussion of religion as a phenomenon; they investigated it as one might profitably enough investigate a tree after it was cut down or an animal that had first been killed, never realizing that they missed the important thing, which is the life that informs any living structure.

It was not unnatural that this mood of confidence should be shaken by the war and by all its consequences in the impaired stability of institutions and the beliefs which supported them. We began to wonder whether perhaps there is not some limit to the validity of the scientific method if so well-informed a generation could lapse into such barbarism. Has Science, we wondered, been too much concerned with the primitive beginnings, the origins, while the really significant thing about human life is seen only when we look at its highest manifestations? Perhaps what is wrong with us is that we have neglected the qualities of personality without which there can be no moral control of all the clever mechanisms we have been able to invent. At any rate, we lost our confidence in "inevitable progress". Indeed, many have felt that humanity walks along the edge of a precipice, in danger of imminent disaster. Says Dr. C. G. Jung:

Whether from the intellectual, the moral, or the aesthetic viewpoint, the undercurrents of the psychic life of the West present an uninviting picture. We have built a monumental world round about us, and we have slaved for it with unequalled energy. But it is so imposing only because we have spent upon the outside all that is imposing in our natures—and what we find when we look within must necessarily be as it is, shabby and insufficient.

Now the interesting thing is that nowhere do we find

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today so clear and convincing a criticism of the undue confidence of science as in the works of the best trained and most successful scientists. Bertrand Russell forcefully illustrates this point (*The Scientific Outlook*, p. 78):

We do not ever see what we think we see. Is there any reason to think that what we think we see exists, although we do not see it? Science has always prided itself on being empirical, and believing only what could be verified. Now you can verify the occurrences in yourself which you call "seeing Jones", but you cannot verify Jones himself. You may hear sounds which you call Jones speaking to you; you may feel sensations of touch which you call Jones bumping into you. If you have been impressed by this argument, you may address him as if he were at the other end of the telephone, and say, "Are you there?" And you may subsequently hear the words: "Yes, you idiot, can't you see me?" But if you regard these as affording evidence that he is there, you have missed the point of the argument. The point is that Jones is a convenient hypothesis by means of which certain of your own sensations can be collected into a bundle; but what really makes them belong together is not their common hypothetical origin, but certain resemblances and causal affinities which they have to each other.

One limitation of science brought out in this passage, and in the chapter from which it is quoted, is that it deals with reality in some one of several possible particular ways, each of which necessarily leaves out something which could be known only by the adoption of a different approach. That is what we mean when we say science is *abstract*. The investigator selects certain aspects of a phenomenon and isolates these for study; he is aware, if he is a true scientist, that the resultant knowledge he may gain is only a partial knowledge, and he sometimes compares his results closely with those reached by colleagues who approach by a different pathway this same phenomenon. So it is the part of wisdom, for him and for all who take over his results, to remember that what he knows never justifies the conclusion that all is known that might be known.

It is particularly to be remembered that because the method of science is to analyze, then to describe the details revealed by the analysis, then to classify these details, and

finally to make a general statement about them on the ground of similarities and differences observed, the scientist must always be interested in breaking up any object or event he studies until he has reached the smallest discernible units. But we human beings are interested in objects and events which are *wholes*, which (that is) we apprehend and value as unique objects and events and not because they may by a process of abstraction be classified with other objects and events. Eddington goes so far as to say (*The Nature of the Physical World*, pp. 288-289):

The physical world is, we have seen, the answer to one definite and urgent problem arising in a survey of experience; and no other problem has been followed up with anything like the same precision and elaboration. Progress towards an understanding of the non-sensory constituents of our nature is not likely to follow similar lines, and indeed is not animated by the same aims. . . Those who in the search for truth *start from consciousness as a seat of self-knowledge with interests and responsibilities not confined to the material plane, are just as much facing the hard facts of experience as those who start from consciousness as a device for reading the indications of spectrosopes and micrometers.*

(Italics mine). Elsewhere he says:

Mind is the first and most direct thing in our experience, and all else is remote inference.

Our notions regarding matter are under continuous revision and we can today properly question the dogmatism of those who attribute reality to matter and give to mind only a dependent and secondary existence. Scrutiny of the "material" leads us directly into those mysterious regions in which energies change their form and consciousness alone can measure or interpret the processes. Man may belong to a world of external contingencies, but he is also a world in himself, and since it is he who asks "What is Man?", and he who must weigh the reply, he can never find a final answer. True, he is body, but he is more, or the body could not be what it is. True, he cannot move without accommodating himself to inexorable facts, such as temperature, pressure, and the configuration of alien

objects, but once adjusted to these facts he may move in any one of many directions and it is his purpose that determines which direction he takes. Yet the very purpose he expresses in what he does derives its meaning from his appreciation of his place in a Whole which he did not create, which he may even come to feel creates through him. "Only an infinite process can show me who I am", said Royce.

Before the problem of the relation of mind to body the only proper attitude today is one of humble, undogmatic recognition that little is known and much yet to be learned. As we have realized that the spectrum shows the eye only those components of light that the retina is adjusted to, while there are infra-red and ultra-violet rays that must be detected by instruments sensitive in other ways, so we may well recognize that the body-mind relationship is far more complex than either mechanists or vitalists have supposed. We have, so to speak, seen only a portion of the spectrum. No one can say dogmatically that the only conditions under which consciousness may exist and continue its creative activity are those already familiar to us, or that the change which comes with bodily death necessarily interrupts the continuity of consciousness. It is too naïve to identify sensations with the neural processes which accompany them. It is absurd to say that my thought about a long past event is nothing but an excitation of neural elements—the latter exists only in the immediate present while the former is a persistence of the past into the present and a grasp of past and present within a single span of consciousness. And in much of our knowledge, if not in all, we are relating what we perceive through sense impressions to concepts which correspond to no present external objects. As a physiologist of repute says:

Consciousness is a different form of energy from nerve energy, which it is impossible to describe in terms of the physical. . . . This dramatic leap from the physiological to the psychical is the most important factor in the evolution of mind. It is the decisive factor

which once and for all turns the balance and establishes the supremacy of the mind over the body.

And we can point to the fact that the developed mind, so far from reacting mechanically to an external situation, can either follow its suggestions, so to speak, or exert an inhibitory action. The discharge of energy need not be down the most obviously open or frequently used channel; on the contrary, the energy can be directed at will into channels which lead to the fulfilment of a consciously cherished purpose. So there is a force developed "which can dominate brain processes". From this starting-point of a higher development the mind may pass on "still further along the road that delivers us from bondage to the flesh, and leads us to anticipate the complete emancipation of the mind from the body". Science, in the opinion of this authority, "points to this supremacy and liberation of the mind as the goal towards which nature is working".

Even these considerations are not the most searching reply to the materialist. We have been shown in our time how hard it is to draw a line between the organic and the inorganic, between living creatures and what we have called "dead matter". We find ourselves inhabitants of a living universe. Or, to say the same thing in a somewhat different way, the universe is the embodiment of spirit, the "living robe of deity". It ceases, if this be true, to be "the mere scene or theatre on which our life is transacted, which is all a dead universe can amount to". Instead it becomes a "living Companion" whose purpose we can share as we also become creators of values. On such a level the relationship between a man and the Universe precludes an exploitation of his individuality as a mere means to an end that is not his own. The recognition of creative purpose as characteristic of the Universe means the discovery in the Universe of what we know in ourselves, in limited fashion, as "personality". A Universe in which personalities are extinguished by material changes is not treating these personalities as ends in themselves, but only as means,

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as "fodder or fuel". (For a suggestive development of this point of view the reader would do well to consult *A Living Universe*, by L. P. Jacks.)

Being the kind of creatures we are, we find in some parts of our experience a quality which satisfies us without reference to any other part of our experience. In other words, we find an intrinsic value in some of our experiences. They are not welcomed as a means to some other satisfaction. They carry their own validation. Life is not worth while unless it includes some such experiences, for we are not content indefinitely to be used for purposes we cannot share; we claim some deep satisfactions which are inalienably our own. When moments or hours of such intrinsically valuable experience come we recognize that they are not measurable in terms of time and space. "Eternity in an hour" is the poet's phrase, and sometimes we know what he means.

No two of us will select for enumeration similar experiences of timeless values, but many of us can understand that others will find them in their own way. The artist, for example, who has penetrated beyond merely pleasing particulars of outward form and color to underlying principles of structure and harmony can understand the musician's discerning ear, though its distinctive joys are denied to him. But it is not only by persons of keen aesthetic insight, nor only as the result of long training, that the intrinsic values in life are appreciated. Unlettered men can know the unadulterated joy of wholehearted service of a supreme cause. Very ordinary people can find in comradeship, in simple human fellowship, in the intimacies of family life, in the exercise of consciously-acquired skills, in the fashioning of useful things, a satisfaction which remains peculiarly their private possession. And at the heart of the satisfaction is the joy of creating something that endures, either as an undying memory which makes life forever different and better for ourselves or as an object of use or beauty which enhances the desirability of life for others. Insofar as we

do thus create we are already dwelling in a realm that is invisible but not therefore any the less real than the tangible environment. In such experiences we achieve uniqueness, and therefore become real individuals; and the meaning we find in our lives at such times resides more in conceived possibilities as yet unrealized than in our consciousness of present circumstances. We discern through such moments a timeless Reality of which we discover ourselves to be even now uniquely real and individual parts, but we see our present selves as only fragments or hints and dimly visible beginnings of something not yet known. We may even measure the worth of our experience by what it suggests to us of larger meanings which are at once future possibilities for us and present realities as ideals. Perhaps it was this that Schleiermacher had in mind when he spoke of the "immortality we can have now in this temporal life": Emerson phrased it in more nearly Oriental language when he said (*Letters and Social Aims*, p. 281), "the future state is an illusion for the ever-present state". Perhaps, indeed, our difficulty in all discussion of immortality is just that we have conceived of it as continuous duration whereas it is in no sense concerned with quantities but only with qualities of existence. "There is a sphere where insight has nothing to do with the lapse of hours." Similarly we have imported into our thought of immortality the conception of space and talked of heaven as of a place, and find it hard now to escape this self-imposed limitation of our thought. Frederic W. H. Myers well said:

Few men have pondered long on these problems of Past and Future without wondering whether Past or Future be in very truth more than a name—whether we may not be apprehending as a stream of sequence that which is an ocean of coexistence, and slicing our subjective years and centuries from timeless and absolute things.

Of these intrinsically valuable experiences those which most completely emancipate us from the limitations of the present are those in which we are conscious of growth, the widening of the range of our powers, the increase of

the intensity of our appreciation, the achievement of originality in insight and purpose. It is indeed of the very nature of the creative life that it defies the confining boundaries of circumstance. "Greater things than these shall ye do."

The power to enjoy or to create beauty, the acknowledgement of an imperative which has authority over us because it is self-imposed, the clear perception of truths which have been reached through the very different but complementary processes of induction and intuition, the delights and self-denials of love, the coöperation of kindred minds in efforts which are beyond the powers of any one person—these all suggest far more than they can show; in them we have intimations of capacities which the routine and the conventions of life succeed in concealing from the casual eye, except when a crisis tears away the crust of habit. And the capacities which are so limitless in their suggestion are all intimations of an order of existence that is independent of particular combinations of material events. As Dr. John Wright Buckham has lately said, "We come to realize that the Personal Order constitutes our most real and meaningful habitat though not our most obvious and insistent one". (*Christianity and Personality*, p. 164.)

I wish to say in conclusion that I am not supposing these considerations I have brought forward to be potent enough to convince anyone who is determined to doubt the possibility of survival. I am content, as a layman in the field—as distinct from a theologian, a philosopher, or an investigator into psychic phenomena—to voice in my own way what Santayana calls "the soul's invincible surmise". For this I think there is no need to apologize. A great deal of what we most value in life is made possible only because man has a soul, or is a soul, and because the soul does surmise. There is an outreach of personality towards what as yet can only be hoped for, assumed, or regarded as at least a risk worth taking. After all,

*Our knowledge is a torch of smoky pine*

*That lights the pathway but one step ahead  
Across a void of mystery and dread.*

The supreme outreach of the soul is that which projects man's values into a future beyond the convenient boundaries and distinctions of time, into an Eternal Now; and into an existence beyond the convenient but tyrannical boundaries and distinctions of space, into an All-inclusive Here. And I have tried to suggest to you that in this familiar life of earth man is capable of a quality of existence which reveals to him that he already belongs to that Now and to that Here. Man can achieve a self-discovery which shows him an imperishable world within.

*Discovered lies the land of our rebirth,  
A world of rest within this world of strife;  
The steadfastness that bears the life of earth  
Reveals already the immortal life.*

—*Swarthmore College,  
Swarthmore, Pa.*

## Haunted Houses

BY DR. EUGENE OSTY

### Are There Hauntings?

When Camille Flammarion held a sort of referendum on this question, he received a large number of narratives, all of course requiring confidence in his correspondents, as is the case with spontaneous phenomena. When M. Bozzano was writing his book on the subject, *The Phenomena of Haunting*, he gathered, as he tells us, 532 cases worthy of attention. These two authors have called attention to the fact that the details of the reported manifestations agree within their category. They showed also that such phenomena have been reported in all periods and that they are still reported from every part of the world, particularly among the less sophisticated peoples. Explorers, travellers, missionaries, have often written about hauntings among the backward races of almost primitive customs.

Nevertheless a great many cultivated people, it would be safe to say the majority, do not believe in haunted houses. So few people have had occasion to witness them, in conditions safeguarded against illusion and fraud, that one is loath to accept a phenomenon of which neither the process nor the purpose is understood.

If I were asked "What do you think about it?" I should reply, "I know hauntings only through reading of them. Some of the published accounts seem supported by persuasive testimony. Moreover, I see no good reason for denying in theory the possibility of hauntings. Of course I am very certain that this phenomenon, like so many others, has had its frauds; is this a reason for never studying it? But I should like, as would so many others, to be convinced by personal experience. I am waiting for the opportunity."

It must be that the opportunities are rare, for in a quarter-century of active curiosity about the phenomena

called metapsychic, the balance-sheet of my experiences in the matter of haunted houses stands thus: one attempt to witness a haunting, and having been on the point of making a second attempt.

In 1922 an opportunity was offered me. It meant passing the last night of the year in a room in the château of L.L., a vast and ancient dwelling where, it is said, an old lord of L. who murdered someone there long ago returns each year—as though keeping an anniversary—to show his remorse in the very room of the murder. The owners of the château were certain about the haunting. They said they were certain because the story had been handed down for generations, and because they had had confirmation of it from various persons (priests, doctors, and so on) who had been willing to pass St. Sylvester's night in the haunted chamber. They themselves had never had the courage to do so.

Old Lord L. forgot his periodical expiation in 1922. He cheated me.

During the four years that Dr. Géley was Director of the Institut Métapsychique, he was only once, together with Charles Richet, in a position to investigate a haunting; it was in Paris. Many evenings of patient waiting were in vain. In my eleven years of directing the Institut Métapsychique I have never been asked to investigate a haunted house, although I am kept informed about all sorts of other things. If the phenomenon were relatively frequent, I imagine—considering the number of readers of the *Revue Métapsychique*, of my correspondents and my contacts—I should sometimes have been called upon for the purpose; particularly since so many people naïvely endow psychical researchers with magical knowledge which they would like to see put to work ridding them of embarrassing "spirits".

The only haunting which I might have observed in eleven years was mentioned to me last year by the excellent writer René Johannet, who heard of it indirectly. It concerned an estate in the Ain, where terrifying noise, over a period of

years, had disturbed the life of a family. Since the thing "looked good" we took the necessary steps to get in touch with it. We had no luck. The family which occupied the estate had, only a little while before, given up the place rather than submit to further harassing. And the attempts made by M. Johannot to get the permission of the proprietor had, as might have been expected, no success.

The exchange of correspondence which this occasioned had at least one result: a circumstantial report by Mme de M., tenant of the estate where the strange and inexplicable noises had occurred. This report is certainly not a presentation of testimony calculated to establish the facts with exactness. While Mme M. was living among the phenomena of haunting she never dreamed of assuming the position of an observer with a view to future publication. She suffered annoyance from the phenomena, and wished ardently that they would stop. Nor should such a story be expected to convince the reader. In such cases only those who have lived among the events can be certain of them, their certainty being built up of a quantity of secondary observations which are not written down and many of which are forgotten. What gave me the idea of publishing this report was the care to preserve simple objectivity displayed in it, affording a high opinion of the good judgment of the narrator. I thought that the phenomena of haunting are so rare that readers would be glad to read a case simply and clearly presented.\*

### **The Manifestations of Haunting**

Perhaps not all my readers have any very extensive notions concerning hauntings. To understand what I am about to say it is necessary to know something about the workings of the phenomenon. I could sum them up, but I fear, so improbable do some of these modalities seem, that

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\* This case was published in *THE JOURNAL* for October, 1936 ("Record of a Haunting", by Mme De M.; Vol. XXX, No. 10, p. 325).

my lack of personal experience in the matter and the spirit of doubt which "haunts" me might lead me to omit, deliberately, the strangest among these strange phenomena. From distrust of myself, and also because M. Ernesto Bozzano has, in his above-mentioned book, set forth the various forms that hauntings take, I shall make use of his work.

(Extract from *Les Phénomènes de hantise*, pp 1-6).—In their *auditory* form they comprise all sorts of apparently causeless sounds, from raps and cracks of different intensities to noises imitating the sound of falling furniture or the breaking of household objects, such as bottles, bowls, window-panes. One seems to hear doors and windows being violently closed, heavy object dragged across the ground, such as barrels or other round vessels, chairs furiously shaken, large pieces of iron being tossed about with an infernal din. In other cases the sounds and noises seem to have a human origin: particularly the measured footsteps which pace corridors or go up and down stairs; more rarely one hears a strange rustling of a silk dress passing and repassing the witnesses, or the echo of plaintive cries, of harrowing groans, of sobbing, of sighs, of murmurs, of words and phrases uttered. It has even happened that passages of liturgical hymns have been heard, of chants, choirs, musical concerts, in places formerly used for similar functions.

Observation shows us that these sounds, these noises are partly subjective and hallucinatory and partly objective or real; those of a subjective nature, however, are the more frequent. Actually the doors and windows which one hears banging usually remain closed; the pieces of furniture which were overturned, the vessel which was smashed, are found intact in their places. In some cases din which some persons call deafening is not even heard by others present. On the other hand, incontestably objective noises and sounds are not rare, for it has been testified that doors and windows do really swing open, or that they have been seen at the moment of banging shut; furniture is found out of place or overturned, pottery found shattered, or all the witnesses simultaneously hear the sounds, noises, groans, which occasionally become so loud that passers-by have been able to hear them for considerable distances. It is therefore necessary to record the existence of sounds which are "collective" perceptions as well as others which are "elective" perceptions. The first are generally real; the others may be merely hallucinatory, although everything goes to prove that the hallucinatory sounds have their origins in genuinely external conditions.

In their *visual* form, the phenomena of haunting comprise luminous manifestations and phantom-apparitions. The luminous mani-

festations are fairly frequent; usually there is a diffused light, illuminating a site in such a way as to render the phantoms visible; or they are lights emanating from the apparition itself. In some cases they take the form of spheroid lights with vague outlines, which run rapidly along a short trajectory and then disappear; more rarely they take the form of globular lights with sharp outlines, and remain for a long while floating in the air. And there is finally the case of a light seeming to shine from a hallucinatory lamp or candle, carried by the phantom, or even the embers, no less hallucinatory, of a dead fire near which the apparition seems to crouch.

The visualized phantoms, except for a few apparitions of animals, always clothe themselves in human form. Far from showing themselves swathed in the spectral white drapery of old legend, they seem to be dressed in the costume of the period in which they lived. Generally they appear so lifelike that they could be thought alive; sometimes they appear distinct but transparent; in other cases they are mere shades of vaguely human form. Usually they seem to enter a door, pursue their way and enter another room, where they disappear; but often they appear suddenly and vanish from the spot like vapor, or they disappear by passing through a wall or a closed door. Sometimes they walk, at other times they glide, floating in the air.

In many cases the manifestations continue intermittently over a long period of years, with long intervals of non-appearance, and, in certain cases, on fixed days. But generally the haunting only lasts for a few years, and often only months or even days. Manifestations are usually preceded by a vague feeling of "presence" which seizes the percipient and causes him to glance in the direction where the phantom appears. If the apparition draws near, the percipient feels a kind of cool breeze.

One of the characteristics which phantoms most customarily show is their apparent indifference to the living beings who see them, or, occasionally, their seeming ignorance of the place where they appear. They climb a staircase, walk down a corridor, enter a room, without any obvious aim and without noticing the persons present. Or they may even be about some domestic duty, or make gestures of despair, crouch over a fire in an obvious state of "absence of mind", as if the actions they performed arose from "somnambulistic automatism". All this does not mean that there are not many exceptions in which the phantom shows recognition of the onlookers, whom he may even intentionally address by gestures and words; a circumstance which considerably complicates the problem to be solved.

Of the visual phenomena we must repeat what we said of the auditory apparitions, that the lights and apparitions may assume either a "collective" or an "elective" character; in the first case all

proof tends to show that we are never dealing with purely subjective manifestations.

In their *tactile* form, the phenomena of haunting are rare and show little variation. There are sensations of weight or pressure on various parts of the body, corresponding to the unsuspected presence of the phantom sitting on the bedside, or pressing against the witness. There are the cold and clammy hands which grasp, press or insinuate themselves between sheet and body. In a series of hauntings which is well known and well attested, phantom hands which grasp the onlooker's wrists or touch nearby objects have left indelible scorched marks as if they had been hands of fire.

As to phenomena of an *olfactory* order, they are even rarer than the tactile kind, and vary from the corpse-like odor suitable for a bloody drama or an unburied body to the perfume of violets, recalling some gracious episode that happened at the death-bed of the manifesting spirit.

In their *physical* form, aside from the phenomena we have just listed—the upset furniture, the banging windows and doors, the broken glassware—there are many stories of bells which continue to ring loudly without apparent cause, even after they have been isolated by cutting the cords and wires. Equally frequent are cases of the "rain of stones", presenting very remarkable characteristics, as when the stones take a course contrary to the laws of physics, or stop in mid-air, or fall slowly, or with uncommon skill strike an intended spot, or are hurled without doing damage, or even without rebounding, as if they had been caught by an invisible hand. Or the stones may be found to be warm, even glowing.

In other cases bedclothes are violently snatched from beds, their occupants sometimes lifted and put gently on the floor, if, indeed, the beds themselves are not overturned. More rarely there are showers of water, of mud, of ashes, or the sudden disappearance of objects, which are later returned in a fashion just as mysterious. Less frequently still there are phenomena of persecution, and the clothes of the victims are set afire. The beds where they lie sometimes catch fire, or their houses burn—in these cases there is often a shower of bluish sparks which fall on the victim, the bed, the house. . . .

Such are the forms of the phenomena of haunting according to Bozzano, who has read hundreds of accounts, and has drawn from his reading the firm conviction that haunting exists.

The weirdness, the uselessness, the improbability, the insanity of the greater part of these manifestations certainly do not tend to bring about a ready acquiescence in

their reality. When one has not oneself witnessed them, it requires breadth of mind to admit, if no more, that they may be possible, even probable, since they are recorded in all times and from all places. It is in this state of mind, being able neither to affirm nor deny and hoping ardently to become convinced through the testimony of facts, that I am about to set forth some considerations that will aid, I think, in establishing a solid opinion regarding the reality of haunting.

### Spontaneous and Experimental Phenomena

From the point of view of research leading to explanation, it might be said that *spontaneous* psychic phenomena—such as presentiments, telepathy, warnings, hauntings—contribute nothing. They indicate that they exist, and that is all. Also they are likely to be attributed to the causes to which men always turn in the presence of phenomena they do not understand: God, the devil, spirits.

The same is not true of *experimental* phenomena. These teach us something about their origin, and consequently about the origin of spontaneous phenomena. They have not yet taught us much. More than anything else they have tended to eliminate false explanations, thus opening up useful avenues for research. And since this is only the beginning, merely the work of a very few researchers, we may claim that through the centuries—that is to say, in a very short time on the scale of humanity's duration—the accumulation of discoveries in this direction will give illumination to the "metapsychic" scheme of things which will be in striking contrast to the opaque gloom in which we work with so much difficulty today.

Formerly a monition of death, that is to say a warning that a loved one at a distance is in danger, is dying or dead, was called telepathic, which is generally understood to mean that it is the person in danger or dying or dead who by an activity of his mind informs the friend or relative able to receive this sort of mental message.

Another kind of incident, of the same general type, rather interferes with this interpretation. It is that in which the mental warning of danger or death precedes the event by a longer or shorter period of time; and particularly when the one threatened has no idea of what is awaiting him. Consistent with the explanation of monitions, it is usually thought that in premonition it is not the spirit of the one about to die that is the author, but very probably the spirit of someone already dead who is preoccupied with events that concern those he has left behind.

There has arisen the study of experimental phenomena, which by observing persons gifted with supernormal faculties has shown that every human being has a wider psychic range than the ordinary exercise of the intelligence would lead us to believe; that beyond the thoughts over which he has no control, beyond the rational exercise of his intelligence demanded by sensory perceptions and the habit of forming connected judgments, he possesses a "spiritual plane" capable of knowing reality without hindrance from space and time. And thus the spontaneous phenomena, attributed through ignorance to causes outside the percipient, are seen to be of the same sort and having the same origin as the induced phenomena—an origin still obscure, certainly, but capable of being studied, when the investigator is freed from the illusory appearances which held him within one explanation, satisfactory to many, but false in its simplification of the problem.

So far as concerns the spontaneous phenomena of haunting, has the study of supernormal physical phenomena taught anything useful? Yes. When physical mediums—I am speaking, of course, of the genuine ones, so rare among the many frauds that the frauds do not even imitate them—are made to display the varied phenomena of which they are capable, it is seen that a good many manifestations are common to physical mediumship and hauntings: such as the sensation of icy coldness before or during the phenomena, the displacement of objects as if they moved by themselves,

noises, sensations of "presence", sounds of footsteps without visible cause, visions of human forms vaguely transparent, of opaque forms, etc.

And this has led—aided by other lines of evidence—to making two classes of haunting: hauntings properly so-called, seemingly independent of living beings; and pseudo-hauntings, consisting of similar manifestations but due to the presence of an unwitting "medium" in the house. Those who have written on the question are agreed in saying that in these latter cases it is usually adolescents about whom the phenomena occur, a temporary mediumship brought about by disturbance of growth. This spontaneous haunting has been reported of the places occupied by Home, Guzik and Kluski, particularly when they remained for a time without producing their phenomena in séances.

Books about haunting, then, distinguish these two forms of haunting: that in the presence of an unintentional medium, and that which does not depend on any of the persons living in the premises. Would it be rash to say—I am always assuming that haunting is real—that it is not established that there are any hauntings which are independent of living beings?

The proof that could be given for pure haunting would be this; that the facts demonstrate that the manifestations have continued, sometimes for a long period, although the occupants of the house have succeeded one another. Is this a coercive proof? I should greatly prefer testimony to show that the manifestations continue when the houses are no longer occupied. For it might be possible to do for haunting what has been done for objects and places that call up events of the past.

If several highly gifted clairvoyants were placed one after the other in certain rooms, the chances are that they would experience sensations or have visions telling them more or less clearly about the drama that had occurred there. Could it be that in certain places this mysterious, unconscious mode of cognition takes place equally effectively for every-

one or for many people? And that instead of being translated into veridical hallucinations, it is expressed in physical phenomena? Let us remember that if the cases of spontaneous telepathy which have been collected are for the most part subjective, I mean purely hallucinatory, a certain number are objective, that is have physical expression: furniture overturned, sudden and inexplicable noises, and so on, coinciding with danger to a relative at a distance, or his death.

Pure supposition, to be sure, but one that would give a better standing before our reason to the childish automatisms of the phenomena of haunting. It is, moreover, a supposition that would be negatived by the demonstration that haunting continues in houses temporarily cleared of inhabitants: both men and animals.

If there is nobody in a house, how can a haunting be proved?

The study of experimentally induced phenomena makes the proof possible. It will continue to approach that goal little by little. But already our studies into the mediumship of Rudi Schneider have put us into a position to record hauntings, whether there be an investigator at or near the haunted locality, or no one present at all.

What makes this possible is the good fortune we had in finding, in the case of the rather feeble mediumistic powers displayed by Rudi Schneider during the year he was at our disposal, that his efforts to put forth a visible materialization (which were authenticated at the time only up to the vaporous stage) only resulted, because of his failing mediumship, in the production of an invisible substance which would have gone completely unnoticed if our devices for control and for automatic photography in darkness had not shown us that this substance was partially opaque in infra-red light between 1 and 2 microns: an opacity varying from 1 to 75% according to the condition of the medium.

This discovery puts at our disposal, in the case of hauntings, a process for revealing the *invisible phantom* and, at the same time, any fraudulent agent. That is, of course, always supposing that the materializing process is the same in all circumstances in which it comes into play, the spontaneous as well as in the pre-arranged; which is what seems most likely.

If the method we have described in print\* were used, whatever was graphically recorded, and corroborated by automatic photographs, in the presence of the investigator and the ordinary inhabitants of the haunted spot, would continue to register if the haunting went on in a sealed room with no one in it. It would be easy to add the recording of noises.

Risky work, beset with difficulties, demanding a great deal of perseverance, but capable of resulting in precise records and the beginning of genuine study.

### **The Need of Reporting Cases of Haunting**

Human falsehood is everywhere about us. But behind it are all the realities of life. Let us not reject the phenomena of haunting, reported in every age and country, on the grounds that it has been imitated. To act thus would be to exclude from our interest everything that can be faked or imitated. Above all, let us not reject it on the grounds that it is unlikely. The infinitude of what we do not know would seem stupendously unlikely if it were revealed to us. Rather let us exert ourselves to verify this phenomenon in order to ascertain whether it exists, and, if it does, to subject it to scientific study.

Our readers can help in this. First by letting us know of hauntings which turn up in their vicinity. Then by making inquiries so as to weed out all but the cases which seem important and promising, whether in the form the phe-

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\* Les Pouvoirs inconnus de l'esprit sur la matière: *Revue Métapsychique*, No. 6, 1931, and No. 1, 1932.

nomena take or in the opportunities for experimental study. Being on the scene, they can then arrange to let us have access to the haunting; which is almost always difficult to do, for many reasons.

[Dr. Osty's closing remarks are addressed to the readers of the *Revue Métapsychique*, from which his article is translated, but we should like to echo them to the readers of this JOURNAL. Hauntings are still very much on the borderline of established psychic phenomena and greatly in need of clarification. The method of study suggested by Dr. Osty seems well worth trying. The co-operation of readers, in conducting preliminary inquiry and reporting cases to us, is earnestly solicited.]

## A Letter from England

BY DR. NANDOR FODOR

(*Research Officer, International Institute for Psychological Research*)

December, 1936.

### BLACK MAGIC

I do not like the subject of Black Magic. Our hands are too far full with psychic problems, produced through mediums and occurring spontaneously, to trespass on the preserves of occultists. But recently in a public speech Mr. Ramsay MacDonald went so far as to say: "I am told that the Black Art is getting more popular today than ever on account of a wave of extraordinary credulity among young and up-to-date people, who are turning more than ever towards it." Mr. Dennis Wheatley, the novelist, seized this opportunity to explain in the *Daily Mail* that Black Magic is indeed practised in England today; he expatiated on the Black Mass at which children were sacrificed in the old days and stated that "there is some reason to suppose that even today young children who disappear have sometimes been kidnapped for this purpose". In a letter to the *Daily Mail* I protested against this novelistic effort to revive the worst tradition of the Middle Ages, and in an article in the *Daily Sketch* on November 13th I did some plain speaking as follows:

"Too much nonsense is being talked about Black Magic in this country today. Writers of occult fiction, no doubt, welcome it. But the general public should realize that there is not a scrap of evidence that Black Arts are being practised in England. Outside the imagination of morbid and hysterical people, Black Magic has no existence in this land. Psychological Research has made a clean sweep of the Black Arts. Moral perverts may find new thrills in incantations and diabolic ceremonies which they find described in musty books, but no such practice will make them real sorcerers. It will not enable them to invoke Powers and Principalities of Darkness. It will, at best, produce psychological states in which they might believe themselves to be in touch with the Evil One. The Devil only appears to those who believe in his existence."

Regarding incantations, the magic circle, and other paraphernalia of the Black Arts, I could not go into details in a newspaper article. I know of people who smelled awful smells during magic operations but I know of no one who went so far as a philosopher friend of Professor E. G. Browne's who, as described in the professor's *A Year among the Persians*, had twice gone through the training incumbent

upon those who wish to gain control over the Jinns. He retired into a solitary spot where he was to remain for forty days, spending the greater part of his time in incantations in the Arabic language within the magic circle, eating little food and diminishing the amount daily. He was told that "if he has faithfully observed all these details, on the twenty-first day a lion will appear, and will enter the magic circle. The operator must not allow himself to be terrified by this apparition, and, above all, must on no account quit the mandal (magic circle), else he will lose the result of all his pains. If he resists the lion, other terrible forms will come to him on subsequent days—tigers, dragons, and the like—which he must similarly withstand. If he holds his ground till the fortieth day he has attained his object, and the jinnis, having been unable to get the mastery over him, will have to become his servants and obey all his behests.

#### *THE FRIGHTFUL DRAGON*

"Well, I faithfully observed all the necessary conditions, and on the twenty-first day, sure enough, a lion appeared and entered the circle. I was horribly frightened, but all the same I stood my ground, although I came near to fainting with terror. Next day, a tiger came, and still I succeeded in resisting the impulse which urged me to flee. But when, on the following day, a most hideous and frightful dragon appeared, I could no longer control my terror, and rushed from the circle, renouncing all further attempts at obtaining the mastery over the jinnis. When some time had elapsed after this, and I had pursued my studies in philosophy further, I came to the conclusion that I had been the victim of hallucinations, excited by expectations, solitude, hunger and long vigils, and, with a view to testing this hypothesis, I again repeated the same process which I had before practised, this time in a spirit of philosophical incredulity.

"My expectations were justified; I saw absolutely nothing. And there is another fact which proves to my mind that the phantoms I saw on the first occasion had no existence outside of my own brain. I had never seen a real lion then, and my ideas about the appearance of that animal were entirely derived from the pictures which may be seen over the doors of baths in this country. Now the lion which I saw in the magic circle was exactly like the latter in form and coloring, and, therefore, as I need hardly say, differed considerably in aspect from a real lion."

This is an extremely illuminating story. The miracle to me is not that a lion, a tiger and a dragon were seen on the first occasion, but that, provided the conditions were observed as before, nothing whatever appeared during the second attempt.

## JACOB OF SIMLA

Touching on the subject of magic and miracles, I have the sad duty to strip Mr. Jacob of Simla of the glamour of wonders which surrounds him in occult literature. Mr. Jacob is the original hero of Marion Crawford's *Mr. Isaacs* and Kipling's Lurgan Sahib in *Kim*. A dealer in precious stones, he was to all accounts an unusual and gifted man. But, as regards miracle working, he was a dreamer and the victim of a gigantic hoax.

My suspicions were first aroused when I met a gentleman from India who for thirty years was the private tutor of the Nizam of Hyderabad. I asked him if he knew Mr. Jacob. He did, but he never heard of his occult powers; the only miracle that Jacob had ever performed was that he "stung" Mr. Imre Schwaiger, of Delhi, to whom he sold his business.

I know Mr. Schwaiger. I set out to interview him. He happened to be in London. I was fortunate enough to meet in his office Mr. Joseph Maiden, a man with big hotel interests in Delhi, and Mr. Angelo, a banker and Mr. Schwaiger's business associate. All three had known Jacob intimately over a period of about 40 years. They were highly amused when from Stead's *Borderland* (April, 1896) I read them an account of Jacob's thaumaturgical powers, of his walking on the water, of his butterfly-storms, transportations, et cetera. The space at my disposal is not sufficient to print all the information which I obtained. I shall restrict myself to Mr. Angelo's testimony. This is what he told me:

"I think I can throw light on the genesis of the Jacob-legend. He had reason to believe that he was a chosen man; for never in his life did he learn that he was the victim of a gigantic hoax. I know all about it because the man who hoaxed him was my father.

"Jacob was something of a Persian scholar. He had educated himself, and knew the Koran by heart. My father, Colonel Angelo, staff-officer to General Nicholson during the mutiny, was a very good Persian scholar. He was fond of hoaxing, and selected Jacob for one of his victims. He wrote to him in Persian and declared himself to be an ascetic living on a faraway mountain top and caring nothing for worldly things. He chided Jacob for his attachment to material pleasures. He hinted that there would be great things in store for him if he opened his eyes to greater realities. The letter excited Jacob's imagination. He rushed to a friend and read it out to him. My father happened to be there and listened in grave silence to his own letter.

"From that day he wrote to Jacob week by week. He led him on gradually, promising him great wealth if he would follow the holy man's advice. The way would be shown.

"These letters were always delivered at night. My father's confidential servant dressed up as a Sadhu, knocked at Jacob's door, handed in the letter and vanished. He was strictly instructed never to speak a word. Jacob used to relate the story of these mysterious visits. He added color to it. Colonel Angelo heard with considerable amusement flowery descriptions of how the man dissolved into mist in front of Jacob's eyes. Quite possibly this is how the mystery of the disappearance of Ram Lal in Crawford's *Mr. Isaacs* originated.

"This correspondence lasted for some years. Jacob grew impatient, so the Sadhu promised to lead him into a veritable Aladdin's cave if he would obey his instructions and would use the treasure for holy ends. The cave was nine miles away from Simla in the mountains. Mr. Jacob was solemnly bound to cover the journey on foot at night and alone. Colonel Angelo knew that Jacob was a coward. He did not believe that he would set out all by himself, so he had him watched. His spy saw Jacob leave on the mysterious journey. He broke his vow and took Inayat, his servant, with him.

"The cave and the diamonds existed only in my father's imagination. Picture his surprise when Jacob came next day and showed a handful of small diamonds. He said that everything turned out as the Sadhu promised. He had found the cave and in it the treasure. He swore that he went out alone.

"The holy man's next letter was full of venom, denunciation and maledictions. He called Jacob a traitor to the great spiritual mission that was prepared for him and cursed him, promising ruin and desolation as a punishment for the broken vow.

"Call it a miracle if you like; the curse, uttered as a joke, took effect; perhaps because Jacob was an extremely superstitious man and the Sadhu's threats shook him to the core. From that day, everything went wrong with him. No man in his sane mind would have started the great Hyderabad diamond law suit against the Nizam. It was the act of a haunted man. He lost all his wealth and though he was a very shrewd business-man and had considerable reputation, he never could regain his footing. He was ruined by the curse of a Sadhu who did not exist."

It was on this purely imaginary basis that Jacob allowed himself to be reported as an initiate. The snowball was started by the account in *Borderland*. Its author was a *soi-disant* magician, who called himself Tautriadelta and who W. T. Stead suspected (he himself states this in his introductory words) to have been Jack the Ripper. The story crossed back to India. Mr. Jacob encouraged it and, presently, he found himself surrounded by a halo. It was good business. The Rajahs would buy anything from a man who could work miracles, and Mr. Jacob was clever enough to pretend to no miracle working powers

in the presence of his friends. They did not even suspect that he was said to be a magician. As I am told by Mr. Maiden :

"Jacob stayed at my house as my guest for as long as six months. I never heard that he could work miracles. It is impossible that I should not have heard of them. He was a weak specimen of humanity. He could never have kept it a secret if he had performed anything of an occult nature. It is very likely, however, that he would have encouraged people to write miraculous stories about him and that he would even pay for them. That was just what he would have done."

Thus, like the morning mist before the sun, the miracles of Jacob of Simla vanish into thin air. Stripped of its false trappings, the limitlessness of his own credulity is the only miracle which his life reveals.

### *I INVESTIGATE ANOTHER CASE OF HAUNTING*

Through Dr. Maxwell Telling, of Leeds, an SOS came to the International Institute for Psychical Research from Yorkshire. Disturbances of a mysterious nature broke out in the house of a titled lady. Old fashioned wire bells rang for five days without visible or normal agency and, on the third day, two maids independently saw a phantom woman leaning over an ancient cradle. Both girls received an awful shock. The nerves of one were so shattered that she had to be sent home. The other recovered her balance and carried on. The phantom woman was seen again. Doors mysteriously opened, and the owner of the house was considering the disagreeable possibility of leaving the place.

I arrived with Miss Naomi Bacon, the well known trance-medium. By that time the disturbances had died down. There was nothing to do but examine the witnesses, investigate the bells and to prevent, if possible, the recurrence of the phenomena.

I found that the wire bells required some force in pulling. They could not be short-circuited as they were not electrical. The gnawing of the wires by rats would not have produced a sound. The wires ran in the walls and the access to them was limited to the bell-pulls and to the clappers. The bells rung when both the bell-pulls and the clappers were watched. The servants gave an extremely good impression. They were all upset. The household was threatened with disorganization. I took their story and made each of them sign her respective statement. They fitted in. There were no contradictions. A builder was called in. He could find no cause for the ringing.

I went up with him into the attic, where the wires run exposed before they descend into the kitchen-passage to the bells. The wires were thickly coated with dust. There was nothing to discover there.

The phantasmal vision appeared to put the phenomenon in the haunting order. Bells *do* ring in haunted houses. A number of cases are told in an old and rare book, *Bealings Bell*, by Major Edward Moore, F.R.S., 1841. But the phenomenon is seldom acknowledged as supernatural, since it is too easily produced by human agency. The questions which I had to solve were: was there a connection between the phantom lady and the bells, was the bell ringing due to pranks of the maids, or was it a phenomenon of the Poltergeist order?

I ruled out the last two at an early stage. To settle the first, we had two séances in the room where the phantom was seen. Through the entranced medium we heard of three ghosts: two ladies and a cretin boy. One of the ladies poisoned her husband and killed her child; the other was robbed of her boy and was attracted to the house by the cradle; the cretin boy followed a maid into the house and made a habit of ringing the bells from sheer mischief. The stories were dramatic and the awakening of the ghosts to their real mental state was not without struggle. How far the data correspond to truth is, at this stage, impossible to tell. A historic investigation which is being undertaken may throw light on important features.

What interested me mostly was not so much the story but the events which gradually led up to the phantasmal vision. I could trace the increasing pressure on the nervous systems of two highly sensitive girls by the events, and by careless suggestions about ghosts. The tension grew until it reached the border of psychic perceptions. The ghost could make itself visible to them. That is, however, only part of the story. How the bells were rung remains a mystery. But my findings clearly indicate that the maid who fled with a nervous breakdown might have been the main source of power. The bells rang angrily during the night after she left, and in the morning. Then the power seemed exhausted and the house grew quiet. The maids were well above the age of puberty. No crockery was broken, no objects stirred mysteriously. The hand-bell in the house never rang. There was no reason to suspect the presence of a Poltergeist. The cretin boy, of course, would not be far from that description. But his activity, if he was indeed responsible, was a limited one.

#### *MYSTERY OF AN OCEAN FLYER'S RETURN*

In *Empire News*, Nov. 8, 1936, I told the story of a curious adventure of mine. In a sitting with a well known London trance-medium I was addressed by the control in the words:

"You know the gentleman who brings the aeroplane? The gentleman who lost his life in an aeroplane?"

I acknowledged that I might. It instantly leaped into my mind that the man described might be my friend, Capt. George Endresz

who, in 1931, flew non-stop from New Foundland to Budapest. I wanted more information. My questions, however, elicited a mass of confused replies. The correct statements that stood out were: He lost his life in an aeroplane; something about Italy and Mussolini; I talked his language; his name had two syllables, with a sibilant sound in it; he flew across the big water, not for record breaking; he knew something about an amusing photograph.

A clear flow of information would have been suspect of telepathy. The confusions and contradictions ruled this out. But because the contradictions were flagrant I had to conclude that the return of Captain Endresz was not proven.

There came an unexpected sequel. In the evening, Madame Nijinska, the wife of the famous Russian ballet dancer, rang me up. She said that she had a sitting in the afternoon with the same medium. She did not book in advance. The medium happened to be free, but her sitting was very bad. Somebody who said that he was an aviator pestered her throughout the sitting. He would not go. He insisted that he knew her and her family. But she could not place him.

I was getting much interested. Madame Nijinska is a Hungarian by birth. Her family is well known in Budapest. My friend, Captain Endresz would know the family. Was it possible that he was still hovering about the medium and had excitedly rushed through when, of all coincidences in the world, another compatriot happened to have a sitting?

I asked her what the aviator said.

"He said that he crashed to death in Rome and he babbled something about Mussolini."

"Anything else?" I asked.

"Yes, some nonsense that he flew for a country."

That was a bullseye. Captain Endresz' ocean flight was unique. It was the only one undertaken for purposes of political propaganda. The name of the plane, "Justice for Hungary", was meant to call the attention of the world to Hungary, whose thousand-year-old unity was destroyed by the Treaty of Trianon. Verily, Captain Endresz flew for a country.

I thought that the case for Captain Endresz' return had tremendously improved. Years later I received a shock. The trance medium against whose integrity there was not a breath of suspicion before was caught in crude and premeditated fraud. She had been imposing, in her home, by another type of mediumship on a large number of people for years. She had passed off spurious messages, and had involved in a net of lies her "Big Chief". Was it possible that I had been spoofed?

I cast my mind back to the outstanding incidents in the Endresz

message and I was struck by the discovery that the good hits were the salient facts that must have been printed in the daily Press at the time when he lost his life in a crash. Had the medium, knowing that I was of Hungarian extraction, stowed away in her memory the information for future use? Had she made conscious or subconscious use of it?

I cannot answer the question. All I can say is that by the canons of evidence I have no right now to call the incident evidence of spirit return.

#### *HARRY PRICE'S LIBRARY*

I reported in an earlier letter that Mr. Harry Price is retiring from psychical research. He tells me now that he made a gift of his valuable library to London University. The gift has been accepted and his books have already been taken to Imperial College, where they will be recatalogued. The library, consisting of 14,000 volumes, will be known as the Harry Price Library of Magical Literature.

With Mr. Harry Price's retirement the London University Council for Psychical Research will lose its Honorary Secretary. I understand, however, that Mr. Price will remain associated with it in the capacity of consultant, and that the Council intends to carry on in new premises.

## Book Reviews

THE GHOST IT WAS, by Richard Hull. New York. Putnam.  
278 pp. \$2.00.

Psychical researchers who are at the same time lovers of good detective stories will find *The Ghost It Was* a most diverting book, since the central character is an old martinet of an uncle whose nephews, three villainous and one pure, work on his new-found belief in survival to worm themselves into his good graces. A convenient ghost-story about the mansion old James Warrenton has bought permits one nephew to masquerade as a ghost; vengeance to come upon him *via* another interloper in plumed hat and luminous paint; and a gentleman from Scotland Yard to appear in the guise of a member of the Society for Psychical Research. Whether or no there was ever any ghost is a matter that the author glides over as lightly as any spook. The book is adroit as a mystery, and fun—partly because of its absurdities—for those who know the language of spiritualism and psychical research.

SHOCKS, by Algernon Blackwood. New York. E. P. Dutton and Co. 300 pp. \$2.00.

This book, it is well to warn the timorous, is well named. Mr. Blackwood can write as horrendous and uncanny a story as any living author, and several of those in the present volume represent his art at its best. This is high praise, for Mr. Blackwood is instructed in the occult, and his stories have the high verisimilitude which comes with a real mastery of the shadowy but nonetheless necessary boundaries within which the occult story must be confined. His *revenants* do not return capriciously; his unworldly bargains are well made and well kept; his breaches in the wall of the material world occur where the walls are thinnest. But, once again, these stories are strong meat, and except for *The Stranger*, a gentle, tender story which opens the book, are more unpleasant than most of the stories we have had from Mr. Blackwood's pen.

THE WIND BLOWS OVER, by Walter de la Mare. New York. Macmillan. 320 pp. \$2.50.

For the first time in some years we have a new book of tales from Mr. de la Mare. As always, they are incomparably well written, and this group includes two likely to be of interest to the readers of this JOURNAL: *A Revenant*, in which Edgar Allen Poe returns to reprove and remonstrate with a professor who is too complacently tabulating the factors in the poet's life; and *Strangers and Pilgrims*, in which a spirit returns to a churchyard to search for his own epitaph—a subject which gives Mr. de la Mare, the poet, a chance to include more of those epitaphs for which he may, some day, find himself justly famous.

F.L.T.

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### Psycho-Physical Parallelism or Interactionism?\*

*Which Provides the More Satisfactory Philosophical Background for Psychical Research?*

BY JOHANNES J. POORTMAN, M.A. (Groningen)

*Sometime Research Fellow in Philosophy in Harvard College;  
Hon. Treasurer Netherlands Society for Psychical Research*

Philosophy and the respective branches of science mutually influence each other. On the one hand, it is the duty of philosophy—besides its other tasks—to summarize the results of scientific research, forming a complete world-picture. Thus philosophy accepts material from the other departments of knowledge. On the other hand, however, philosophy affects them: it considers the methods of science, and is able thereby to verify its results, and to discover fallacies in them. But there exists in a somewhat broader sense another dependence of the sciences upon philosophy: if philosophy has already arrived at distinct results, not only at such general and formal results as the laws of logic and methodology, but also at more material doctrines such as certain ideas on the essence of things and

\*Address to the Annual Meeting of the Netherlands S.P.R. at Utrecht, May 8, 1932. See also *Tijdschrift voor Parapsychologie*, IV p. 214; *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie*, VIII, p. 510. I wish to acknowledge here the aid given to me by Mr. Robert Lee Wolff of Harvard College, and by Mr. James Brotherhood of The Hague in translating this paper.

of reality, then philosophy will apply these ideas as a standard in judging new achievements of science. Since the results gained in a particular field should ultimately be in harmony with the conclusions of any other field, philosophy will entertain certain expectations concerning scientific developments; *a priori* it will consider one result to be more likely than another.

In this way, the philosophy of the nineteenth century, at the time when the views of natural science, tinged by materialism and positivism, had invaded its province to a great extent, showed little inclination to attach credit to the science of psychical research, which came into being at that very period. Since then, however, some changes have taken place: it is no longer possible to say that natural science, especially natural science of the nineteenth century, dominates philosophy. This fact has proved advantageous for psychical research. But this does not mean that the influence of philosophy on psychical research has ceased altogether. The philosophical theories which prevail today have likewise taken a definite stand with regard to psychical research: certain results of psychical research are welcomed, and certain others rejected from the outset. All of this was to have been expected. Certain results, however, have already established themselves as facts so surely that any philosophy which takes account of experience will have to take them into consideration.

In this paper, I am going to pay special attention to a particular case where philosophy and a branch of science influence each other mutually: namely, the metaphysical theories concerning the relation of consciousness and body, spirit and matter on the one hand, and certain results of psychical research on the other. Among the phenomena of psychical research, some, like telepathy, have been proved real; some others, like clairvoyance or cryptaesthesia, can be placed almost in the same class; still others, including the survival of bodily death, are the subject of constant investigation. Now, which of the metaphysical theories concerning the relation of body and consciousness provides

the best refuge for such doctrines of psychical research, partly proved today, partly to be proved tomorrow? In other words, to mention the two main rival theories by name: does a *Parallelism* with regard to psycho-physical relations, or does *Interactionism*, provide the most useful background for psychical research?

Opinions are divided on this point. The philosopher McDougall gives as his opinion in his *Body and Mind* that psychical research may at any moment furnish the final verification of interactionism, or animism, as he calls it, and that already there has been established the occurrence of phenomena incompatible with parallelism or mechanism<sup>1</sup>. Other thinkers who have occupied themselves with the relation of philosophy and psychical research, like the well-known philosophers William James<sup>2</sup> and Henri Bergson<sup>3</sup>—each, like McDougall, was in his time President of the English S.P.R.—also adhere to the interactionistic view. The late Professor Gerardus Heymans, however, the founder and the first President of the Netherlands S.P.R., was of a wholly different opinion. He writes in an article "Psychischer Monismus und 'Psychical Research'"<sup>4</sup> that precisely because of his "psychic monism" (which involves parallelism) he has been prejudiced in favor of psychical research; that there is in his metaphysical attitude room for these phenomena from the outset; and even that he is able by it to predict the conditions under which they will appear.

Let us for a moment examine more closely this agreement between the theories and expectations of psychic monism and the results of psychical research. In what does this agreement consist? Psychic monism draws the analogy between our individual consciousness with its ideas on the one hand, and, on the other, a larger consciousness, perhaps a world-consciousness, within which the individual

<sup>1</sup> P. 348-349.

<sup>2</sup> *Principles of Psychology* Vol. I. p. 181.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *Fantômes des Vivants* and *Recherche psychique in L'Energie spirituelle*.

<sup>4</sup> *Zeitschrift für Psychologie*, Vol. 64, 1-2, p. 1; *Gesammelte Kleinere Schriften* Vol. I, p. 341.

consciousness fulfill the function of ideas. Now, just as ideas may momentarily disappear from our consciousness, becoming memories which do not perish, but can be recalled, so too, we as individual consciousnesses may disappear for the moment from a certain part of the world-consciousness, while surviving nevertheless in another part of it. From this analogy the likelihood of individual immortality follows, and also that of the possibility that the dead make themselves at some times and under special conditions known to us. Those special conditions have to be of such a kind that these impressions, whether they come from the deceased, or, as is the case with telepathy, from still living persons, can easily reach our consciousness. Therefore it is required that the consciousness of the recipient be not too much occupied by sense-impressions. One finds, as a matter of fact, that the trance of the medium and a certain passive state of the telepathist at least further the result, or may perhaps even be necessary<sup>1</sup>.

These considerations, which Heymans voices, referring explicitly to Fechner, seem to us to be very happy. Here a theory has been found into which a certain number of psychical phenomena fit from the beginning, and by which they therefore can so far be explained. Such a theory is not to be neglected. What strikes us, however, is that as a matter of fact nowhere in this analogy between the individual and a world-consciousness is there mentioned a parallelism between mind and body. Heymans uses the inferences following on this analogy as if they were the inferences of "psychic monism". Now, a very important part of psychic monism is the thought that the real is merely psychical, that therefore all the physical is essentially psychical, and merely *appears* physical. Nothing, or almost nothing<sup>2</sup>, however, of this part of the doctrine of psychic monism comes into the above-mentioned analogy, which enables us to explain certain psychic phenomena.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Heymans, *Over de verklaring der telepathische verschijnselen*, in *Mededeelingen der Nederlandsche S.P.R.*, Vol. 10, p. 1, ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Zeitschrift für Psychologie*, Vol. 64, p. 10.

Much more, however, is said about that other part of psychic monism in the reflections on the relation of philosophy to psychical research of Professor Leo Polak, the successor of Professor Heymans at Groningen University, and, until some years ago, of the Netherlands S.P.R. In his address *Feit en Hypothese* (Fact and Hypothesis) delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Netherlands S.P.R. in 1926, Professor Polak draws some concrete conclusions with regard to psychical research from the epistemological assumptions of psychic monism. He says among other things: "A Spirit, who could move in space, be present in a body (either brain, or heart, or elsewhere), or step out of the body; thoughts, which could float in the air (in the literal sense!) and cover distances (with the swiftness of thought, too!) all this is as absurd and contradictory as thought-reading or spirit-photos. . . . Thought, as it is, can essentially never be read, that is, be perceived, but only be thought. And photos of spirit as such can never be taken."<sup>1</sup> Other utterances of Professor Polak, in his book *Kennisleer contra Materie-realisme*, can be compared with these: "If, for instance, Mr. F. van Eeden says in accordance with spiritualism . . . that in this room there may be no one knows how many spirits,—then we are able to reply with the apodictical apriorical certainty of epistemology: none whatsoever! *Ex hypothesi* in this room there can only be. . . matter!"<sup>2</sup> And further on: "Every spiritualizing of matter, or materialization of spirit, is a dogmatical superstitution that can be accurately refuted as conflicting with epistemology (the immateriality of the spiritual, the ideality

<sup>1</sup> "Een geest, die zich in de ruimte zou bewegen, in een lichaam bevinden (t zij brein, t zij hart of nieren) of ook buiten het lichaam treden, gedachten, die in de ruimte zouden zweven (in niet-overdrachtelijken zin!) en afstanden afleggen (lieftst met de snelheid der gedachte!) enz., enz., het is alles even absurd, contradictoir, als het gedachtelezen of de geestenfotografieën . . . gedachten kunnen nu eenmaal principieel nooit gelezen d.i. waargenomen, slechts gedacht worden . . . En gefotografeerd kan nooit geest a. z. worden . . ." *Mededeelingen der Nederlandsche S.P.R.*, Vol. 12, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> "Als b.v. heer V. van Eeden met het spiritisme . . . zegt . . . dat in deze kamer zich misschien wie weet hoeveel geesten bevinden,—dan kunnen wij met de spodictische apriorische stelligheid der kenleer antwoorden: geen enkele! In deze kamer kan zich *ex hypothesi* niets anders bevinden dan . . . materie" P. 79-80.

of space, the immanence of objects) and with the inviolability, based on epistemology, of the principles of natural science (the closed causality of nature, the conservation of energy).”<sup>1</sup>

So, as for the significance of psychic monism as regards the current results of psychical research, a considerable difference between the utterances of Heymans and of Polak, of master and of pupil, can be observed. A favorable reception, a seemingly *a priori* fitting of certain results of psychical research into the philosophical doctrine, on the one hand, is opposed to a strong distrust towards a number of psychical investigations that nevertheless deserve attention, and to a rejection on epistemological grounds of certain conceptions commonly used by psychical research, on the other.

We are inclined to acknowledge that Polak is right. We agree with him that there exists an unbridgeable gulf between certain provisional results of psychical research and the epistemological assumptions which cannot be separated from psychic monism. If some members of the Netherlands S.P.R. have had the impression that Professor Polak has sometimes been inclined to be too cautious in accepting facts, one cannot blame him overmuch therefor. He has only been consistent. This is a case of the bringing to bear of philosophical opinions on a department of science, by which certain results of that science are held *a priori* to be or not to be likely. It is true that there is the possibility—as one of the debaters, Mr. P. Goedhart, remarked after the address of Professor Polak—“that the occult facts will prove that the philosophy of Professor Polak is not right”.<sup>2</sup> In that case one would have to look for a different epistemology, in which the apparent results of psychical research would more easily come into their own. In that other epis-

<sup>1</sup> “Elke geestwording van stof of stofwording van geest is een exact te weerleggen, met kennisleer (de onruimtelijkheid van het geestelijke, de idealiteit van de ruimte, de immanentie der objecten) en met de kennistheoretische gefundeerde onschendbaarheid van natuurwetenschappelijke beginselen (de gesloten natuurcausaliteit, het behoud van arbeidsvermogen) strijdige dogmatische bijgeloovigheid” P. 334.

<sup>2</sup> *Mededeelingen Nederlandsche S.P.R.*, Vol. 12, p. 27.

temology there ought also to be a place for that analogy which Heymans draws between the individual and the cosmic consciousness. But it may very well be that Polak is perfectly right as regards the incompatibility of psychic monism, as an epistemological standpoint, with the results of psychical research. Because of this incompatibility, then, Polak has not been, as was Heymans, "favorably prejudiced" with regard to psychical research, but rather unfavorably.

We are so far convinced that Polak is right with regard to the incompatibility of psychic monism with psychical research that we should like to take a step further. It is possible in our opinion to indicate with psychic monism, as Heymans conceived it, several points which it is very difficult to bring into line with certain results of psychical research, equally accepted or considered likely by Heymans. Heymans, then, overlooked these incongruities. If Polak ponders them, he will have to deny the reality of telepathy. Let us go into these points at some length.

The phenomenon of *telepathy*—our first point—has been proved, according to Heymans. The report of the investigation by Heymans, Brugmans and Weinberg states "that concerning the existence of thought-transference under conditions wholly excluding the ordinary intercourse through the medium of the senses all reasonable doubt has been set at rest".<sup>1</sup> Moreover, just as impossible as the intervention of the senses is the notion that it may be question only of an idea's spontaneously arising in the mind of the percipient: that this is not so is demonstrated by the very fact of the agreement of the thought of the percipient with that of the experimenter. For the percipient the thought transferred undoubtedly comes from without. It comes as much from without as do the ordinary sensations. Now psychic monism assumes that the common sensations do not actually reflect the reality that is causing

<sup>1</sup>"Dat het bestaan van gedachtenoverdracht onder omstandigheden, die het gewone verkeer door tusschenkomst der zintuigen volledig uitsluiten, door deze proeven buiten allen redelijken twijfel is gesteld". *Mededeelingen Nederlandsche S.P.R.*, Vol. 1, p. 6.

them. The human brain, *e.g.*, does not exist in itself; the contents of our consciousness, however, do exist in themselves, which thereupon appear as our brain to the eventual perceiver. A similar state of affairs is assumed by psychic monism for the whole of nature. "Can this be true?" one is inclined to ask. Reality in all ordinary cases is *not* adequately perceived, so that, for instance, if we avert our eyes from this desk, no brown wooden object remains, but only something psychical that *appears* to be of wood and brown if one looks towards it—in all ordinary cases conditions are thus complicated; while in that rare and remarkable case, telepathy, then, the simplest possibility—that of appearing adequately—is real, for the thought of the experimenter agrees with the thought of the perceiver. It would be much more natural if there were in *both* cases either such a transmutation of the reality of qualities into appearance, or in *both* cases, an adequate perception. Does not the intuitive conviction of our natural consciousness plead for the latter theory, according to which the qualities which we think we perceive really belong to the objects, such as this desk? There are, accordingly, quite a few epistemologists who defend this adequacy of sense-perception, otherwise called Neo-realism. Now, conversely, Polak seems to agree with the requirement that, if psychic monism is true, there must be the same transmutation of qualities in the case of telepathy. He says in the above-mentioned address: "Thoughts, as it is, can essentially never be read, that is, be perceived, they can only be thought . . . and that only by their own subject; the thinking, therefore, of the thoughts of another person is, moreover, a contradiction." Reading of the thoughts of another person, however, is nothing else than telepathy. So we agree with Polak, that, *according to psychic monism*, it is to be expected that thoughts, if they make themselves known to another consciousness, do not do so as thoughts, so that

<sup>1</sup>"Gedachten kunnen nu eenmaal principieel nooit gelezen d.i. waargenomen, slechts gedacht worden . . . en alleen door hun eigen subjeet, dus ook het denken van eens anders gedachten is nog een contradictie." *Mededeelingen Nederlandsche S.P.R.*, Vol. 12, p. 19.

their own content is immediately caught, but in the form of appearances, which cannot be recognized without something further. According to Heymans, however, the reality of thought-transference has been proved. Consequently Polak, the consistent psychic monist, has either to deny the phenomenon of telepathy, or he has to alter his entire epistemology.

One might still suggest that in the case of telepathy the very factor which psychic monism holds responsible for the transmutation of the qualities, namely the distorting influence of our ordinary senses, has been ruled out. Telepathy may be said to be a transference of thought, not a different kind of perception. But, in the first place, Polak expresses himself strongly: "We are all, as a subject, monads without a window".<sup>1</sup> In other words: nothing that is *content* can penetrate into us from the outside: no more can thoughts. Secondly, one can point to other phenomena than telepathy. Little by little a sufficient number of cases of clairvoyance or cryptaesthesia have been proved real. Here also the very coöperation of the ordinary senses is excluded, but the content of which one becomes aware does not concern the thoughts of another person, but various objective events, which might, in principle, also be perceived by the ordinary senses. A perception which, as far as the content goes, is identical with sensory perception has, then, on the one hand been proved real in certain cases, and on the other been effected *without* the coöperation of the ordinary senses, which alone, according to psychic monism, can bring about the content of perception! Thus our conclusion upon reflection must be that facts like telepathy and clairvoyance cannot be reconciled with psychic monism. They form a direct contrary-instance against it.

Let us now pass on to a second point, with which both psychical research and psychic monism deal, and which likewise in our opinion involves a difficulty as regards the latter. It concerns a question which is important in psychical research: the survival of bodily death. Heymans, as we

<sup>1</sup> Wij zijn allen, qua subjekt, *vensterloose monaden*. Ibidem, p. 14.

saw, considers this fairly probable because of reflections which he borrowed from Fechner. These reflections, however, had practically nothing to do, as we remarked, with the question of the parallelism between consciousness and brain. But if, on the other hand, one does connect this question of parallelism with that of death and eventual survival, then again, it seems to us, there are consequences which threaten psychic monism. One should bear in mind what, according to Heymans, is the point of departure of psychic monism. It is an empirical fact that there exists a certain parallelism between the processes of my consciousness and what is perceived (by another person) of my brain. In order to learn something about the unknown reality of things, one has, according to Heymans, to seize upon that very parallelism between the processes of my consciousness and the perceptions of my brain, for these processes of consciousness are immediately and certainly given to me, and the brain, too, is known only as a perception, that is, again, as a process of consciousness—of another, perceiving person. Therefore it is simplest to assume that the processes of consciousness themselves are the unknown reality manifesting itself in what is perceived of my brain. "Wenn aber irgendwo, dann (musz) jedenfalls hier das pou stō zu finden sein . . . , welches mir den Aufschwung in die unbekante, in meinen Wahrnehmungen sich mir offenbarende Wirklichkeit gestattet".<sup>1</sup> From here the metaphysical theory of psychic monism with its epistemological presuppositions is built up. Apart from the circumstance that from the outset this phraseology, in our opinion, assumes too readily that it is an *unknown* reality that manifests itself in our perceptions—for the reality of things may as well lie in the qualities known to us—the relation between brain-phenomena and the processes of consciousness is in any case very important and essential. One wonders all the more that it seems possible to raise certain objections against psychic monism with regard to this very

<sup>1</sup> *Einführung in die Metaphysik auf Grundlage der Erfahrung*, Vol. 31; *Der Grundgedanke des psychischen Monismus*, p. 226.

point of the narrow relationship between brain and consciousness. In the first place there is the case of fainting. Here the ordinary processes of consciousness cease. It is, however, likely that during the state the ordinary perceptions of the brain by another person should in principle still be possible. Consequently the direct relation, from which psychic monism started, has been disrupted in one instance at least.<sup>1</sup> The same applies still more plainly to that other phenomenon, death. In connection herewith Busse raises in his *Geist und Körper, Seele und Leib* the following objection against psychic monism: If our brain were, indeed, the appearance of our consciousness and nothing else, then, too, the decomposition of the body and of the brain after death would, at least to a certain extent, be an indication of what happens to our consciousness, and a slow, corresponding disintegration should occur there too.<sup>2</sup> One might add: Here is a new point of view as regards the choice between burial and cremation! Heymans, however, did assume, in contrast with these reflections, a certain personal survival, as we have seen. What, then, is his reply to this argument that there must needs be a parallel decomposition of body and of mind? "Das auch nach dem Tode das Gehirn nicht für die Wahrnehmung verschwindet, muss als ein Zeichen dafür angesehen werden, das im zugraude liegenden Psychischen zwar die spezifisch-menschliche Gesetzmäßigkeit zurückgetreten ist, dafür aber eine allgemeinere und mehr primitive wieder die Oberhand gewonnen hat."<sup>3</sup> In other words, there is a parting of the ways between brain and consciousness at death. In that case one is, however, inclined to ask: what is left of the point of departure of psychic monism? Heymans started from the empirical parallelism between processes of consciousness and perceptions of the brain (by another person.) The simplest theory, according to him, with regard to

<sup>1</sup> Cf. my book *Tweeërlei Subjectiviteit, Ontwerp eener "Centrale Philosophie"* (Haarlem, 1929), p. 277-279, 281.

<sup>2</sup> P. 372-376.

<sup>3</sup> *In Sachen des psychischen Monismus*, Vol. V, p. 212: *Gesammelte Kleinere Schriften*, Vol. I, p. 355.

the relation of consciousness and body is, in connection with that empirical parallelism, that the processes of consciousness only are real, while the brain is merely an appearance in human perceptions thereof. The inference that the decay of the brain is an indication, at least to a considerable extent, of the fate of consciousness after death seems unavoidable. But now it suddenly appears that the brain is something else than merely an appearance of the processes of consciousness: a law, more primitive than that of man, *again* holds sway! It is true that one may construe these arguments in such a way that the primitive law, which got the upper hand, is also essentially psychical; and, conversely, Heymans expects that "physische Paralleler-scheinungen"<sup>1</sup>—that corresponding physical phenomena might also eventually be demonstrated for the deceased, who are by that time independent of their brains.

But all becomes very complicated in this way. One thing is sure, anyway: Heymans has abandoned his point of departure, according to which my consciousness is simply mirrored in my brain. Meanwhile attention should be drawn to one point: if, as it appears from the parting of a specifically human and a more primitive law at death, the brain is *not* the *direct* appearance of the consciousness of man, but of something that is *connected* with his consciousness, then the whole conception becomes strikingly like the theory competing with parallelism: psycho-physical interactionism, assuming an action of consciousness on the brain—or on its substrate—and of the brain on consciousness. If one, then, considers that this transmutation of the qualities of things in perception (which is so awkward) is inseparably linked with psychic monism, then one begins to wonder whether an interactionism—without that transmutation—should not be preferred altogether.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Gesammelte Kleinere Schriften*, Vol. I, p. 355.

<sup>2</sup> After the writing of the above we came across the text of an address "Le sens de la mort", delivered by Professor Polak on Feb. 23, 1928, at Paris (*Union pour la Vérité, Bulletin*, 39e année, 2-3, nov.-déc. 1931, p. 41). Dealing with "le monisme psychique" and its epistemology, based on Kant, Polak says here: "Pour cette théorie l'unité de l'organisme vivant est le phénomène, l'indice

Our conclusion is, accordingly, that parallelism as the solution of the psycho-physical problem is hardly useful at all for psychical research. It is true that types of parallelism exist besides psychic monism, such as, *e.g.*, the "Theory of the Unknown Third" or Neo-Spinozism, and the "Theory of the Unknown Other"; but the general objections which Heymans raises against these standpoints as meta-physical doctrines seem to us insuperable.<sup>1</sup> Compared with them, psychic monism is much more flexible. But psychic monism appears to be irreconcilable with the results of psychical research. The transmutation of the qualities of things in perception is a lasting handicap to psychical research. If the results of this new science point in any direction, it is toward the existence of nothing other than a ready contact between the psychical and the physical, toward an influence of the psychical on the physical, much greater<sup>2</sup>, and much less dependent upon the ordinary senses, than used to be assumed. The theory of the inadequate appearance of things in perception hinders the establishing

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de l'unité du moi pensant, de l'individu psychique,—et la décomposition de cet organisme est à la fois l'effet et la preuve de la désintégration de ce moi particulier, subjectif, individuel, sa désindividualisation finale" (p. 50). And further on: "Ainsi la mort physiologique (en opposition à la mort pathologique, prématurée) c'est la fin normale et définitive de toute existence individuelle" (p. 51).

These utterances confirm in an unexpected way our arguments, namely, that a consistent psychic monist not only has to disavow the phenomenon of telepathy (which Polak already does with more or less clarity in his address "Feit en Hypothese"), but also, because of the decomposition of the organism after death, is obliged to deny every personal survival of death. It follows that the present professor of philosophy at Groningen University and his predecessor largely disagree with regard to these two points. Nevertheless in our opinion Polak is right in his inferences from psychic monism. But it seems very doubtful to us that these inferences, including the impossibility of personal immortality, should follow directly from Kantianism, and, indeed, this has only very rarely been maintained. Therefore a theory of knowledge, especially of perception, differing from the one on which psychic monism is based is necessary, and it is, we think, possible. In so far as the phenomena of psychical research become corroborated as the years go by, there will be a decision between these two epistemologies.

Professor Polak has also delivered an address on the same subject at The Hague and at Veendam (Cf. *Het Toekomstig Leven*, March 1932, p. 47; April 1932, p. 62.)

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Heymans, *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, §22, §27.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Tenhaeff, "Ideoplastie" in *Tijdschrift voor Parapsychologie* Vol. III, p. 216 ff. and p. 254 ff.

of these phenomena. In accordance with this, Polak has drawn several conclusions from his epistemological point of view: thought-reading, spirit-photos, ghosts in this room are contradictory, essentially impossible. He ought to go on to say: the investigations of Heymans, Brugmans and Weinberg on telepathy are necessarily fallacious. As to the analogy, borrowed from Fechner, between the individual and world-consciousness, on account of which Heymans welcomes the results of psychical research, and is even able to predict the special conditions under which they will occur, this theory has practically nothing to do with psychic monism as a psycho-physical parallelism and a doctrine of perception. One may as well include it in a different theory concerning the relation of consciousness and matter, *e.g.*, in an interactionism acknowledging the adequacy of perception. The fact that Polak is far less pleased with Fechner than is Heymans tallies with all this. Polak reproaches Fechner expressly for not arriving at a correct theory of perception.<sup>1</sup> Polak has here been perfectly consistent: but it appears, on the other hand, that Fechner's analogy, on account of which Heymans welcomed psychical research, does not necessarily involve a rigorous doctrine of perception according to the recipe of psychic monism.

Now we might pass on to the inquiry as to whether an interactionism may perhaps be conceived, which is both satisfactory as a general metaphysical theory and yet meets the various objections raised by parallelism to the results of psychical research. By way of introduction, we propose, however, first to examine the reasons why Polak adheres so strongly to his epistemological doctrine of perception—so strongly, in fact, that he is therefore even inclined *a priori* to deny the reality of a number of truly established facts of psychical research.

All sense-qualities are, says Polak, necessarily secondary: it is impossible for them to belong to things.<sup>2</sup> They cannot

<sup>1</sup> *Kennisleer contra Materie-realisme*, p. 178.

<sup>2</sup> *Cf. e.g. Feit en Hypothese, Mededeelingen Ned. S.P.R.*, Vol. 12, p. 15.

do so because even if the content of sensation were a reproduction of the real qualities of the thing, we should never be able to know anything about any agreement between the two, since things themselves are never given to us, but only ideas, contents of consciousness indirectly caused by things. What is sometimes called "the third possibility of Trendelenburg" is out of the question. What are the three possibilities referred to? First, that we become directly aware of things, and therefore the qualities perceived belong to them. This first possibility, in our opinion as well, is out of the question; Polak rightly contends against Külpe and others that we never experience things themselves, but only ideas in connection with them. Consequently, says Polak, the second possibility is right, namely that we know merely the contents of our sensations, which are only the indirect effects of things possessing entirely different qualities in themselves. According to this theory the third possibility is impossible: that we only know, indeed, with regard to things the contents of our sensations, but that those sensations, however, contain the very qualities which belong to the things in themselves. We could never, he says, be aware of this agreement between the two; we are and we remain "monads without a window".

It seems to me that a way may yet be indicated whereby this difficulty could be removed and by which "Trendelenburg's third possibility", nevertheless, becomes possible and even likely. Allow me, therefore, briefly to repeat an argument which I worked out more elaborately in my book *Tweeërlei Subjectiviteit*. In epistemology one is accustomed to correlate the general judgments, going beyond the arbitrariness of the individual, empirical subject (such as the apriorical judgments with regard to space) with a supposed epistemological subject. This epistemological subject, however, is merely a supposition, hypothetical, an abstraction of the judgments of the empirical subjects. Now what about assuming that this general epistemological subject is *real*? By referring to self-consciousness I have tried to make it acceptable that such a general subject,

which I have called the *suprasubject*—distinguished from the empirical subjects or *infrasubjects*—is actually real, of a profounder reality than common reality. In self-consciousness one may distinguish between a “*differential I*”, that is you and me, man or woman, having certain definite qualities and a distinct character, and a *pure I*. This “pure I” can never be completely objectified: if one tries to objectify it by the thought-experiment: “I think, that I think, that I think,” *et cetera*, then this I, on the contrary, continually escapes the endeavor of objectification. One is never able to contemplate it *in front of* one, since it is present again and again as the subject in every new effort to know it. It is, therefore, according to experience that which escapes in principle, in other words the absolute; which means, does it not, that which is freed (*absolvo*)? And this “pure I” is, notwithstanding these peculiar qualities, real; it is taken, as appears from the Cartesian “*Cogito ergo sum*”, as a very example of reality; also remember the saying: “As true as I live!” This “pure I”, however, is to such an extent devoid of all concrete qualities that it is impossible to distinguish *many* “pure I’s”; in other words there is only *one* “pure I” that thinks all thoughts in every one of us, being present at all ideas or contents of consciousness. In pure self-consciousness everyone encounters a reality profounder than that of the entire universe known to us, whether psychic or physical; it is the Absolute itself. It being so that all of us, in ourselves, may experience the One Pure I which is of a profounder than common reality, then by far the simplest way is to have it coincide with that one, general, epistemological subject which is needed in epistemology in view of the *a priori*. Consequently, however, the epistemological subject is also real, of a profounder reality than common reality.

The third possibility of Trendelenburg can be made acceptable in connection with this. For, *if* that epistemological subject, to which the judgments are related *a priori* is at the same time the “pure I”, being of a profounder reality than the entire remaining psycho-physical

reality, one has to imagine that, on the one hand, from this one real suprasubject spring in reality the foundations and the laws of this entire lower psycho-physical world; whereas on the other hand, the suprasubject has planted certain apriorical knowledge with regard to those foundations, *e.g.*, space or the scheme of colors, in the infrasubjects. If this be so, the *a priori* knowledge of the infrasubject and the qualities belonging to things themselves ultimately spring from the same source. Then the gulf between things in themselves and ourselves as infrasubjects has been *bridged*, though we may not experience things directly, but only the ideas caused by them in us. *Via* the subprsubject, which all of us have in ourselves as the "pure I", the infrasubjects are able to know something *objective* concerning the qualities of things, as these qualities spring from the same source, namely the basis of the world consisting of the one, real suprasubject or the "pure I". And nothing but such an objective, such a true belonging of the qualities to things, is implied, according to phenomenology, if we consider something to be true; only such a theory satisfies and adequately accounts for our natural consciousness of what truth is.

It is entirely out of the question, therefore, that, as Polak will have it, the third possibility should be altogether inadmissible; that a theory of perception holding that qualities belong to things should be impossible, and that their transmutation should be necessary. The main reason for Polak's standpoint is probably the Kantian idea that we assimilate the data of our experience while adding something to them: space is *our conception* (*Anschauungsform*). But we admit wholeheartedly the existence of this apriorical knowledge together with the necessity of attributing it to the influence of a subject, since only in this way can its general, necessary and accurate character be explained. *One should, however, relate the apriorical knowledge to the suprasubject, and not to the infrasubjects.* Psychic monism, which says that this desk is really not brown and does not occupy any space, regards the *infrasubject* as the source

of the *a priori*:<sup>1</sup> it is the infrasubject which in its sensations conceives things in a spatial way: they, on the other hand, in reality and apart from it, are of a different nature. Polak says, absolutely in accordance with this standpoint, that it is impossible for ghosts to be in this room, that is, in this room regarded as a space. According to him it is, namely, the spirit of the infrasubject which actually creates space. We ourselves, as spirits, therefore, are not in this room. Conversely, all impressions from without have to undergo that spatial conception and transmutation, according to Polak. That is why he also says that thought-reading is essentially impossible. According to us, he is also forced to the conclusion that Heymans was mistaken in his experiments on telepathy. Thoughts, transmitted by telepathy, would *also* be transmuted. It is the same argument when Heymans remarks that it should be possible to demonstrate "physische Parallelerscheinungen," corresponding physical phenomena of surviving persons, independent of the corpse.<sup>2</sup> And when Mr. Lissaeur asked Professor Polak, in the discussion following his address on "Feit en Hypothese", whether it was not possible that only the physical *appearance* of the spirits be present in the room, Professor Polak answered that in that case his objection would be removed.<sup>3</sup> In this way the intentions of psychic monism become clear.

This entire theory of perception, however, which by that transmutation of qualities causes so many difficulties (so that even the phenomenon of telepathy would have to be denied) is far from compelling. If one only relates the *a priori* not to the infrasubject but to the suprasubject, as we propose to do, a wholly different conception results, a simpler one, one in harmony with our natural conscious-

<sup>1</sup> It may be pointed out, however, that Heymans does not seek the origin of the apriorical knowledge as regards time and causality in the infrasubject, but in the World-being, that is, in something like our suprasubject. We propose to extend this conception to *all* forms of the *a priori*.

<sup>2</sup> *Psychischen Monismus und "Psychical Research"*, *Ges. Kl. Schriften*, Vol. I, p. 355.

<sup>3</sup> *Mededeelingen Netherlands S.P.R.*, Vol. 12, p. 28.

ness of truth, whereas the main thought of Kantianism is retained, and psychical research rids itself of that awkward transmutation of the qualities. If the real source of the *a priori* lies in the one real suprasubject, if it is the suprasubject, and not the infrasubject, which posits space, and if it be true that the infrasubject assimilates the data of sensation, but only because of its relation to the suprasubject, then it is possible that spatial and other sense-qualities belong to things-in-themselves. In that case, however, quite another possibility exists too, namely that spatial qualities belong to things in a still broader sense: beyond the things of physical nature. *In that case the soul may also be seen as spatial and material.* I know very well that this seems to be a bold contention. But the results of psychical research, as stated above, point in the very direction of a ready contact between the psychical and the physical, making their affinity likely. The materialization of spirit, spirit-photographs, and thought-reading suddenly reënter the realms of possibility. The idea that man possesses yet another body, of a finer substance, has a respectable tradition behind it.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless one will be inclined to raise serious objections to this conception. Let us review them calmly.

People will say "That is a *materialistic* conception". Yes, it would be a—dualistic—materialism, were it not true that in our theory the suprasubject or "pure I" is the profoundest existing reality. Materialism is the doctrine that matter is the profoundest reality. Our standpoint is, on the contrary, the purest idealism: the entire psycho-physical reality exists only as a less profound reality, if compared with the suprasubject, which has the whole psycho-physical reality before it as the general content of its consciousness (*Bewusstseinsinhalt überhaupt*).<sup>2</sup> This idealism is not changed

<sup>1</sup> Cf. W. H. C. Tenhaeff, *Beknopte Handleiding der Psychical Research*, I: *Het Austraallichaam*; G. R. S. Mead, *The Doctrine of the Subtle Body in Western Tradition*.

<sup>2</sup> Polak's requirement, the immanence of the object, remains satisfied in this way, no longer as regards the infrasubject, but, as a matter of fact, as regards the suprasubject.

if one attributes spatial and material qualities to the soul in the same way as to physical nature.

Secondly, the objection might be raised that the soul is actually *immaterial*. But we do not intend to question immateriality as such. It goes without saying that there exists, *e.g.*, a certain immaterial relationship between a triangle and a square, or, more generally, that there exists something like one big immaterial coherence with regard to contents, independent of eventual material realization. This is true of the signification of physical nature, of the difference, for example, between ideal and real triangles. Consequently, neither is the signification ("der Sinn") of *physical* nature material. Now one has to make the same distinction as regards psychical nature. The abstract *contents* of thought have to be distinguished from the real idea existing in a man's mind. Materiality and spatiality are only attributes of *the latter*, of real ideas. That big immaterial coherence or inner relationship between things is connected, in a way I cannot enlarge upon here, with the one suprasubject, which is real, but not material, so a distinction has to be made between the suprasubject or the immaterial spirit, and the psyche or the spatial and material soul.

Neither is it our intention to assign *only* material and spatial qualities to the soul, as, for a period, natural science used to attribute only form and matter, only geometrico-mechanical qualities to physical nature. Now, in the same way as *all* our sense-qualities, colors and sounds included, can be attributed to physical nature, so, after one has laid the origin of the *a priori* in the suprasubject, can many more qualities in addition to the material ones belong to the soul.

If the reader persists in finding this conception of the soul a bit queer<sup>1</sup>, since one does not, as a rule, experience the contents of one's consciousness as something that fills space and is material, I may remind him of the following. Particularly in connection with psychical research this conception is not so uncommon, as, with regard to the phenomena of this science, there is question time and again, on the one

<sup>1</sup> Wilhelm Haas expounds similar ideas in his *Die psychische Dingwelt*.

hand, of material effects of thoughts or of "ideoplastics", on the other hand of a sort of clairvoyance, wherein that which as a rule remains subjective and closed is undoubtedly perceived as something objective and more or less spatial. Aside from that, one can point out that in ordinary cases as well the objectification—the simultaneously spatial perception—of *physical* objects has to be learned somewhere or other. Every baby acquires this faculty somewhere; it quite probably does not possess this faculty from the outset. People born blind never acquire it, any more, probably, than do a group of lower animals. Conversely, all of us already possess with regard to the *psychical* a certain sense of touch: we handle our ideas and feelings. There is, then, nothing absurd in the suggestion of an extension of this handling into their spatial perception.

Curiously enough, it can be pointed out that Heymans has also taken a view which seems to support these conceptions. In his paper "Über die Anwendbarkeit des Energiebegriffes in der Psychologie",<sup>1</sup> Heymans answers the question whether energy can be attributed to the soul in the affirmative. As regards this psychical energy he elaborates from the data a set of notions, such as "potential energy", "energy of level", *et cetera*, of the contents of consciousness, and, in general, conservation of energy in this field as well. The resemblance to the potential energy of a physical body is obvious. Now Heymans, who is a psychic monist, means, of course, that only this psychical energy is real, while all physical energy is nothing but a reflection of psychical energy. He himself, however, points out the resemblance these results have to the physical law of gravitation, saying that "die Analogie mit räumlichen Bewegungsverhältnissen sich stets wieder aufdrängt" ("the analogy with spatial conditions of motion repeatedly forces itself upon the mind").<sup>2</sup> Now one should consider that this investigation of his into psychical energy is, in itself, just as independent of psychic monism as a theory of the relation of body and

<sup>1</sup> *Gesammelte Kleinere Schriften*, Vol. II, p. 319 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Loc. cit.* p. 340.

mind, as is the above-mentioned analogy (borrowed from Fechner) between the individual and the world-consciousness. Obviously, then, one can say that Heymans has elaborated here, quite apart from psychic monism as a psycho-physical parallelism, which involves many difficulties, a theory about the soul which fits beautifully into a conception simply attributing not only its own, but also spatial and material, qualities to the soul.

At this juncture, however, we must return to our point of departure: does parallelism or interactionism provide the more satisfactory philosophical background for psychical research? We have seen that parallelism certainly does not fulfill this requirement, as the happiest parallelistic theory, psychic monism, involves a great number of difficulties as regards psychical research. As far as psycho-physical interactionism is concerned, we may now fairly quickly arrive at a conclusion. As said in the beginning, James, Bergson and McDougall believed in a relation between psychical research and interactionism. This is only to be expected, as psychical research deals constantly with independent workings of the soul, either during man's life or during his eventual survival after death. Body and soul cannot, then, be as closely related as parallelism contends they are. But all interactionistic theories so far possess one great shortcoming: they are not in a position to explain the "influxus": the actual interaction between soul and body. The reason is that they still contain remnants of the old Cartesian dualism of soul and body: the soul is immaterial, the body is material; how can two such heterogeneous substances possibly act one on another? It is clear, however, that as soon as one draws the line between the immaterial and the material in another way, namely not between the psychical and the physical, but between the psychical and the One spirit or the suprasubject, then the heterogeneity of the psychical and the physical at once disappears to make way for an all-round homogeneity, by which the influxus suddenly ceases to be inconceivable.

This is no place to enter into all the details of such an

interactionism. Its probability has to be carefully compared with that of a theory of parallelism. It appears, then, that interactionism and not psychic monism supplies the simplest formula whereby the three laws in question can be explained: of psychical, of physical and of psycho-physical phenomena.<sup>1</sup> I may refer to my book for details on these matters. I would like to remark, however, that neither can the objections raised in connection with the closed causality of nature be raised against *this* interactionism: the soul also belongs to nature, and a transmission of energy can take place. For the rest I want to conclude my paper with the following: just as some rare phenomena like the attraction of rubbed amber and the convulsions of a dead frog's leg developed into the theory and practice of modern electricity, so the present investigation into psychic phenomena will, very likely, lead to big things. Psychical research has a brilliant future in store, but in view of that future development psychical research needs a fruitful philosophical background. In my opinion it wants, where the relation of soul and body is concerned, not a parallistic but an interactionistic theory, emphasizing psycho-physical homogeneity.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Tweeërlei Subjectiviteit*, §49.

# A Letter from England

BY DR. NANDOR FODOR

(*Research Officer, International Institute for Psychical Research*)

January, 1937

## UNUSUAL GHOST PHOTOGRAPH

I have visited a large number of haunted houses in the past few months. From an analysis of the testimonies collected on the spot, it was impossible not to conclude that a genuine disturbance had taken place. But I saw nothing of a ghostly nature, and the countless photographic plates which I exposed in the dark and by flashlight were found innocent of any ghostly shapes. It appears, however, that where I failed a professional photographer has succeeded in an astonishing degree.

In the issue of *Country Life* for December 26, 1936, an account is published by Indre Shira, of Indre Shira, Ltd., Court Photographers (London), of "The Ghost of Raynham Hall".\* The account is accompanied by a photograph of the main staircase of Raynham Hall, the ancestral seat of Marquis of Townshend in Norfolk. On the thirteenth step a transparent figure dressed in a cape is visible. It is descending the stairs and faces the photographers. There were two men at the bottom of the stairs, Mr. Indre Shira and Captain Provand, the Art Director of his firm. The extraordinary part of the story is that Mr. Indre Shira saw the ghost appear on the stairs. Captain Provand was under the black cloth, just getting ready, having already made one exposure. To quote Mr. Indre Shira:

"All at once, I detected an ethereal, veiled form coming slowly down the stairs. Rather excitedly, I called out sharply: 'Quick! Quick! There's something! Are you ready?' 'Yes,' the photographer replied and removed the cap from the lens. I pressed the trigger of the flashlight pistol."

Captain Provand was standing sidewise to the camera and, according to the account, removed the black cloth from his head only after the flash had been fired. He inquired the cause of the excitement and laughed at Mr. Indre Shira when told of the ghost. He offered Mr. Indre Shira a bet of five pounds that there would be nothing on the plate. Mr. Indre Shira took the bet and won.

The first psychical researcher to examine the negative was Mr.

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\* Editorial Note:—The same photograph appeared in this country in *Life*, and was discussed in our December issue (p. 373).

Harry Price. In an article which accompanies that of Mr. Indre Shira, he says:

"I will say at once that I was impressed. I was told a perfectly simple story: Mr. Indre Shira saw the apparition descending the stairs at the precise moment when Captain Provand's head was under the black cloth. A shout—and the cap was off and the flash-bulb fired, with the result which we now see. I could not shake their story, and I had no right to disbelieve them. Only collusion between the two men would account for the ghost if it is a fake. The negative is entirely innocent of any faking."

I can join my own testimony and that of Mr. Leon Isaac, the official photographer of the International Institute for Psychical Research, to this statement. But I was not satisfied with an examination of the negative alone. I am well acquainted with Lady Townshend, the mother of the present Marquis of Townshend, and I had a standing invitation to visit Raynham Hall and wait up for the ghost. Lady Townshend, in collaboration with Mrs. Maude Foulkes, has recently written a book, *True Ghost Stories*, to which I contributed the preface. In this book she tells the full story of the ghosts of Raynham Hall, amongst which the Brown Lady is the most prominent. This Brown Lady is said to be the shade of Dorothy Walpole, sister of Sir Robert Walpole who, according to tradition, died of starvation at Raynham Hall. Was the ethereal figure of Mr. Indre Shira the Brown Lady?

It was impossible to tell. But I decided to take a "shot" at it. I spent the week end of January 9th at Raynham Hall. I was accompanied by my friend Mr. Arthur Kingston, a famous camera-maker and the inventor of a synthetic lens which will revolutionize the photographic industry. We found that the height of the ghost on the photograph fits perfectly into human size. We took photographs in daylight and at night under identical conditions. We found nothing that could normally explain Mr. Indre Shira's result. But our plates only showed the empty stairs. No Brown Lady favored us. Perhaps she had not yet recovered from the shock the sudden flash must have given her; perhaps her coming is so erratic that the chance of her appearance at a time when cameras are exposed and flashlights are fired is infinitesimal.

At night I slept in the Monmouth room, which is haunted by the Red Cavalier, the tragic Duke of Monmouth. I had a camera with flashlight focused at the foot of the bed where he had been seen appearing, and waited, hopefully, in the pitch-dark room. Nothing came, but from above I heard strange noises that set me on the *qui vive*. Furniture was being rolled on castors, thumps, thuds and dull crashes came through the ceiling as if a one-legged booted man had been hopping about amidst pots and pans. The noises, with

slight intermissions, kept on all night. In the morning I inquired from the butler if anyone was living above me.

"Yes," he replied. "The old lady."

"Does she never sleep?"

"No, Sir, she is always on the move at night."

The old lady was a visitor, 89 years of age. At 12 o'clock, we left her in the sitting-room below, struggling with her income tax declaration. Now I remembered the footsteps which I heard previous to the ghostly noises. It was she, walking up the stairs at the back. Why should she move her furniture about at night? I cannot tell. Perhaps it is a whim, perhaps it was her sense of humor, knowing that a ghost-hunter was sleeping below.

### *A VALUABLE EXPERIENCE*

I said before that my photographic plates, exposed in haunted houses, were always innocent of any ghostly shapes. This is not quite accurate. Recently, at Carshalton, I had obtained a strange cloud over a chair which was left empty for the ghost. I was thrilled with it, but, alas, not for very long.

With a man who claimed telekinetic power, I had photographed, on three separate occasions, with the aid of a quartz lens, strange clouds which three glass-lens cameras failed to register. The effect might have been due to some biological radiation in the ultra-violet range. I used infra-red plates, which are sensitive to ultra-violet also. The cameras were opened in the dark and the photographs were taken by flashlight. I supposed that the cloud, through the quartz lens, impressed the plate before the flash came.

It was, however, in due course discovered that on two occasions out of three the clouds showed exactly the same pattern. This re-directed suspicion to the camera. After considerable testing, the source of error was discovered.

My quartz lens camera is fitted with wooden slides. The wood transmits infra-red. My slides were piled up on the table. The top one was exposed to electric light. The infra-red of the electric bulb penetrated the wood and was partially stopped by the thickness of the coat of paint on the underside of the slide. This caused the spot-like effect which I took for clouds.

Thus something which appeared to be a wonderful finding went up into thin air. It was a valuable lesson.

### *I SHOOT AN INFRA-RED FILM*

Incidentally, it was the strangeness of these "clouds" that lent support to the telekinetic claim of an American business-man whom I have known for two years. He said that he was able to pluck

flowers out of a vase from a distance without contact by some strange power which he possessed. His demonstration was quite impressive, as it was accompanied by all the characteristic symptoms of mediumistic phenomena. I took many photographs. I caught him once in fraud but he pleaded that he was drunk that night, and swore that he would do the feat under any conditions. So I made arrangements for an infra-red cinema film at the Institute. I secured an entirely new equipment with which, for the first time in infra-red cinematography, I was able to cover a circle of eight feet diameter.

The demonstration and the film were a wonderful success. A white carnation jumped out of a vase; and the analysis of the film blocks showed plenty of strange features difficult to fit in with any normal explanation. Alas again, there *was* a very simple one. Information has reached me that my "medium" has been caught elsewhere. He manipulated the flowers with a thread and was so drunk that he left the evidence behind. Acting on this information, I uncovered the whole seamy story. The man was a rogue. His own wife rung me up on the telephone and gave him away. She said that she could not keep a spool of black cotton thread at home. Her husband always takes them for "psychic" demonstrations. For two days there were scenes and confrontations in my flat in which passion ran high. My "friend" swore by his mother's life and health that he was genuine. Then, gradually, he broke down and confessed.

His explanation fitted in perfectly with the apparently supernormal features of the flower-levitation at the Institute. He came in a dark suit, with a dark tie. He has a black thread attached to the button of his right sleeve and had it up inside his sleeve looped over a match. Retiring into a comparatively dark corner, he pulled down the match and slipped the loop over the wrist of the left hand. He stood now behind the flower and with one forward sweep caught hold of the biggest carnation and threw it up in the air. Then stretching his arms wide apart he snapped the thread and subsequently ate the loose ends.

The film did not show the black thread as the camera was twenty-two feet away. A close-up would have shown it. The lesson is that in any similar demonstration it is insufficient to use one cine-camera. You must have two: which of course will double the expense of a costly experiment.

### *THE TALKING MONGOOSE*

The greatest psychic mystery of England is the talking mongoose. It is still going strong. Recently I had a visit from "Mr. Northwood" (the pseudonym used in Mr. Price's book, *The Haunting of Cashen's Gap*), the godfather of Voirrey Irving, the daughter of the farmer

in whose house the mongoose took up its abode. He showed me his correspondence with Irving and the photographs of "Gef". The story which unfolds in this correspondence is an incredible one. "Mr. Northwood" has known Irving for thirty years and vouches for him as a singularly honest man with plenty of common sense. Indeed, his letters bear witness to this. Here is one of the very latest, dated January 8th, 1937:

"Towards the end of next week, I hope to be able to send you an enlarged snap of Gef, taken on Sunday last, on the top of a five-barred gate at Doarlish Cashen. On no account part with it. Time and time again in the past nine months Voirrey has been trying to secure a good clear snap, and has at last got one after countless disappointments, to say nothing of the expense of films and developments.

"Now for a conundrum for the sceptics. If Gef is a fake, or does not exist, let the sceptics explain why, if they can, his appearance on the photograph, and furthermore how, if Gef could not talk, would have Voirrey known exactly where to go and snap him when she left the house had Gef not said 'I will be taken on the gate up the road'? She is not carrying him about with her like a lap dog.

"Gef is extremely small, about half his apparent bulk, with long fluffy hair, light yellow in color, and this particular snap shows a line of darker fur running down the centre of the back. There is also a similar line on both sides, running from the shoulder in a parallel line to the one down on the back. The profile shows a very long, sharp face, but Voirrey says that the end of his nose is flattened like a pig's. On the snap, Gef's tail is curled up over his back like a squirrel's.

"Should I at any time write my experiences, yours would be included as the most valuable of all, as the demonstration you had stands out as the most unique of any, entirely different from the three separate visits of Capt. X. in the manner in which it was given: in broad daylight when you, Voirrey and myself were all at the one table and in full view all the time for 2½ hours and Gef speaking to you direct (without our intervention) from different parts of the house, which never happened before, nor since. We cannot get him to do this even for ourselves when entirely alone. (He is now listening and watching everything.)

"One thing he does, and that is killing rabbits for us, his total now being 146. Of this 80 have been killed this winter, some of them weighing 4½ lbs."

I have seen letters from Irving during the writing of which Gef, the inquisitive mongoose, was not satisfied by listening and watching. He called out: "Read it out, you big-headed gnome." In the house itself, it is impossible to speak, even in whisper, without Gef's overhearing. He is fairly civil but if he is contradicted, he does not

hesitate to call "Jimmie" (James Irving) "a dirty liar". He calls Mrs. Irving "Maggie". Sometimes he is as docile and takes scoldings like a child. His linguistic attainments are quite amazing. Irving knows a little of Manx. He thought that he could floor Gef with it. He asked for the name of the various colors in Manx. Gef gave them all, except "blue". He did not know that. "Now", argues Irving, "if he had been reading my mind he would have known, as I know the Manx for 'blue'."

### *THIEF-CATCHING BY WITCHCRAFT*

In the December 31st issue of *East Africa*, London, the journal of the African Missions of the White Fathers, a remarkable story is told by Father Lesueur of an incident in savage witchcraft which occurred in July, 1918, at Mwembe, in Portuguese East Africa, about halfway between Nyasa and the Indian Ocean. The story concerns the disappearance from the stores of a large bale of goods, valued at twenty pounds. The three native servants responsible denied all knowledge and proposed to bring a sorcerer to find the thief.

"He was a man of medium height and slim build, looked intelligent, his most remarkable feature being his eyes, which certainly had an uncanny gleam. Altogether the appearance fitted the rôle, and one could imagine how he might hypnotize a frightened native.

"At the scene of the theft he put an antelope's horn on his head, arranging it so that the point stuck out over his forehead, and to the point he fastened a few feathers. He took out of his bag a little coronet made of plaited string and adorned with all kinds of animals' claws. Inside this coronet was a similar one, slightly smaller, and decorated with animals' teeth.

"He fastened the whole affair on a cord and slung it over his right shoulder. Then he armed himself with a bamboo about two inches thick and four and a half feet long. In the middle of the bamboo was a hole into which he inserted a potion of his own making.

"With his right hand he grasped a gourd in which were a few pebbles, and shook it violently so that it produced a sound like a bell; at the same time he began a chant in a droning, sing-song voice: 'Kalondola, katandiza; kalondola, katandiza; kalondola, Meiza' (Guide, help; guide, help; guide Meiza). Meiza was his name.

"The sorcerer had brought a couple of acolytes with him. They grasped one end of the bamboo; the other end was left trailing on the ground. It began to knock the ground, then gave a sudden twist and seemed to drag the acolytes round the shed. The sorcerer followed, apparently in no hurry and singing steadily 'Kalondola katandiza'.

"The bamboo led the party all round the shed and back to the spot whence it had started. The sorcerer announced that the thief was not

there; he was a stranger. Again he began his melancholy chant; presently the bamboo (still in the hands of the acolytes) was seen to be tracing lines and circles in the dust. The sorcerer studied these and said: 'The thief went towards the west; there will be two rivers to cross before we reach his village'. He rang the bell and repeated his refrain.

"Suddenly the bamboo went off at a great pace, the end touching the earth in front and leaving a visible trace. Now and then it rose and remained parallel with the ground. After a while they came to a river, and a little further on a second river. They reached a spot where two paths met. The bamboo halted and began to knock on the ground.

"'The bamboo has halted,' he said, 'probably because the thief buried some remedy here to prevent those who might pursue him from travelling further'. They dug and found an antelope's horn. The sorcerer, saying he would substitute a more powerful remedy, took out of his bag a small bottle-shaped gourd, poured a remedy into it, and buried it at the spot where the horn was found.

"'Now we can continue,' he said. Off went the bamboo until they came to a small village. It went straight to a hut in front of which a man was sitting. 'That is the thief', said the sorcerer.

"The bamboo led them into the house and straight to a bed made of reeds. The bed was knocked over, and the bamboo tapped on the ground. 'Dig here', said the sorcerer. A foot below the surface they found the bale. They brought it back to me at Mwembe. It was the one which had been stolen.

"The thief confessed".

This is a remarkable story because it shows all the elements of mediumistic practice. The sorcerer prays to his guides and the bamboo appears to move in the same manner as the tipping table under the hand of the sitters. It is, of course, easy to cast doubt on the story by postulating that the sorcerer knew all along who the thief was and found the opportunity a welcome one to lay him by the heels by sham magic. One should, however, credit Father Lesueur, who tells the story, with enough common sense to know whether the theft and the identity of the thief could have been normally known. The thief certainly would not have advertized it, and if the natives guarding the stores were not in complicity with him one fails to see how the sorcerer could have been acquainted with the facts. On the other hand, as soon as we look at the sorcerer as a medium, the story shows little of the extraordinary. Only the setting and the methods are weird, but spirit guidance and physical phenomena stand out plainly as the principal features.

## Book Review

THE HAUNTED OMNIBUS edited by Alexander Laing. New York. Farrar and Rinehart. 848 pp. \$2.75.

In a large but easily manageable book, with clear type and wide margins, Mr. Alexander Laing has brought together forty-one short stories on ghostly themes, one full length novel by Wilkie Collins, and a story by A. E. Coppard which has nothing whatever to do with the hereafter or the supernatural but which the editor, rather quaintly, included because it was his own favorite of all short stories.

The novel by Wilkie Collins can be dismissed without much ado. *The Haunted Hotel* was never a good book, and Mr. Laing's appeal to us to "make fair allowances . . . for certain conventions of the mid-Victorian period", while strategic, can hardly blind any reader of *The Moonstone* to the faults in this minor piece. Collins was too good a novel-writer at his best to be remembered by this failure; and not even the slight and unconvincing amount of supernatural matter in the book quite justifies its presence in a book from which so many excellent ghost stories are absent.

For, although the book is amusing, it is by no means a perfect anthology. There is very little reason, for instance, for our having to find in it, once more, W. W. Jacobs' *The Monkey's Paw*, Stevenson's *Markheim*, Maupassant's *The Horla* or Du Bose Heyward's *The Half Pint Flask*. These are not only easily accessible to everyone, but the first three turn up in volume after volume of short story anthologies which have no primary concern for the supernatural.

Two stories by M. R. James, a little known tale by F. Marion Crawford, *The Screaming Skull*, and Edith Wharton's *Afterward* are all excellent, and well chosen, though James has written better and ghostlier stories than the two which Mr. Laing has chosen. Still, fanciers of the best in supernatural stories undoubtedly know the omnibus of M. R. James' own tales, a book unsurpassed in its field: and perhaps those who read *Casting The Runes* and *The Treasure of Abbot Thomas* for the first time here will realize what a treat there is in store for them.

Arthur Machen is represented by *The White People*, one of the best of those stories of his which mingle the present with the Druidic past of England; Algernon Blackwood's offering is the too-familiar *The Wendigo*: "Saki" has one real horror story, in *Laura*, and that most amusing of pseudo-ghost stories, *The Open Window*. For the rest, Mr. Laing has ranged from a page from Pliny's letters through *The Panchatantra* and *The Arabian Nights* up to the extremely modern and horrifying story by Mr. John Collier, *Green Thoughts*. He sandwiches these offerings together with many of the best hits

from old John Aubrey's *Miscellanies*, Browne's *Urn Burial*, and *Religio Medici*.

It is perhaps ungracious to wish that some compiler of such books would, instead of giving us well known tales over and over, go back and find such a little read and really excellent book of stories as *The Wind in the Rose Bush*, in which Mary E. Wilkins Freeman told some New England ghost stories that are hard to surpass; or that E. F. Benson might be represented, since he is known, in this country at least, mainly for his books of social comedy and contemporary history; or that that master of the uncanny, Walter de la Mare, might be considered an absolute necessity—although, let it be said quickly, he should not be represented once more by *Seaton's Aunt*.

A book such as this can hardly fail to be fascinating; yet the entire effect of the book is rather haphazard and random. It is no surprise, turning back to the foreword after the conclusion, to read again that "the following stories, then, have been gathered together by an unbeliever." It is the shiver pure and simple that these stories go after; and the shiver is, after all, only one, and not the most important, effect of a story of the supernatural. It is surprising to find how often, indeed, the desired chill and quiver are absent here, even when the author of the individual piece has been out for them before and beyond every other aim. The necessary requirements for producing at least temporary credulity are too often absent, and we are presented instead with mere statement. At the worst we get mere stories of mental disintegration, like Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Yellow Wallpaper* and Gertrude Atherton's *The Foghorn*. When what might be called the supernatural verities are observed, however, we have such masterly tales as M. R. James' and May Sinclair's.

The book is illustrated with woodcuts by Lynd Ward. Once more the intention to horrify and chill overshoots the mark. Those who would like to see how ghastly here, as elsewhere, intelligent understatement can be, are recommended, once more, to look up *The Wind in the Rose Bush*. Everyone will have seen these New England types at some time in his life; how did Peter Newell, by drawing a mere rigidity of facial-muscles and showing his creatures' pallor, manage to be at once commonplace and blood-curdling?

Still, *The Haunted Omnibus*, for those who are not too captious about their ghost stories, and who do not mind their horror neat, will provide many an hour's amusement.

D.R.G.

# THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

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### Have We Indisputable Evidence of Survival?

BY E. B. GIBBES

The November number of the JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH contained an article by me on the mediumship of Geraldine Cummins. I gave a résumé of the development of her automatic writing since our association began. In addition to this, I recorded some personal observations made by the two unseen intelligences who purport to have communicated to her five published psychic books. As previously mentioned these are *The Scripts of Cleophas*, *Paul in Athens*, *The Great Days of Ephesus*, *The Road to Immortality* and *Beyond Human Personality*.

It may now be of interest to give full details of an episode only briefly touched on in the JOURNAL (p. 344), in which the identity of an unknown communicator was eventually established and ultimately acknowledged by his widow.

This case completely eliminates the hypothesis of thought-transference from those present to the automatist, and of mind-reading on her part from those around her. The information given, and subsequently confirmed, was certainly not in our minds *or even in the minds of anyone known to us*. This is an important point. The theory of subconscious intervention does not apply, neither can the events here recorded be attributed to unconscious clairvoy-

ance; for there was no link between the relatives of the deceased man and Miss Cummins. To the question of telepathy from an outside source, I refer later.

Incidentally, this case illustrates how the *conscious* and not the subconscious mind of the sensitive intervened and played havoc, for a time, with what would seem to be indisputable evidence of survival.

As stated in my previous article, Miss Cummins and I became acquainted at the end of 1923, and soon started a series of experiments in automatism. For the first fifteen months or so communications of a varied kind were received. On November 18, 1924, we were invited to the house of Captain and Mrs. R. They were friends of mine; Miss Cummins had not met them. They were anxious to see what results would be obtained from her association with them. She prepared herself for writing as usual and after a few moments her control, "Astor", wrote as follows:

Astor is here. There is someone here newly dead, I think, anxious to get a message through. He has only just passed over and has still his astral envelope about him.

E.B.G. Please ask him to speak. [The writing changed.]

Is this the earth? How queer. I thought I was dead. Is my wife there?

E.B.G. We don't know who you are.

Surely you see me?

E.B.G. No, we can't.

Then perhaps if I tell you who I am, you will tell my wife I am alive.

E.B.G. Yes, please tell us who you are.

Henry, my Christian name.

E.B.G. That isn't sufficient.

Try and listen now.

[Here the pencil hesitated a little, making only a tiny movement. Then the following was written and underlined.]

Bois. Horswich. Did you get my name?

E.B.G. Yes, that is clear.

The place I lived in. Write to Highfield, my wife lives there.

E.B.G. I wonder if we have your name correctly?

Yes, Henry Bois, Bois.

[The pencil then gyrated as if there were some difficulty and again the word "Bois" was written.]

E.B.G. All right, your name is clear. I will try to trace you at that address.

Yes, yes. Horswich. Tell her that I am alive. I know how she is grieving. Tell my wife her husband will be watching for her and give her my love. I am in dimness but don't tell her that. I feel this is only the beginning. I have faith. I know I shall find Heaven and my God eventually.

E.B.G. I don't know where this place is that you mention but I will try to trace it.

England. Horswich. It's not a foreign name. I am English.

E.B.G. We would like now to see if there is anyone else here who would care to speak so I must ask you to come again.

Yes, please let me come again. I am so relieved to feel the earth has not stopped. I thought everything had stopped at first. Good-bye.

It was necessary to send this communicator away at this juncture, for Captain and Mrs. R. were getting very bored. They had anticipated conversations with their friends. Therefore we transferred to an improvised ouija-board at which Captain and Mrs. R. often sat. The first entity who then claimed to spell out some remarks was F. W. H. Mvers.\* None present was acquainted with him. After a while I asked Astor to call someone connected with our friends and the communication proceeded on other lines.

Now it seemed apparent that some obstruction checked the writing of the name "Bois". But as the communication of names is a well-known stumbling-block in psychical research, I attached no especial importance to it. Later it will be shown that this hindrance was caused by a conflict taking place in the mind of the automatist. Considerable delay in proving the identity of this communicator thereby resulted.

When I told Miss Cummins of the message from Henry Bois, she at once remarked that it must be the invention of her subconscious mind. She stated that she knew a certain Mr. Henry Bois then living in India. Therefore she assumed

\* See *The Road to Immortality* p. 137-8.

the whole message to be fictitious. Nevertheless, I consulted a railway guide book and discovered that a town of the name of Horswich existed in Cheshire.\* So far as we could remember, neither she nor I had ever heard of it. I wrote to the postmaster. On November 28th he replied that he "had made enquiries from all the postmen in the district but was sorry he could not help me to find Mr. Henry Bois". For the time I let it go at that, believing that dramatization by the subconscious mind accounted for what had been written.

On December 13th following, Miss Cummins and I were experimenting at the ouija-board. She was blindfolded. I was watching and recording the words spelt out. At first the communication consisted of a few disjointed remarks from Astor expressing annoyance at the bandage. Then followed the words:

Let me talk. Henry Bois. My wife. Help me. Write pencil.

E.B.G. If you are Henry Bois, can you give me the name of a place you know?

Horswich.

E.B.G. I want the name of the house or street.

Highfield. Message, my wife, love.

The above was slowly spelt out. I then removed the scarf from the eyes of the automatist and the communication proceeded rapidly.

Give my wife my love, give it to her, will you please?

E.B.G. If I can. Tell me if you remember when you died?

November. Will you give my message? My love and I am alive. Tell her that.

E.B.G. I will if I can find the right address.

Highfield, Highfield Road.

E.B.G. Is your name really Henry Bois?

Yes, Bois.

E.B.G. I wrote to Horswich in Cheshire. Is that right?

Horswich, Scotland. I am confused. Please find my wife. Let her know I am alive. She thinks I am dead. I am not dead at all. I feel so clear now. My memory is muddled still but I can think

\* For obvious reasons I have changed the name of the town and the county in England.

and I have no pain at all. She may not believe or consider it is really true. How did I succeed in getting back to earth? I don't really grasp what this means. I saw you in a whirl of mist. It is clearer tonight.

E.B.G. You remember speaking to us on a previous occasion?

A lot of shapes were near me then. But when I saw the light I went straight for it. I didn't care. I wasn't frightened. I just wanted light to see—to know what had happened.

This communicator then drifted away. Now the word "Scotland" came as a surprise. On again referring to the railway time-table, I discovered the existence of a town of the name of *Horswick* in Scotland. This I had not previously noticed. I delayed applying there for a few days. Strangely enough, on December 17th I received voluntary information from the postmaster at *Horswick*, Scotland. Referring to my enquiry for the name of Bois, he informed me that a "Mr. and Mrs. *Boyce*" lived at "———" Heathfield Road, near *Horswick*, Scotland.

It is a curious circumstance that the postmaster at *Horswick* should have spontaneously written from that town giving me a similar name and address to that which I was seeking, *four days after Henry Bois had himself communicated the word "Scotland" on the ouija-board*. Presumably my application to *Horswick* had been forwarded to *Horswick*.

Subsequent enquiries at *Horswick*, however, elicited a curt reply to the effect that their name was not *Boyce* or *Bois* but *Boyes* and that "they had never known a *Henry* in the family". It appeared that I was once more on a false trail. As at that time we were very much occupied with other affairs, I put the whole matter aside. As a result, however, of further study of the phenomena of supernormal writing, it occurred to me, some months later, that, if communications were made to some extent phonetically, misinterpretation might have taken place in the mind of the automatist owing to her conscious connection with the name of *Bois*. If this were so, it was quite possible that the name in the automatic script should have been spelt *Boyce* and not

*Bois*, the pronunciation of these two words being the same.

Therefore, on September 13, 1925, I again applied to the postmaster at Horswich, Cheshire, asking if Mr. Henry Boyce lived in any house or road by the name of Highfield. He replied the next day, stating that a "Mr. H. Boyce lived at 2 Highfield Road, Horswich". The following day I wrote to that address asking for information concerning him. The *widow* of Henry Boyce answered by return saying that her husband of that name had died there on November 13, 1924. The problem was solved.

At this point I must diverge in order to recount what might be called a "side-light" on the case. I have referred to the fact that F. W. H. Myers, the well-known investigator of psychical research and one of the founders of the London S.P.R., purported to write on the occasion when Miss Cummins and I visited Captain and Mrs. R. Thinking it might be of interest to follow up this lead, on December 1st I asked Astor if he could call this entity. He did so. Replying to my query as to whether he had spoken to us on a previous occasion, Frederic Myers wrote:

I tried to speak through the old man but it was very confusing. Someone else was trying to talk too, who said he had not been able to give you his name properly, or something like that. Anyway, I tried to get my message through in spite of him and the other influences.

Now this was a possibility which had occurred to neither of us. We had completely turned down the communication purporting to come from Henry Bois as being a flagrant example of subconscious invention. Moreover, the postmaster had stated that he could not trace this individual. The information, therefore, given by Myers was entirely opposed to the ideas in our minds.

In looking back, I blame myself for my utter stupidity in not seriously considering the important inference in Myers's remark. But at that time, I was not an experienced student of psychical research, and Frederic Myers soon began writing many things of interest; so I paid no attention to his

valuable hint. In those days I was inclined to attribute all such mental phenomena to the subconscious and telepathic theories.

Now, after nearly fifteen years close investigation of the various forms of Geraldine Cummins's mediumship, I have come to the conclusion that these theories play a very minor part—so far as she is concerned—in communication between the living and the so-called dead. In all I have recorded above and in what follows, I fail to see any indication of telepathy, thought-reading, subconscious invention or intervention. It is easy to speculate on the probability of the widow's thoughts being picked up by Miss Cummins while in a condition of light trance. But if this case were thoroughly analysed, taking in connection with it the spontaneous remark of F. W. H. Myers, it would be acknowledged, I think, that thought-transference in any form from any living person is out of the question. The mere contents of the insistent message from Henry Boyce seem to put these theories beyond all reasonable possibility. The widow of this individual, or anyone connected with him, would hardly have formulated such remarks and ejected them into space at the precise moment when Miss Cummins and I were holding a sitting. Or if the message be assigned to latent telepathy, it is impossible to believe that the sensitive would be able to select, out of the millions floating around, such appropriate thoughts as would fit this hypothetical communicator.

Also, it seems hardly probable that the mind of the psychic would wander into the mind of a woman unknown to her who lived 190 miles away, and gather the fact that her late husband (among other things) refused to admit that he was "dead". For it subsequently transpired that the widow declined to believe in the continued existence of her husband. It seems reasonable therefore to postulate that the communications purporting to come from Henry Boyce can only be accounted for by the spirit hypothesis. What is more natural than that this discarnate entity actually saw Miss

Cummins's psychic "light" and "went straight for it"? Under difficult conditions he identified himself giving his name and address.

What followed seems quite comprehensible. Hearing that his first effort had failed, and, in his anxiety to get a message through to his wife, accidentally, as it were, he recollected the name of the other town in Scotland. In a flash, his thought was communicated to the brain of the sensitive. In fact, he would seem to confirm this view for he quickly followed up the word "Scotland" by the remark that he was "confused". Probably he realized this slip but was powerless to arrest its passage. This may be an example of *unintentional thought-transference* (from the dead to the living). It may often account for errors for which the intermediary or medium gets the blame.

An unexpected corroboration of this surmise would seem to have occurred under similar conditions in a case recorded in the *Proceedings of the S.P.R.* (London) for May, 1929, p. 288. In this case—a most remarkable one—the alleged communicator, Margaret Veley, remarks: "I suddenly woke up and found myself here. I didn't choose to come, and I felt as if I had some vague control over your brains and some of the things I thought of were written." On p. 330 Margaret Veley also remarks: "You have got my ideas, but hardly the form that I should have given them."

There are two other instances in the automatic writings of Geraldine Cummins in which the communicator has been conscious of the fact that inaccuracies have crept into the script. One came from an entity described by the initials "T.M." This very evidential case is fully reported in *Psychic Science*, (The Quarterly Transactions of the British College of Psychic Science), for October, 1935. He wrote: "I see the words coming on a glass as I think the thought they embody. But now and then wrong words get in and the thought is not always completed just exactly as I think it. I fancy I am a beginner who does not yet understand his apparatus."

The second example comes in an automatic script published for the first time in *The Occult Review* for January, 1937. It purports to have been written (also in November, 1924), by one of the explorers who lost their lives in a vain attempt to reach the summit of Mount Everest. He wrote: "You see, I didn't expect to find myself without a body and I am rather lonely and confused. The queerest things come into my mind. Even as I write this, the sentences run away from me and only some of my words get in."

I now turn to further evidence of the survival of Henry Boyce. In the spring of 1925 Miss Cummins began writing *The Scripts of Cleophas*. This being so, we ceased all other work. As stated, I corresponded with the postmaster at Horswick in September of that year. Miss Cummins was in Ireland and *knew nothing of my renewed quest for the widow of Henry Boyce*. She was aware of the fact that I had failed to trace him in England or in Scotland. Many matters—personal and otherwise—were crowding into her life and she gave little thought to anything that was not of apparent consequence. However, on her return from Ireland, I arranged to have a sitting with her. She had no idea as to whom I was seeking and, on October 8, 1925, we again got into touch with Henry Boyce.

Astor is here.

E.B.G. Do you remember a stranger who spoke some time ago named Henry Boyce? Could you get him to speak to us again? He spoke twice before.

Wait. It will be difficult but I will try.

[There was a pause of less than a minute and the handwriting changed from Astor's vigorous caligraphy to something rather faint.]

A queer place this, all misty. I am puzzled. Is any friend of mine here? I know now that this light of yours means the world and the people living in it. I think I spoke to you before but my memory has all gone to pieces—I mean of the earth. I am quite sane and clear in my mind, in fact, I can think a hundred-fold quicker than when I was alive. But you human beings are just like stone effigies to me now, so cold and grey and silent.

E.B.G. I wonder if you are the same person who spoke to us before.

I am called Henry Boyce. You are a stranger to me. But in that time of terror just after my death, your face appeared to me in this mist and I thanked God for it.\*

E.B.G. Well, tell us something about yourself.

I was really retired from my business. I mean I hadn't been very fit for it for some time—my illness made me confused. Before the end, I entered into a curious time in which I seemed to be always awake, lying there in blinding light, seeing pictures of my life all the time from the very beginning. They wouldn't stop coming—that was what was so maddening about them.

E.B.G. Were you ill for long before you died?

I wasn't ill for very long. I was ailing before anyone knew for a while but I wouldn't tell. It didn't seem a matter for alarm and I was never a great talker. My heart was not in good condition. It seemed, even to me, before I saw a doctor, to be irregular.

E.B.G. Was that the cause of your passing over?

It was merely a complication, there were other causes. I think if my heart had been stronger I wouldn't have gone out as I did.

E.B.G. Can you tell us what your profession or business was?

My profession? Oh, handling money. I was buying and selling for a good part of my life and I have pulled off a thing or two in my time but it is all a bit blurred now. You would be surprised to learn that I remember my childhood best. I remember being brought up very strictly and the little Highlander my mother made of me. The kilt I didn't like a bit but it was the fashion in those days. Queen Victoria made it popular. I got into fearful trouble for fighting another boy when I had this on. It was my Sunday best. Curious the way you call up these memories for me.

E.B.G. Do you remember anything of your later life?

I remember things in a tangle. Listen and I will try. I was a serious man and I did not care for new-fangled ideas. I didn't believe in going with the times, I preferred that the times should go with me.

E.B.G. Can you tell us anything of your relatives?

Well, you are a stranger. I wonder whether you know my wife. If you do, I can understand your questioning me.

E.B.G. That is just what I want to ask you about, if you can tell us some more?

I understand that you do not know her. I can only tell you ours was a rare connection. We were devoted to each other though we never said very much—we were not taken that way. She didn't

\* This is the first time anyone has ever thanked God for the sight of my face!

know how much I loved her. If you ever meet her tell her this. That is all I care about. You seem to be able to get in touch with people. I am losing grip now, good night.

The writing had become very faint and after a short pause Astor wrote as follows:

He slipped away. He was a person of no great interest I think. He seemed not to have lived to be very old. I think he must have died in the fifties, at least, he seemed not to have reached the ripeness of spirit which we associate with those who lived to see seventy years and more.

E.B.G. Can you describe him.

He seems to have been about medium height on earth. He had quite a pleasing appearance. I think he was dark when he was alive, but he was dim to me. At any rate, his hair had changed color before he died.

It will be seen that it was somewhat difficult to formulate a letter to the widow enquiring as to the accuracy of these details, yet obtain an answer without explaining my reason for so doing. Even when intense love exists between parties concerned, the idea that the dead may possibly be alive appears distasteful to many. I feared a rebuff before securing the hoped for corroboration from the widow.

On the following day, therefore, I wrote to Mrs. Boyce enumerating various remarks and saying I was anxious to trace someone answering to that description. I made the letter a friendly one. After four days, the widow replied—guardedly asking my reasons for applying to her. Was she to get any benefit from it or was I? For, she said, "all the questions could be replied to". On October 14th I wrote again assuring her that my efforts were entirely disinterested, giving her my bankers' reference! The following is an unedited copy of her letter.

2 Highland Road, Horswich.  
Oct. 15th, 1925.

Dear Madam,

In reply to your letter of Oct. 14th. You will quite understand why I wanted to know who I was answering your questions to, about one whom I dearly loved and have a great respect to his memory.

My husband was a great sufferer from Arthritis he was ailing two years, and kept on going to business, he was not fit to go, but he would not give in, he walked with the help of a stick for a long time, and the last two weeks he went to business, I had to go with him to help him to walk, then I had to go to help him home again in the evening, he started out one Monday morning and only got a few yards down the road, he could not walk any further, I had to get him back home, and he never went to business again, it crippled him up so much, that I had everything to do for him for eight years, he had a merlin chair for the house and when the weather was fit, he went out in a bath chair, he was suffering ten years and bore it all very patiently never giving up. On Nov. 10th 1924 he was not very well so I called in the Dr. and he told me it was a Gastric Ulcer that had burst in the stomach, and he gradually went worse, and died three days after, Nov. 13th 1924. he was 55 years of age when he died.

I cannot say he was a great talker, but he was a great reader, and enjoyed a good conversation with anyone, and would talk on most subjects, he was not a very serious man and did not care altogether for some of the new ideas, he was medium height, dark, and of a very pleasing appearance, I do not know that he ever wore Highland Kilts, but as a boy he wore velvet suits.

I am anxiously waiting for a reply to these questions, to know if I am the right person you are seeking.

Yours faithfully,

— —. BOYCE.

I replied to the above gently informing her that I thought I had received a message from her dead husband. To this letter she vouchsafed no reply. I fear she was disappointed.

Now there are many points in the document printed above which corroborate statements made in the script-writing of October 8th. For instance:

*Astor.* (Nov. 18, 1924.) There is one here newly dead. . . . (H. B. "November").

*Mrs. B.* He died on November 13th, 1924.

I think he must have died in the fifties. . . .

He was fifty-five years of age when he died.

He seems to have been about medium height . . . he was dark

He was of medium height and dark.

. . .

*H. B.* I was really retired from

*Mrs. B.* He was ailing for two

my business, I mean I hadn't been fit for it for some time . . .

I wasn't ill for very long, I was ailing before anyone knew, but I wouldn't tell . . . and

I was never a great talker, I was a serious man and did not care for new fangled ideas.

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On November 10th he was not very well. I called in the doctor who told me it was a gastric ulcer that had burst. He died three days after.

I cannot say he was a great talker but he was a great reader and could talk on most subjects. He was not a very serious man but he did not care for new ideas.

In his first communication Henry Boyce seemed anxious his wife should know that he was in no pain. As he had suffered from arthritis for a number of years, it is probable that he would still be very conscious of this memory and would wish to comfort his wife in that respect. He might not have been aware of the actual cause of his death. My question as to his being a serious man was probably misunderstood by Mrs. Boyce. Anyone who is a great reader and can talk on most subjects would surely be somewhat serious-minded. It will be noted that she remarked that I was enquiring "about someone whom I dearly loved". Henry Boyce says they "were devoted to each other". As I received no reply to my letter explaining my reason for tracing her, it would seem that she unconsciously endorsed her husband's doubts concerning her ability to believe in his survival of bodily death.

When I enquired for information from the widow, I worded my letter in a manner which might have induced her to misrepresent him in order to proclaim her relationship to the deceased man. It will be seen that she honestly disagrees with the suggestion that he was a great talker and owns that she does not know if he wore a kilt as a child. Obviously she realized that if she had not told the truth it was easy to ascertain the correct facts about her husband.

I must now revert to the blindfold sitting of December 13th, 1924. After Henry Boyce had written the word "November" as being the month in which he died, he added the word "Times." I asked if he meant the newspaper? He replied "Yes", and then hurried on to give the message for his wife. As the name and address given proved untraceable, I did not then trouble to apply to this newspaper. When, however, the mystery had been solved, I wrote to the offices of *The Times*, and received the following reply:

27th September, 1925.

Dear Sir,

I am asked to acknowledge your letter of September 25, but to say that no death announcement or obituary notice can be traced in *The Times* during November 1924 in the name of Boyce.

Yours faithfully,

The inadvertent reference to *The Times* may again be explained as unintentional thought-transference. The anxiety to get through some notification of his continued existence is very apparent in these communications, and it is probable that Boyce caught at any straw which he thought might assist in the matter. That his death might have been reported may have occurred to him, and, as already suggested, the *thought* of *The Times* slipped accidentally through to the trance-writer's brain.

As a final possibility I considered that some mention of his death might have appeared in local papers. To these, perhaps, the automatist had had access—either normally or super-normally. Therefore I now wrote to *The Manchester Guardian* and to the four other principal newspapers published in the town in which Boyce had lived. *None of these was called "The Times"*. Only the editor of *The Manchester Guardian* replied to my enquiry and that was again in the negative. Even if there had been any notice in one of these other papers, such details as had been communicated would not have been published. Moreover, it will be evident, from the illiterate character of the let-

ter received from Mrs. Boyce, that her husband was hardly the type of man who would have an obituary notice in a newspaper.

From the above, not one but many facts emerge which could not conceivably have come from any source but the discernate mind of a man who was on earth known as Henry Boyce. He gave his name and an address in a provincial town which neither Miss Cummins nor I had ever visited. In addition to this he gave details of a personal character cognizance of which it is impossible to assign to any of the well-worn scientific causes. In the last communication (October 8th) the name appears correctly spelt. This, I think, can be ascribed to the fact that Miss Cummins's psychic powers had considerably developed since the writing of the earlier scripts. The communicator was thus able to put through his name without the unconscious intervention of the automatist's conscious mind. Asked afterwards if she had any knowledge as to who had been writing on October 8th. Miss Cummins recalled with difficulty the name of Boyce and appeared to have forgotten its former connection with her own mind. She made no allusion to it at the time.

In conclusion I would like to draw the reader's attention to the introduction of the word "listen" in the first communication. This was written by the communicating entity as though he anticipated some difficulty even before he actually wrote his name. The confusion in the spelling of the word "Boyce" would seem to indicate that the method of communication is, to some extent, phonetic. Obviously, the mistake occurred because the *sound* was reminiscent, in the automatist's mind, of a name with which she was familiar.

# The Reality of Psychical Phenomena

## Clear Testimony by Mr. Harry Price

Reprinted from "LIGHT", January 28, 1937

*"After a lifetime's investigation, I declare that I have seen abnormal phenomena that could not be explained by any laws at present known to scientists."*

Mr. Harry Price, responding to the toast of his health at a dinner arranged in his honour by the University of London Council for Psychical Investigation, and held at the Hotel Splendide, Piccadilly, London, last Friday evening (January 22nd), bore clear testimony to the reality of psychic phenomena in the words quoted above. Spiritualists had not, he said, proved their case for Survival, but "perhaps some day the scientists will do it for them."

Mr. Price recalled that the idea of founding a psychical laboratory arose out of his sittings with that remarkable Medium, Stella C. Amongst the positive results obtained with Stella C. was a drop of the séance-room temperature, supernormal displacement of objects (telekinesis), and at least one extraordinary case of prevision. Another girl Medium was Eleonore Zugun (13 years of age), in whose presence objects moved of their own volition and on whom stigmata appeared every few minutes. In one experiment, devised by Dr. R. J. Tillyard, F.R.S. (whose death was announced last week), coins were precipitated from the lintel of a door in full light.

"The arm-chair sceptic, with no experience of Psychical Research," said Mr. Price, "will tell you that all physical Mediums insist upon a dark room in which to 'perform.' That is quite untrue. Some of Stella's phenomena were witnessed in a good red light; all Eleonore Zugun's manifestations were seen in normal daylight or by the ordinary artificial illumination of a living-room; and the phenomena of Anna Rasmussen occur in sunlight or under an arc light.

"In Professor Chr. Winther's laboratory in Copenhagen there is a glass chamber supported on and bolted to a concrete pillar, the whole being clamped to a concrete floor.

In this chamber are suspended a number of bobbins or pendulums of dissimilar weights, made of cork, steel, etc. In the sunlight, I have seen Anna Rasmussen's externalized energy move these pendulums at my request, although no person was less than a yard distant from them. These pendulums would swing or stop to order; would change their course; swing at right angles to one another, and announce the time of day by tapping the glass, etc. No ordinary, external, physical force could have affected those pendulums, and a steam-roller crossing the concrete floor would not have moved them by the vibrations it set up. Prof. Winther has been studying Anna's strange phenomena for fifteen years and has published a monograph on his results.

"I am amazed that universities all over the world show no disposition to obtain the services of Anna Rasmussen for the purposes of experiment. Why do not the physicists demand to see these wonders?"

"Of course, many scientists *do* take an interest in such matters, but so far there is no official recognition of these phenomena of Psychical Research, and as a consequence, no co-operation between those who are engaged in their investigation, and little co-ordination of results. It is because of this lack of *official* interest in the phenomena of the séance-room that we have let the Schneider boys slip through our fingers without any report from the accredited department of a university on their amazing phenomena.

"If the University of London authorities had been with me in Munich in 1922, at the home of the late Baron Schrenck-Notzing," Mr. Price continued, "and had seen the 'miracles' produced by Willi Schneider, I am sure they would have established a department of Psychical Research without further question. I saw half-formed psychic hands; I heard a heavy musical box in a gauze cage wind itself up, and start and stop at word of command, time after time. A handkerchief was repeatedly lifted from my feet by unseen hands; musical instruments were played; cold breezes blew. All these phenomena occurred under good conditions of control both of Medium and of sitters. More-

over, we saw them night after night. A hundred Continental savants signed statements to the effect that they witnessed genuine phenomena, but no official action was taken to investigate them.

"It was the same with Rudi Schneider, Willi's young brother. When I brought this Austrian boy Medium to London in 1929, he was young and unspoilt. I did my best to interest orthodox science in the phenomena which he produced. I invited scientists to see the boy, and they went away impressed. But no official action was taken. Those whom I invited experienced phenomena similar to those which I witnessed through his brother at Munich: pseudo-pods, playing of musical instruments, cold breezes, fall in temperature. Alas, when Rudi returned to me in 1932, he had capitalised his mediumship, and had begun to 'help out' the phenomena. I think that both Willi and Rudi should have been saved for science. Such Mediums as Stella C., Eleonore Zugun, Anna Rasmussen and the Schneider boys would have kept a university department busy for ten years.

"A similar indifference has been displayed towards the mental Mediums. After my sitting with Mrs. Eileen Garrett, when we received a detailed account of the disaster to the R101 airship, less than forty-eight hours after the tragedy, scientists and the universities did begin to take a little notice of the wonders in their midst. I wrote a number of articles on Mrs. Garrett and, largely as a result, that lady was invited to various American universities. She is being examined by one of them at the present time. It will be remembered that Mrs. Garrett figures also in the Rhine experiments at Duke University. There are, however, already signs of a change in the attitude of the universities. I am happy to record that at least one university, that of Bonn, is anxious to establish a department of Psychical Research, and a semi-official request was made to me to transfer the laboratory and records to the banks of the Rhine."

Continuing, Mr. Price expressed the view that they had travelled *some* distance along the road which would finally

lead to that goal he had so long striven for: official scientific recognition of abnormal phenomena.

"I cannot help thinking," he said, "that that recognition is now not far distant. Scientists all over the world are taking an increasing interest in psychic subjects. Such seats of learning as the universities of Bonn, Leiden, Leipzig, Duke, Johns Hopkins and Leland Stanford are taking psychics seriously, though I think that only one—Leiden—has a recognised department. The work at the others is done through their departments of psychology. We are making some progress, even in this country. As you know, our library and records have been transferred to the University of London, and I hope the day is not far distant when we shall see a fully equipped department of Psychical Research in the new buildings at Bloomsbury. That the day *will* come is as certain as that the sun will rise to-morrow morning.

"The question may be raised: What results have we achieved during the past thirteen years? In the first place, we have made out a case for the occurrence of abnormal physical phenomena, through the Mediums, Rudi and Willi Schneider, Stella C., Eleonore Zugun and Anna Rasmussen, and have demonstrated in particular the following: Telekinesis, thermal variations in the séance-room, pseudopods or 'psychic limbs,' and other teleplasmic masses, all of which appear to show volition and, in some cases, intelligence. We have, moreover, shown that a person can walk barefoot unscathed along a red-hot trench with a surface temperature of 806 degrees Fahrenheit.

"In the realms of mental phenomena we have demonstrated that what we believe to be the secondary personality of a trance Medium can assume such characters as 'Lieut. Irwin,' 'Conan Doyle,' etc., and discuss subjects and impart information that could not have been available to the Medium in her normal state. Of course, I am now speaking of Mrs. Eileen Garrett. The Spiritualists contend that such entities as I have named are in reality spirits who have 'returned.' But they have not proved their case for

Survival. Perhaps some day the scientists will do it for them.

"Then there are telepathy, thought-transference and clairvoyance, which have been rechristened 'extrasensory perception.' That cases of spontaneous telepathy do occur, I have not the slightest doubt. Whether we can demonstrate telepathy in the laboratory, at will, and at any time, is another matter. Dr. J. B. Rhine claims to have done so, and we are now trying to duplicate his results—not, however, with much success I am afraid. But telepathy is a fascinating subject, and it may well be that it is in this realm that official science in the shape of University Departments of Psychology will be willing to take their first steps in Psychical Research.

"What is the future of Psychical Research? Though it is usual for investigators to draw a hard and fast line between mental and physical phenomena, this is, I believe, purely arbitrary. I believe the future will teach us that *all* abnormal phenomena are the product of, and are controlled by, the mind. Stigmatic subjects and ecstasies can produce wounds by mental exaltation; blisters can be raised by hypnosis; suggestion can cure or injure a person. We are only now beginning to realise the full extent of the mind's power over the body. In the case of the fire-walker, it is probable that his immunity was due partly to his training in *yoga*, which is only a technique for the mastery of the body, its functions and its senses, by the subconscious mind. I am sure of the opinion that, in the realm of Psychical Research, mind is paramount.

"All these problems will be studied by the universities, and, in addition to departments of psychology, we shall one day see departments of abnormal psychology or Psychical Research—they mean much the same thing. We shall learn the conditions under which a Sensitive can be relied upon to produce phenomena in the laboratory, and in that way much time will be saved. It also pleases me to believe that some day the purveyor of fraudulent phenomena (whom we call the fake Medium) will be treated in exactly the

same way as we now treat the purveyor of fraudulent £5 notes.

“To sum up, the future of Psychical Research will lie with the universities, which will be able to establish a close co-operation between the scientists and the psychics. Experiments will be freed from the emotionalism and credulity so apparent in the typical séance-room of to-day, and I expect that the scientists will license their subjects, in order to cut out the charlatan. After all, one cannot expect a busy scientist to waste valuable hours—as I have been doing for thirty years—in examining conjurers who pose as Mediums. They are amusing enough, but they are consumers of good money and valuable time and energy.

“To conclude, if there is any person present to-night who declares that ‘there is nothing in Psychical Research,’ I am quite convinced that he has not studied the literature of the subject and has never sat with any major Medium.

“After a lifetime’s investigation, I declare that I have seen abnormal phenomena that could not be explained by any laws at present known to scientists. If I were not convinced of these things I would not waste another moment of my time, or another penny of my money, in further research. And certainly my conscience would not permit me to receive the handsome testimonial you have so generously presented to me this evening.”

Dr. C. E. M. Joad, who presided at the dinner, presented to Mr. Price a handsome illuminated framed address, in which his services to Psychical Research were recorded. Other speakers were Mr. R. S. Lambert (Editor of *The Listener*), Professor J. C. Flugel and Mr. G. H. Lethem (Editor of *LIGHT*).

# A Letter from England

BY DR. NANDOR FODOR

(*Research Officer, International Institute for Psychological Research*)

London, February, 1937.

## THE TRUTH ABOUT THE TALKING MONGOOSE

In my January notes I said that the greatest psychic mystery of England is the Talking Mongoose. At that time I was speaking from general knowledge and from a glimpse of the correspondence which passed between Mr. James T. Irving, the owner of the mongoose-haunted Doarlish Cashen, Isle of Mann, and Mr. Northwood, godfather of Voirrey Irving, the farmer's daughter, commonly suspected as the Poltergeist girl of the case. Since then I have conducted a personal investigation, having spent the first week of February at Mr. Irving's house as his guest.

I was not fortunate enough to hear "Gef" talking. There was some reason to suppose that he was lying low behind the boards. Mr. Irving's family was desperately anxious to coax him into talking. But "Gef" disapproves of strangers, whose presence he associates with unwelcome publicity, and he made no exception in my favor. Nevertheless, my week was very well spent. I collected an enormous amount of evidence. I learned to know the Irving family and to adjudge the value of their testimony. I examined a number of witnesses who, in the past five and a half years, had heard "Gef". I followed the trail which the talking mongoose left behind in his travels of exploration, of which he used to give a detailed story to the Irving family. I checked up on Captain MacDonald's amazing experience (reported in Mr. Harry Price's book, *The Haunting of Cashen's Gap*) by taking photographs of every important position in the drama of the talking mongoose's descent to the bottom of a dark staircase, at the open door of which Captain MacDonald was sitting with his finger on the trigger of his flashlight. Finally, I analyzed the psychic aspects of the case.

I returned with fifty closely typed pages of notes, and I claim to know more about "Gef", the talking mongoose, than anyone—with the exception of the Irving family—in this country today. I am ready to re-affirm that the case represents the greatest mystery in all England. This mystery, however, is not a psychic one, at least not in the usual sense of that phrase.

Voirrey Irving, the young girl at Doarlish Cashen, is not victimized by a Poltergeist. While it is quite true that the manifestations of

"Gef" commenced before she reached the age of puberty and that a very noticeable affection existed between the mongoose and herself, the explanation based on these two facts is an erroneous one. Voirrey Irving has long passed the critical age. "Gef" still persists. Voirrey is no more fascinated by the mystery of the talking animal. "Gef" is fast outgrowing his "childhood" and returns Voirrey's hostility with indifference and occasional scorn. He shows a certain amount of respect towards Mrs. Irving, but really he is only fond of the head of the family to whom he is grateful for having taught him to speak.

The Poltergeist theory was supported by "Gef's" ability to thump on the match-boarding which is built along the walls inside the house, and also by his stone-throwing habits. The story of the Saragossa Ghost, the voice which spoke from a dark flue, is still remembered in England. It was supposed that a combination of the Direct Voice with Poltergeist disturbances might explain the case of the Talking Mongoose.

I found that the match-boarding of Doarlish Cashen possesses remarkable acoustic qualities and that no particularly great effort is required to set up a din. The stones which "Gef" throws are pebbles, gravel and pieces of turf. In only two instances was strength displayed which one would not expect from a small animal. The shower of gravel which Captain MacDonald heard on the window panes outside of the *finale* of his conversation with "Gef" inside, was not due to supernatural agency. Having searchingly questioned Mr. Irving and his family, I established the fact that "Gef" stopped talking before the shower and that he must have slipped out of the house through his entrance hole and thrown the gravel in a normal manner.

But how can a mongoose throw things? one may ask. All I can tell is that "Gef" claims to possess hands (three fingers and a thumb) and that he has proved the possession of these appendages to the satisfaction of the Irving family.

I can definitely state that "Gef" is not a Poltergeist, that he is not an earthbound spirit and that he is not a ghost. I am also positive that no psychic contribution on the part of the Irving family is responsible for the extraordinary happenings at Doarlish Cashen. There is but one psychic feature in the whole gamut of "Gef's" manifestations: this is his ability to describe the movements of Mr. Irving, together with the words which he speaks, to his wife and daughter in the house while the farmer is in the fields out of sight and out of hearing. "Gef" has often been asked how he does it. He answered:

"I can't tell you how I know. I know."

What, then, is the mystery of the Talking Mongoose?

I can only see one explanation which covers all the facts. This is the same which is given by "Gef" himself: that he is an animal, "an

extra, extra clever little mongoose", who for years understood the human language but could not speak it until Mr. Irving taught him.

There is a considerable amount of proof in support of "Gef's" claim and there is nothing, except the absurdity of the claim, against it. He has been seen, he has been heard when all the members of the Irving family were satisfactorily accounted for, he has been photographed. It is true that these photographs are not very successful, Voirrey Irving is a poor photographer and "Gef" is very small and moves like lightning. Just the same, the photographs are good enough to show the presence of a mongoose-like animal.

But could he not be a familiar, a survival from dark mediaeval days?

There is much which supports this contention, and in the first five days of my stay at Doarlish Cashen I strongly leaned towards it. But I had to discard it in the end. "Gef" does perform the services of a familiar. He finds stray sheep, barks home the goats, chases out the rats, scares away the mice, finds lost objects, guards the fire at night, acts as a watch dog, tells the time in the morning from the clock below and pays for his lodgings and his food by catching rabbits for the family. He also acts as a newsboy and a defender of the family's name by throwing stones at those who speak disparagingly of the Irvings, and by killing their poultry. But he cannot penetrate closed doors, he cannot disappear in other than normal manner, he cannot be in two places at once, and he has no supernormal knowledge. He has a Grade A memory, abnormally keen eyesight and hearing, and a capacity for learning which is simply astonishing. But he has no ties with the ghost world and is afraid of spooks. If we can bring ourselves to the admission of the stupendous fact that an animal can learn to talk like a human being, the mystery of "Gef" immediately evaporates. If the Elberfeld horses could solve complicated mathematical problems, if they could express their own thoughts and ideas by the help of a code; if Rolf, the wonder dog of Mannheim, could show the intelligence of a child; if Black Bear, the Briarcliff Pony, could possess powers of clairvoyance; if birds can speak and associate definite ideas with definite words—why not a Talking Mongoose?

#### *A WITNESS OF THE ROPE TRICK*

I have had the good fortune to meet a witness of the famous Indian rope trick. She is Mrs. A. M. Pulford, of 27 Tanza Road, Hampstead, London. In a signed statement now in the files of the International Institute for Psychical Research, she says:

"Eleven years ago, I was in the temporary branch of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Services which was relieving the old army nurses. In Benares I attended a demonstration by a stout old

native and a slim little boy, weighing probably less than 5 stones (75 pounds). The scene of the demonstration was a courtyard. There were bazaars all around. I cannot quite remember whether the crowd surrounded the demonstrator on all sides.

"The old man took a very thick rope and threw it up in the air. The rope stayed up after the first throw. The stout man uttered a low incantation, then some more. He chanted in Hindustani. The rope was about twenty feet high. The little boy climbed up to the top of the rope. For a second or two he stayed there, extending one arm and leg. The man at the bottom let up some sort of fireworks. Thick smoke went up. When it cleared, the boy was nowhere to be seen. The smoke covered the whole scene for a second. The boy would have had to be agile as lightning to slide down and vanish. The smoke-screen did not cover him for more than a second. Somebody suggested that he might have jumped on top of a bazaar. The bazaars, however, were too far away.

"Ten minutes later, the boy came running round from outside.

"I believe that the rope must have had some wax or wire inside. It certainly rested on large coils. The demonstration was very impressive. We could not quite see, at the time, how it was done."

This is a very sensible statement and, from the description, the trick was done in the same manner as by Karachi for the entertainment of Mr. Harry Price in England.

### *MECHANISM OF PSYCHIC MESSAGES*

Strange light on how the mind operates in the receipt and transmission of psychic messages is thrown by the experience of a well known member of the International Institute for Psychical Research who, for social reasons, prefers to go under the name of "Mrs. Vincent" when her psychic powers are discussed. This is her story:

"At 1 P.M. on Saturday, February 7th, a friend rang me up to say that on the night before Mrs. Hayes Sadler telephoned from Florence that her daughter, aged 19, was dying.

"The following morning, about 11, a telegram came to say that Mrs. Hayes Sadler was dead. We naturally wondered if there had been an error in transmission, and my friend sent off a reply-paid telegram to the servants to know which of them was dead and if both, how. My friend and I concluded that it must have been a car-smash.

"About 3 o'clock I went to rest and it occurred to me that this was a fine opportunity to seek knowledge by supernormal means. I got at once THOM CONCARNO. I objected: THOM should be spelled with an 'n'. (It means 'tunney' in French and Concarno is a place in Brittany where there is tunney fishing.) The answer came to my

mind: 'This is Thom Concarno with an "m".' I said: 'Sorry, I don't understand; which of them is dead?'

"Came the picture of a brooch and of a wedding ring, separate; this pointed to the mother. Then I asked: How did she die? I was shown a picture of two screws turning in opposite directions.

"At tea-time the answer to the telegram arrived. Mrs. Hayes Sadler had died about an hour after the telephone call. She had had for many years consumption of the throat and the doctor had warned her that a sudden shock might cause strangulation and death. That is what happened.

"THOM CONCARNO seemed to mean nothing. In the evening it occurred to me that it was on the principle of messages through the tilting table. Read backwards 'Thom' is the beginning of 'mother' and 'Concarno' was three words, an answer to our speculation (*concar no*) that the death announced was not due to a motor accident."

Here is a case where a psychic message has been based, in the form of a wonderful conundrum, on the knowledge in the medium's own mind, apparently to show that the sender of the message possesses an intelligence of his own.

#### *THE DEATH SMELL MYSTERY*

I have recently received a letter from Blackpool from which I quote:

"We certainly have most strange things happening in our sitting room. Even a cat we had often used to spit and get its back up for nothing at all that we could see, and if anyone dies there is an ice-cold blast of air. Some years ago my daughter, then aged 12, flew out of the room, saying that there was a smell of death in it. The following morning we had a letter to say that my brother-in-law died at the very hour."

Technically, we ought to describe the manifestation as an olfactory premonition of death. As the smell of a dead body is due to the commencement of decomposition, the idea of impending death may well obtrude on our consciousness in the form of the odor of dissolution. The difficulty arises when we try to trace the source of this awareness. Whence the premonition?

In haunted houses we may find another facet of the same mystery. In some gruesome cases an unbearable stench is said to arise from the ground where unburied bodies were left to putrefy. Does the stench stand also for corruption and evil? Are the strange, earthy smells of which we read in ancient chronicles of evocative real olfactory phenomena or subjective: a protest of the subconscious mind against an evil practice?

If the phenomena are objective, what is the chemical source? We have good reason to assume that the origin of the "spirit perfumes" is in the medium's body. Stainton Moses has left some very illuminating accounts behind of the exudation of perfumes from his own organism. Further, it is a medical fact that in certain illnesses the skin gives out a scent of violet, pineapple, musk, from the presence of butyric ether in the human system. May we not then assume that the source of evil smells is analogous? That the subconscious mind, or for that matter a discarnate agent, speaks in a physio-chemical language?

Would this also apply to the stench in haunted houses? We are as yet only dimly aware of the part which psychic conflicts in the minds of the inhabitants of a haunted house play in the phenomena of haunting. My recent experiences make me lean towards the hypothesis that the disturbances do not always have a periodicity of their own but may be due to periodic emotional upheavals, misery and acute discontent on the part of the tenants in the house. If we could establish this psychic link, the physiological dependence might not prove such a strain on our imagination as it does in our present incomplete state of knowledge.

#### *THE MAN WHO BIT A GHOST*

It is an old maxim in journalism that if a dog bites a man, it is not news, but if a man bites a dog, it is news. Applying the maxim to Psychical Research, one might, perhaps, say that if a ghost bites a man it is not news. If a man bites a ghost, it is news.

Well, I have some psychic news.

The man who bit a ghost is a German refugee, Julius Reiter, LL.D., who lives in a small flat in Manchester Street, London. He does not know much about ghosts, but gave me some facts. This is the most startling one:

"I was in bed in the dark. I suddenly felt that somebody was offering me a drink. I had a glass in my hand and wanted to pour the drink in. At the same moment, somebody upset the bottle and started to fight with me. I felt as if I had been sitting in a chair and my opponent had been standing. He rushed at me and tried to strangle me. As I was trying to push him off, he caught my fingers in his mouth and tried to bite savagely. I got away, and as he was grasping for my throat I bit the small finger of his left hand. The taste of that bite lasted in my mouth for an unconscionable time. It was horrible. The finger was a dead man's finger, ice cold and rubbery, a finger in which there was no blood circulation.

"The clock struck twelve and, suddenly, I was quite myself again.

I was in bed but could not move. I realized that I was not attacked in the body but that something psychical had happened to me. It was a kind of double consciousness. I know it happened, yet it did not happen. I was shuddering from the horror of the experience and fell into a deep sleep."

I am not sure that the comfortable solution of a dramatized psychometric impression answers this strange case. The ghost had been seen in that flat by the original owner whom I also interviewed. But she had no disagreeable experiences, in fact she had a strong feeling that the ghost was attached to her and resented her moving out. Has Dr. Reiter, who impressed me as a highly strung man, tapped a deep, unconscious layer of ghostly memories? Had he shared a nightmare with the ghost? It is a curious problem and I regret my inability to offer a satisfactory solution.

## Book Review

THE CASE FOR ASTRAL PROJECTION. By Sylvan Muldoon. The Ariel Press, \$2.00.

As Mr. Muldoon says in the preface of his new book, *The Case for Astral Projection* needs no explanation of its purpose. Its title is self-descriptive. In this volume which should be a companion work to his earlier book, written in collaboration with Mr. Hereward Carrington, Mr. Muldoon has collected and ably arranged most of the best cases of "out of the body" experience to be found in psychic literature. He has also added a number of new experiences that have come to his notice chiefly through readers of his first book. In the first book, *The Projection of the Astral Body*, Mr. Muldoon describes all the sensations of astral projection while fully or partially conscious, and the relation of astral projection to flying and falling dreams and what is technically called dreaming true. He sets down definite rules for developing the ability to project and shows drawings illustrative of the route taken by the astral body upon projection etc. He also sets down what he believes are some of the physical laws governing this phenomenon. The experiences which he relates to illustrate his conclusions are for the most part drawn from his own projections, both spontaneous and voluntary. In this second book, Mr. Muldoon quotes but one case from his own experience. The cases are chosen from authoritative and often well-known sources such as Gurney's *Phantasms of the Living*, Myers' *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death* and autobiographical works by well known mediums including, D. D. Home, Stainton Moses and Andrew Jackson Davis.

The fact that there is a very definite similarity in these accounts is a point in favor of the truth of the phenomenon. Especially as the earlier accounts drawn from a wide variety of sources over a long period of time are not likely to have been influenced by a tradition of how such phenomena occurs.

For those who are not familiar with the phenomenon of astral projection the following case is quoted from "*The Case for Astral Projection*". It has been chosen by the reviewer from a vast number of others because it contains most of the points upon which Projectors seem to agree and because it is a new case from a reliable source:

"A letter dated June 15, 1936 from William Gerhardi the famous novelist with whose works I am sure many of my readers will be familiar, informs me that he has had five out-of-the-body experiences. His novel, "Resurrection" is based upon one of these experiences, and his letter goes on to say: "Though

'Resurrection' for reasons stated in the prefatory note, is presented in the form of a novel, the experience is entirely genuine. . . . you have my permission to quote me . . . may I take this opportunity of telling you that I have read your book, *The Projection of the Astral Body*, and find my own experiences tally with yours. . . ."

I now quote a portion of Mr. Gerhardi's astral adventure:

" . . . I had been dreaming a dream, so ridiculous, that suddenly it came over me that I must be dreaming. . . . 'Now wake' I said, 'And find that there is no need to worry, because it is only a dream'. And I awoke.

"But I awoke with a start. For I had stretched out my hand to press the switch of the lamp on the bookshelf over my bed, and instead, found myself grasping the void, and myself suspended precariously in mid-air, on a level with the bookcase. The room, except for the light of the electric stove, was in darkness, but all around me was a milky pellucid light, like steam.

"I was that moment fully awake, and so fully conscious that I could not doubt my senses, astonished as I have never been before, amazed to the point of proud exhilaration. I said to myself, 'fancy that! Whoever would have believed it! And this is not a dream.'

"It seemed almost ludicrous. . . . It was as if I were being held up by a steel arm which held me rigid—myself, in comparison, as light as a feather. Next the force which held me up was electrified to a bout of energy by the sudden apprehension which succeeded my first moment of delighted astonishment.

"The swiftness which I was seized, pushed out horizontally, placed on my feet and thrust forward with the gentle-firm hand of the monitor—'There you are, my good man, now you can proceed on your own!'—was something in the highest degree incredible, yet which I cannot doubt. . . . Then my body checked its outward movement, turned around. And turning, I became aware for the first time of a strange appendage.

"At the back of me was a coil of light, like a luminous garden hose resembling the strong broad ray of dusty light at the back of a dark cinema projecting on the screen in front. To my utter astonishment, that broad cable of light at the back of me illuminated the very face on the pillows I recognized as my own, as if attached to the brow of the sleeper.

"It was myself, not dead, but breathing peacefully, my mouth slightly open. My cheeks were flushed as if I must have felt hot under those blankets and eider-down drawn over my shoulder. My hair, lifted by the pressure of the pillow, presented an aspect of my face not familiar to me, never before having seen myself asleep. The face, lying sidewise, and deeply sunk into

the pillow, was pathetic and touching in its vacant innocence of expression—and here was I outside it watching it with a thrill of joy and fear. I was awed and not a little frightened to think that I was in the body of my resurrection.

“So that’s what it’s like? How utterly unforeseen! But I was not dead, I consoled myself; my physical body was sleeping peacefully under the blankets while I was apparently on my feet and as good as before. Yet it wasn’t my accustomed self, it was as if my mould was walking through a murky, heavy space which, however, gave way easily before my emptiness.

“I had in this mould of mine transgressed into its native fourth dimension, leaving its contents, so to speak, in the third. . . . There was this uncanny tape between us, like the umbilical cord, by means of which the body on the bed was kept alive, while its mould wandered about the flat through space which seemed as dense as water. Indeed, in this extraordinary light body walking seemed like wading through an unsteady sea.

“I staggered uncertainly to the door. I felt the handle, but to my discomfiture I could not turn it; there was no grip in my hand; it seemed unreal. Now, how will I get out? . . . I was pushed forward, the door passed through me, or I through the door, with a marked absence of resistance. . . . I caught a glimpse of myself in the mirror as I passed into the bathroom. I looked at my own double and I was dressed exactly as I had gone to bed.

“The only difference was a lack of weight and substance about this body of my continuation. Avidly I went from room to room, trying to recollect what proof I could. I was alone in the flat, which was in darkness except for the murky light which seemed to emanate from my own body. . . . I could not hold anything in my hand or displace the lightest of objects and all I could do was to note carefully the position of things—which curtains were open or drawn, the time by the clock in the dining-room, and things of that sort; which all proved correct when I checked them afterward.

“ . . . Suddenly this strange power . . . began to play pranks on me. I was being pushed up like a half-filled balloon. ‘Steady, steady’. I called to myself. . . . I was being pushed out with a sort of glee, right out of my flat. Out I flew through the front door and hovered there in the air, a feeling of extraordinary lightness of heart overtaking me. I knew that I could transport myself at will had I now chosen to do so—to New York if I so wished. But a feeling of caution intervened, of fear that something might happen on this long flight and sever my link with the sleeping body to which I wanted to return if only to tell my astounding experience.

" . . . My consciousness became dimmed. It seemed to me as if a dozen coolies among much screeching and throbbing, were lowering with the utmost precaution under expert direction from a noisy crane, which seemed to reverberate in my own brain, some precious burden which was myself, into some vessel which presently became myself. . . . 'Steady, steady', that same monitor who had directed my exploits seemed to be saying, and then with a jerk which shook me as though the machinery dropped into my bowels weighed a ton, I opened my eyes."

Mr. Gerhardi continues: "Since then I have had four other projections. On one of them I actually visited a friend at Hastings and obtained irrefutable proof of having been in his room. On another I visited relations of a friend living at Tunbridge Wells and described them to her accurately, without my ever having seen them before. On a third, I passed right through a man walking on a lonely road at night. I have not, so far, met a ghost. . . . It (projection) has no resemblance to dreaming. If the whole world united in telling me it is a dream I would remain unconvinced. . . ."

If astral projection is a true and natural phenomenon, then all psychic manifestation must be reviewed from a new light. Mr. Muldoon discusses a famous case called the *Watseka Wonder* which would undoubtedly be labeled a case of dissociated personality by a psychologist, though a puzzling case.

Hypnotism too must be studied in this light as illustrated by the extraordinary experience of Andrew Jackson Davis as a boy. The story is to be found in his book the *Magic Staff*.

Whether Mr. Muldoon presents a convincing case for Astral Projection must be determined by the reader. That he has presented the best available material in a workmanlike way, is certain. It is a book well worth reading and possessing as source of reference.

Mr. Muldoon's own attitude as quoted from the conclusion is as follows:

"While projection of the astral body must remain but a theory to those who have not experienced it, I am personally convinced beyond a doubt of its reality and of a posthumous existence.

"Yet I do not maintain as do many Spiritualists that all psychic phenomena is to be attributed solely to spirit. Neither do I swing to the other extreme as do many psychical researchers and credit none to spirit. What I do maintain is that we have multiplex psychical phenomena and it admits of multiplex explanations—some spiritistic, some mental, some independent of both."

Perhaps the most interesting point that Mr. Muldoon makes, is this:

"Is it not a remarkable coincidence that so many people claim to have seen phantoms of the living, while so many others claim to have been phantoms of the living?"

J. P.

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### Clairvoyance in Ancient Greece and Rome

BY EDWARD MORRISON, B.A.

The capacity for intercourse with the supernatural powers that regulate human affairs occupied an important place in the religious and political systems of Greece and Rome for over a thousand years, and during this splendid period of history it was regarded with the various feelings of reverence or contempt that were inspired by the other dispensations of the divine ordonnance. Plato himself was the author of a distinction that was respected until the subversion of the pagan way of life. He divides prophecy into two kinds: the rational and the ecstatic.<sup>1</sup> The former, which in Rome long remained the indispensable preliminary to any state occasion, consisted in the observation of natural signs, or of the disposition of the entrails of sacrificed animals, on the part of qualified persons, who inferred from them, in accordance with specified rules, the course of future events. In the latter, a prophet or prophetess entered into direct communication with the higher powers in sleep or frenzy. With the spiritual sophistication of an aging civilization, the enthusiastic method gained in favor at the expense of the other,<sup>2</sup> since it involved a more subtle ap-

<sup>1</sup> *Phaedrus* 244 B.C.; ed. Stahlbaum and trans. Jowett. cf. *Cicero De Divinatione* c. i. XVIII, 34, ed. Loeb.

<sup>2</sup> Farnell, *Cults of the Greek States*, vol. IV, p. 224.

preciation of the nature of the godhead and of its relation with the human mind. 'The greatest of blessings comes to us through madness', Socrates remarks,<sup>3</sup> 'which is the especial gift of heaven.' Far from being despised as a fraud or entertaining trick, clairvoyance was adduced to prove the existence and the beneficence of gods, and fortified the lofty aspirations of a brilliant people. Both the recorded facts and their philosophic interpretations resemble those of modern experience in an embarrassing profusion of instances.

There were some hundreds of oracular centres in Greece, although not all of them were ecstatic nor did they all possess an equal authority. Each of them was presided over by a god, demi-god, or hero, who inspired the responses, and each was endowed with a temple and a corps of sacerdotal ministrants.

One of the most reputable was the dream oracle at Mallus in Cilicia.<sup>4</sup> It was dedicated to the hero, Amphilochus. The fee for consultation was fixed at the reasonable amount of five cents, although the value of money was far higher then than now. An oblation was necessary to prevail on the hero to impart his supernal knowledge. The priest, on receipt of the fee, slaughtered and sacrificed an animal bought by the client, retaining as his own perquisite certain cuts, which were also the subject of regulation. The suppliant was then permitted to stretch the hide of his beast on a bench in the temple, and, sleeping on it for a night, he received the answer to his question in his dreams. There are extant at Oropus the foundations of a temple dedicated to Amphiaraus, the father of Amphilochus, which include the remains of benches on which the votaries slept. The fee for consultation at this shrine was five times greater than what was charged at the temple of the younger hero.

A 'psychopompeum',<sup>5</sup> or oracle of the dead, was an ordi-

<sup>3</sup> *Phaedrus*, 244 A.

<sup>4</sup> For this paragraph see Pausanias I. 34 and Frazer's exhaustive note vol. ii, p. 472 ff. (Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, trans. and ed. J. G. Frazer).

<sup>5</sup> Plutarch, *Of Those whom God is slow to Punish*, 560 E.

nary convenience of Greek life. A seat such as this was situated at Phigalea<sup>6</sup>; others at Taenarum<sup>5</sup> and Heraclea Pontica.<sup>7</sup> It was questioned like a dream oracle, by sleeping in a temple, dedicated, presumably, to a chthonic power. It is authoritatively recorded<sup>8</sup> that Periander, the dictator of Corinth, wished to raise the ghost of his wife. His reason for adopting so extraordinary a course, as will be readily guessed, was the prospect of a substantial remuneration; for he was anxious that she should indicate to him the whereabouts of a sum of money that he had lost. With this end in view, he sent his representatives to an oracle of the dead by the river Acheron among the Thesprotians. To them her phantom appeared with all the attributes of her earthly self, like those with which modern mediums invest their controls. She was agitated by a violent rage. She complained that Periander had, in substance, left her without a thing to wear, since the clothes in which she had been interred, were not burnt in accordance with the funerary customs of the time; and she asserted that she would not give him the information that he wanted until he had rectified his omission. But Periander, who was evidently familiar with her arguments, did not satisfy her demands in the expensive manner that she no doubt desired. Instead he exercised his cunning and his dictatorial powers to deprive the other Corinthian ladies of the choicest parts of their wardrobes. After a holocaust of these, he sent again to the oracle and was rewarded by the information that he sought.

But the source of prophecy that most repays serious study at the present time was at the great shrine of Apollo at Delphi. From time immemorial it was one of the two most sacred religious centres of Greece and was habitually consulted by powerful states on high matters of policy during the noblest period of their history. It was situated at the heart of the peninsula in natural surroundings that

<sup>6</sup> Pausanias iii. 17, 9 and Frazer's note. Although oracles of the dead are mentioned fairly frequently, evidence regarding them is disappointingly scarce.

<sup>7</sup> Plutarch *Cimon* 6.

<sup>8</sup> Herodotus, V 92. (*History*, ed. Clarendon Press and trans. Macaulay).

still affect the mind of the visitor with sentiments of awe.<sup>9</sup> The temple<sup>10</sup> itself, some of the foundations of which remain, covered an area of more than 1200 metres, and adjacent to it were the offices, treasuries, and subsidiary shrines proper to a rich and influential religious establishment. The administration was in the hands of a corporation of priests, derived from the oldest families of Delphi, who sacrificed their several identities to the service of the public good. They were intimately allied with the most altruistic political and religious body in Greece, the Amphictyonic League.<sup>11</sup>

The instrument of divination was a medium, who laid aside in frenzy her fleshly self and entered into a direct relation with the god. During the palmy days of the oracle its duties were so onerous that they necessitated the presence of two or three,<sup>12</sup> the number being reduced with its declining prosperity. Although prophets<sup>13</sup> are mentioned at others of Apollo's shrines at Branchidai and in Boeotia, the medium at Delphi, who was invested with the title of the Pythia, was invariably a woman. In ancient times it was stipulated that she must be a virgin; but the rule was modified when a consultant, interested more in her charms than in her prophecies, ran away with her,<sup>14</sup> and the priests, in order to forestall a similar embarrassment to their offices, had recourse to the safer virtue of a woman over fifty.

It is generally supposed that women are more susceptible to occult influences than men and the uncultivated intellect than the cultivated.<sup>15</sup> Although one of the prophets

<sup>9</sup> Frazer's note to Pausanias gives an admirable description of the site, vol. V p. 248.

<sup>10</sup> An exhaustive account of the remains is in Frazer's Pausanias V. p. 336.

<sup>11</sup> The precise relationship between the temple authorities at Delphi and the Amphictyonic League is not clear. I have followed Farnell IV 182-186.

<sup>12</sup> Plutarch, *Why the Oracles Cease to give Answers*, ed. Loeb and trans. Goodwin.

<sup>13</sup> Herodotus VIII. 134-5; Tacitus *Annals* ii. 54; Charles Picard, *Ephese et Claros*, p. 219; Farnell, IV. 224; Ovid, *Fasti*, ii 5 and Frazer's note.

<sup>14</sup> Diodorus Siculus XVI 26.

<sup>15</sup> See *The Delphic Oracle* by T. D. Dempsey, who compares McKenzie, *Spirit Intercourse* p. 14 with Porphyry's doctrine, quoted in Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, IV 1, 5 and V 8, 9, 12, cd. Gaisford.

at Branchidai was a man of refined intelligence,<sup>16</sup> the medium at the greater shrine was ignorant, uneducated, and illiterate.<sup>17</sup> She was not, however, of a neurotic or highly-strung temperament. Plutarch,<sup>18</sup> whose experience was intimate and wide, relates, on the contrary, that she led a usual existence when her frenzy was not on her. She was the exact counterpart of Eusapia Palladino, the daughter of an Italian peasant, who could neither read nor write.<sup>19</sup>

She was prepared for her functions by a complicated ritual. She inhaled the smoke of burning laurel, a plant which was the peculiar property of Apollo, and chewed the leaves. She drank the waters of a sacred spring, Casotis, in which a spirit was thought to dwell. She was robed in a symbolical vestment. The ceremony could not proceed unless the beast that was offered to the god trembled from head to foot when it was drenched with libations. Finally, the prophetess descended into a crypt beneath the adytum, or inner sanctuary of the temple, and seated herself on the symbol of things past, present, and to come, the holy tripod of Apollo.<sup>20</sup>

The state into which the prophetess sank was identical with what is now called a 'trance'. The external characteristics of the best attested modern cases are habitually referred to the Pythia: the short, sharp breathing; the foaming lips; the groans and wild cries; and finally the staccato utterances of more or less articulate speech. She was thought to burst with the omniscience of the god, which manifested itself imperfectly and with difficulty. The psy-

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<sup>16</sup> Picard, p. 219.

<sup>17</sup> *Why the Pythian Priestess Ceases her Oracles in Verse*, 22 ed. Loeb and trans. Goodwin.

<sup>18</sup> *Why the Oracles Cease to Give Answers*.

<sup>19</sup> Proceedings of British S.P.R., vol. XXIII.

<sup>20</sup> Farnell and Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire de la Divination dans l'Antiquité*, are in substantial agreement as to the nature of the ritual. They do not, however, make clear the situation of the tripod. By far the most stimulating account of the place of prophecy is in Sir James Frazer's note to his monumental edition of Pausanias, vol. V, p. 235, where he gives an exhaustive description of the excavations at Delphi. A cave or underground chamber was the invariable appurtenance of prophetic shrines, no doubt because of their early connection with chthonic powers.

chological characteristics of the state, although they must obviously have differed with the mediums, resembled those of modern cases. The frenzied Cassandra,<sup>21</sup> the poetic type of prophetically inspired woman, has visions of a conflagration and of a bloody torch wrapped in fire; and the prophet of Clarus,<sup>22</sup> having ascertained the names and numbers of his clients, answers their questions when in ecstasy as if he had read their minds.

There is no possibility that the state of possession was simulated in any large number of instances. The savage afflatus of the god was, on the contrary, more often feared<sup>23</sup> than welcomed. It was regarded as a dangerous gift,<sup>24</sup> which shortened life; and it even proved fatal to the unfortunate prophetess who died as a result of her ecstasy<sup>25</sup>.

It was popularly supposed that the oracular inspiration was produced by drinking the sacred water<sup>26</sup> or the sacrificial blood; or by inhaling a mephitic vapor<sup>27</sup> that was said to rise from a fissure in the floor of the prophetic cell. There is no evidence of such a fissure in the existing remains at Delphi. The vapor, which is mentioned only by late writers on the subject and has aroused a degree of controversy disproportionate to its importance, may probably be explained by the musty odor of an ancient and airless edifice.<sup>28</sup> It is evident that, as the furnishings of a seance room assist the frenzy of a modern medium, the circumstances of religious pomp, repeated at infrequent intervals, abetted, although it did not produce, a state of trance in a feeble and impressionable mind.

The oracle was not open for consultation more often than once a month, when the clients assembled in the mega-

<sup>21</sup> She is interesting because she is quoted in Cicero *De Divinatione* I 31-32.

<sup>22</sup> Tacitus, *Annals* II. 54, where he describes the visit of Germanicus.

<sup>23</sup> Lucan, *Pharsalia*, V. 120 ff. I have not hesitated to accept this poem as evidence. Lucan did not possess a high order of creative imagination, and the passage bears the stamp of an intimate relationship with known facts.

<sup>24</sup> Picard p. 386.

<sup>25</sup> Plutarch, *Why the Oracles Cease to Give Answers*, 51.

<sup>26</sup> Pliny, *Natural History*, II. 232.

<sup>27</sup> The vapor plays a large part in the arguments both of Cicero and of Plutarch.

<sup>28</sup> This is my own somewhat obvious suggestion. The possibility of the existence of such a fissure as Plutarch mentions has been disproved by Oppé in *The Chasm of Delphi*, *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 1904.

rum, or great hall, of the temple. In general they presented their questions in writing to a priest or priests stationed in the sanctuary above the prophetic crypt. Herodotus, however, relates in several passages<sup>29</sup> that the oracle replied to the votary 'as he entered forthwith', implying that on some occasions, at least, she was immediately aware of his thoughts like the prophet of Clarus. It is certainly improbable that the prophetess herself was informed of the questions to which her cries contained the answers.<sup>30</sup>

Where the clients sat, the frantic shrieks and the grinding of the metal tripod on which she writhed, were plainly audible. She habitually spoke in the first person as if indeed the voice of the god was heard in her.<sup>31</sup> A priest interpreted her utterances and translated them into hexameter verse for the benefit of the recipient. The poetry, which was not remarkable for its sweetness, did not fail to offend the ears of the fastidious, and, since Apollo held among his fiefs that of poetic, no less than oracular inspiration, it is not surprising that sceptics inquired why the deity could not attain to a more than mortal success in the art.<sup>32</sup> The problem has not yet been solved more happily than by Plutarch, who, in apology, affirmed that 'neither the voice, nor the sound, nor the word, nor the metre proceeds from the god, but from the woman. The god only presents the visions and kindles in the soul a light to discover future events.'<sup>33</sup>

The subjects on which the oracle was consulted were of every variety that could interest either the spiritual or the material welfare of mankind. There were confided to the divine wisdom of the Pythia matters of diplomatic and military policy,<sup>34</sup> and the discovery of a theft,<sup>35</sup> questions of

<sup>29</sup> E.g. V, 92; I 65; cf VIII 134-5.

<sup>30</sup> Farnell.

<sup>31</sup> Bouché-Leclercq, p. 366.

<sup>32</sup> Cicero *De Divinatione*. Plutarch *Why the Pythian Priestess Ceases her Oracles in Verse*.

<sup>33</sup> *Ib.* 7.

<sup>34</sup> Herodotus VII, 220; IV, 161; V, 79; VI, 34; VII, 148; VII, 169; I, 53, 55, 91; I, 66.

<sup>35</sup> *Ib.* II, 174.

economic prosperity,<sup>36</sup> and the legitimacy of a child;<sup>37</sup> the succession to a throne,<sup>38</sup> the impediment in a prince's speech,<sup>39</sup> and the cause of the visitation of a ghost;<sup>40</sup> and in all the ages the analysis and cure of disease were in her important charge.<sup>41</sup> The oracle was the highest court of appeal in all that concerned the established religion.<sup>42</sup> She was asked, for example, what god should be propitiated in order to bring a famine to an end.<sup>43</sup> If the shrine initiated no startling reforms, its solutions of ethical problems were at least on a level with the highest morality of the day, and it is not recorded in classic times that it advocated a course of action that would shock the modern conscience. It urged, indeed, the adherence to principles of financial integrity superior to those that prevailed in the age of Aristotle.<sup>44</sup> At an early date the Pythia set her face against the imputation of blood guiltiness to accidental homicide, which was the harsh and invariable precept of primitive law; and she insisted, on the other hand, that a ritualistic purification was an inadequate substitute for an uncorrupted conscience.<sup>45</sup>

Sufficient evidence is not available at this late date to prove or disprove the fulfillment of the oracular predictions. There are two methods of forming an opinion on its merits. First, if a continuous policy in its responses can be discerned, it may reasonably be supposed to have been the instrument of a party, and it will lose all pretence to clair-

<sup>36</sup> *Ib.* III, 57.

<sup>37</sup> *Ib.* VI, 66.

<sup>38</sup> *Ib.* VI, 52; IV, 161.

<sup>39</sup> *Ib.* IV, 155.

<sup>40</sup> *Ib.* IV, 14.

<sup>41</sup> *I.* 19 *cf.* S. Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, Bk. IV ch. I.

<sup>42</sup> Herodotus, VI. 139.

<sup>43</sup> The most sanguine account of the religious authority of the oracles is in Curtius' *History of Greece*, vol. II, pp. 101 ff., which is not now generally accepted. Involving as it does the question of the relations between the Delphic authorities and the Amphictyonic League, the point is in the highest degree controversial.

<sup>44</sup> Herodotus VI. 86 Glaucus, an Athenian, asks whether he should return a sum of money entrusted to him, to the son of the depositor. There is an instance of a comparable deceit in Aristotle's *Politics*.

<sup>45</sup> Farnell, IV pp. 211-213, who quotes Aelian *Variae Historiae* III 44 for the case of a man who accidentally killed his friend in a fight with bandits.

voyant impartiality. By contrast, if no continuous policy can be ascertained, it is scarcely probable that such an institution should have maintained its position in one of the greatest periods of history without some justification, and the value of its prophecies will be decided by the sentiments of its contemporaries.

The possibility that the whole affair was a deliberate and self-interested hoax need not be considered. The powerful states of Greece would hardly have relied on a system of fraud for the solution of immediate and important problems. Educated Greeks were intellectually more scrupulous than ourselves; and it is improbable that their politicians were less favored than ours in point of mental endowment. The Delphic establishment exercised a permanent influence in the eminently practical sphere of colonization. For not one of the many settlements that invested the shores of the Mediterranean was founded without the advice of the oracle, not only as to its site, but as to its laws and guardian deity as well.

Two possible instances of political bias are, however, recorded. The first is the least doubtful and the least important. The temple at Delphi, after one of its many conflagrations, was rebuilt through the munificence of the Alcmaeonid family, whose dominant position at Athens had been rendered untenable by the tyrant, Peisistratus. The Delphic institution showed its gratitude by attempting to persuade the Spartans to overcome the tyranny. Whenever a Lacedaemonian consulted the prophetess, he was welcomed by the gratuitous exhortation that 'Athens must be liberated'. Sparta was at length, in 510 B.C., prevailed upon to perform this task, and the Alcmaeonid family was restored to its pristine eminence.<sup>46</sup>

The other instance is the subject of one of the most interesting controversies of Greek history. Did the oracle favor the Medes in the Persian War? It is only fair to say

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<sup>46</sup> Herodotus V 63; Grote *History of Greece* III 340 ff.

that a large number of modern historians<sup>47</sup> sustain its guilt. But although the question cannot be discussed in detail here, the arguments strongly supporting a contrary opinion may be summarized.

The accusations of the oracle are largely based on negative evidence, namely, on what it failed to do. It is urged that on no occasion of its consultation<sup>48</sup> did it advise a Greek state to join the Pan-Hellenic alliance that alone could save the peninsula from the ravages of the common enemy; further that some of the responses recommended submission. But all of the latter class of the responses are susceptible of ambiguous interpretations, and they were regarded as favorable to the Hellenic cause at least as often as they were assumed to oppose it. In but one instance did the shrine unequivocally advocate abstention; namely, in the oracle to the Cretans,<sup>49</sup> which may well be a later forgery intended to exculpate their conduct.<sup>50</sup>

The prophetic impartiality of the great shrine would have been impugned if it had taken on itself the moral leadership of Greece, with which its later critics would have had it invested, as certainly as if it had adopted a contrary policy. At the time of the crisis it had for some centuries<sup>51</sup> flourished as an institution peculiar to a system of conflicting city states. Since it had, during this long period, adapted its responses to their individual requirements, it cannot be blamed because it was incapable of entertaining the sublime ideas of so eminent an author as Herodotus, and still less, the *weltanschauung* of a modern historian.

<sup>47</sup> Farnell; Fowler, *Herodotus*; How and Wells in *Notes to Herodotus*, and, Frazer think that the oracle was biassed. On the other hand, neither Curtius nor Grote lend the weight of their opinion to such a view. The various political and religious forces were too complex to permit the historian to indulge the temptation of discovering facile theories of policy.

<sup>48</sup> There are numerous instances of oracular consultation in Herodotus, Bks. VI, VII, and VIII. Some of the responses that are supposed to indicate a pro-Persian policy are found in VII, 148; VII, 168; VII, 169, 171; VIII, 114.

<sup>49</sup> VII, 108-171.

<sup>50</sup> See How and Wells, *Commentary on Herodotus*, II p. 203, on Herodotus VII 109.

<sup>51</sup> I have accepted Bouché-Leclercq's statement that the oracular establishment was first instituted in the 8th or 7th century before Christ. But the date of its foundation must be conjectural and may well be earlier.

The positive evidence entirely confirms the prophetic establishment in its venerated position which it maintained both during and after the War. Those states who had sided with the Persians, whether presuming on oracular advice or for any other reason, were forced to pay tribute to Delphi, and the victorious powers themselves testified their gratitude to the beneficent god by numerous donations. As a result, the oracle, far from suffering any diminution of its prestige, appears to have entered into the period of its greatest glory. In the Holy War that broke out shortly after the Persian invasion, Pericles, far from separating his city from Delphic influence, as he might have been expected to do if he had thought it hostile, acquired for Athens the priority of consultation; and in each of the truces that interspersed the Great Peloponnesian Wars, the first stipulation was that the oracle should be free to all who chose to resort to it.

The wealth of the shrine, which was so enormous as to tempt, in later times, the depredations of impecunious governments, alone affords convincing proof of the repute in which it was held. It also ensured that the purity of the oracular inspiration should not be consistently depraved by bribery. But avarice was not imputed to the temple authorities. The pretty story<sup>52</sup> is told, with others of a like nature, of a magnate who, with splendid parade and hearty self-approbation, offered a vast hecatomb to Apollo. Having inquired at the shrine what man had best honoured the god, he was mortified to hear that it was a certain Clearchus who lived in a remote village of Arcadia, and he travelled into the rural solitude in order to learn that Apollo was better pleased by a humble but devout offering, than by all the donatives of vanity.

But the oracle appropriated neither its monetary nor its prophetic resources to the purposes of its own aggrandisement. Although it resembles the Papacy of the Middle Ages in many other respects, the Delphic establishment

<sup>52</sup> Frazer's note on the *Fasts* of Ovid, vol. II p. 148 ff. He quotes Porphyry, *De Abstinencia*, II, 15, 16, 17, and 28.

was not animated by an ambition, as it did not attain to a temporal power, comparable to those of the Roman. The influence of the Amphictyonic League, such as it was, tended to confirm the oracle as a place of equitable and international resort. If the state of Phocis, in which Delphi was situated, had ever had pretensions to the hegemony of Greece, it might have diverted the oracular flow to its own uses. But Phocis was rarely in a position to assert itself without the help of a transient ally, and when, in the fourth century, it made two attempts to control the oracle, they were speedily and jealously crushed.

There was thus a clairvoyant institution enshrined in the religion and bedded in the history of Greece, which enjoyed and deserved a wide reputation for the impartiality of its predictions. It flourished with the splendor of Hellenic civilization and did not decline until its sun was setting. The moral, political, and religious judgments that it delivered were at least on a level with the enlightened conceptions of the age.

Whatever the many modulations of contemporary opinion as to the validity of the responses may have been, a feeling of superstitious awe was not one of them. Aristophanes ridicules them, in common with Apollo, their inspiring spirit, in the *Knights*. In classical antiquity, however, the persons and events of religious story were not defamed by comic presentation on the stage, as a cathedral was not desecrated because it was adorned by grotesque sculptures. The contemporaries of Aristophanes were innocent of the self-conscious crises of religious faith which have characterized Christian experience in both the early and late periods of our ecclesiastical history. Far from intending to bring the gods and their homes into disrespect, the Athenian comic poet, in his religious views, was more probably conservative.

All the modern forms of scepticism were familiar to the Greeks. Croesus, the acute and ambitious King of Lydia, before confiding in the prophetic inspiration made experi-

ments on seven oracular agencies.<sup>53</sup> He sent representatives to the temples of Delphi, Abai, Dodona; to the shrines of Amphiaraus and Trophonius; and to the Libyan Ammon; to inquire of each in what action he was engaged, which he kept a profound secret, at a specified time. The oracle at Delphi alone was able to give the correct answer to his exacting test, when it replied that he was cooking a lamb and a tortoise together in a copper cauldron. Herodotus suggests that a man of Europus<sup>54</sup> made a similar experimental tour, during the course of which he was agreeably surprised because the prophet of an oracle of the Thebaus addressed him, not in Greek, but in his own language.

The possibility of falsification was habitually taken into account. Although Herodotus was convinced of the utility of prophetic utterances, he does not hesitate to mention two cases of bribery: one of the priests,<sup>55</sup> and one of the medium, a woman named Perialla,<sup>56</sup> who, being convicted, was deprived of her office. Willful trickery was at once imputed to their envoys by the citizens of Kyme,<sup>57</sup> who, having consulted the oracle at Branchidai, had received an answer that they could not understand; and prophecy after the event, both deliberate and unwitting, was taken into consideration no less. For a charlatan named Onomacritus<sup>58</sup> attempted to impose on the cunning Athenians by a useful insertion into his collection of oracles, and being driven out by them, he successfully exploited the vanities of the more credulous Xerxes. A similar explanation of the divine power is a favorite resource of the sceptical Thucydides. For he attributes the coincidence of an oracle with the events that it foretold, although they had admittedly come about, to the agitated state of mind of the fearful citizens to whom it had been addressed.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Herodotus I, 53, 55, and 91.

<sup>54</sup> *Ib.* VIII, 134-5.

<sup>55</sup> *Ib.* V, 63.

<sup>56</sup> *Ib.* VI, 66.

<sup>57</sup> *Ib.* I, 155.

<sup>58</sup> *Ib.* VII, 6.

<sup>59</sup> Thucydides II, 54.

The fulfillment of oracular predictions was strenuously asserted and categorically denied. Chrysippus, a Stoic philosopher of eminent repute in later antiquity, published an exhaustive collection of those that had been accomplished. Relying on this work, the apologist in Cicero's essay on divination founds his argument on the acknowledged results of the prophecies,<sup>60</sup> which his opponent contradicts without the encumbrance of a detailed analysis.

Finally, Herodotus records a middle class of oracles to which he applies the word, *kibdeelos*.<sup>61</sup> By this phrase he may mean ambiguous, fraudulent, or the work of deliberate deceit on the part of the animating spirit. The deceptions that were recognized are both numerous and varied; but their wide acknowledgment fortifies the Delphic establishment in the high respect which it nevertheless enjoyed.

The prophetic faculty had the approval of philosophers as well as the confidence of politicians. Plato bestowed on it an explanation that bears a startling resemblance to modern theory.<sup>62</sup> He observes that prophetic words and visions appear to the appetitive part of the soul when the rational is bound in sleep or ecstasy. They are interpreted, however, by conscious intelligence. The oracular afflatus is thus the gift of one class of men; the elucidation of its dicta is the function of another. Aristotle remarks that the frenzy may be due either to a temporary disease or to the inborn constitution of the seer.<sup>63</sup> In the later periods of Greek philosophy clairvoyance, although it had the covert opposition of the Epicureans, was in strict conformity with the doctrines of the Stoics.<sup>64</sup> By this time, however, the great shrine of Apollo had fallen into a disrepute that was shared by all the institutions of the ancient religious order.

The establishment at Delphi prospered with the city states

<sup>60</sup> Cicero *De Divinatione* I, 6-25.

<sup>61</sup> Herodotus I, 66, 75; V, 91 etc.

<sup>62</sup> *Timaeus*, 71, 72. Grote, *Plato*, III p. 275.

<sup>63</sup> *Problemata* XXX. This is my own interpretation of a doubtful passage. The point is that Aristotle accepted the prophetic faculty as a normal attribute of the soul.

<sup>64</sup> Dill, pp. 530-1. For a stimulating and compendious account of the whole question of the oracular influence in Greek religion and of the estimation in which he was held see A. W. Benn, *The Greek Philosophers* XIII, V.

of Greece. Repairing to it on all occasions of public crisis, they were the sources of its wealth and honor. The oracle declined in authority as their power sank under the hegemony of Macedon and the dominion of Rome. It was resurrected, and its temples built anew, during the pagan revival of Augustus; and, although its popularity was usurped by the Apolline shrines at Clarus and Branchidai in Ionia, it protracted a halting existence until it was silenced at the death of Julian the Apostate in the fourth century of our era.<sup>65</sup>

But the questions that were propounded for oracular solution during the first years of the Empire were not concerned so much with high affairs of state as with the private doubts, often monetary and matrimonial, of particular clients. The dignity of the establishments lately risen to prominence was not enhanced because they could be consulted by post. The Roman emperors, however, did not fail to gratify their curiosity or their vanity by resorting to the antique shrine. The intellectual Hadrian tested the wisdom of the Pythia by inquiring where Homer was born.<sup>66</sup> Clairvoyance has a gruesome place in the lives of the family of Nero. For Agrippina, in order to accomplish the death of her rival to the hand of the Emperor Claudius, imputed to her a consultation, which regarded the match, with the Clarian Apollo:<sup>67</sup> and the imperial butcher of his own wife and mother choked with corpses the holy gorge of Delphi, because the prophetess, not forsaking her divine trust, had boldly damned him as a second Orestes.<sup>68</sup>

But the religious rites of classic Greece and old Rome, although they obtained a formal observance, had little respect from the greater part of educated men. The mystic vapidity of the East were pressed in the service of spiritual consolation; and the already thronging halls of Olympus were further congested by the Eastern gods. The old metaphysical systems were debauched by an eclectic promiscuity. The speculative faculty, in so far as it was applied

<sup>65</sup> 363 A. D.

<sup>66</sup> Dill p. 434.

<sup>67</sup> Tacitus *Annals* XII, 22.

to the essential problems of philosophy, was atrophied; and a crowd of sophists trifled with unrelated points of conduct or with idle cosmogonies.

The means of luxurious existence were obtainable easily and in large quantities. But governmental vagaries and an arbitrary taxation, which was sometimes inflicted by the help of threats and torture,<sup>68</sup> weighed on the best people in the state, and rendered precarious the enjoyment of their facile pleasures; while a tawdry civic pride or the stratagems of tyrants excused the lavish pecuniary indulgence of the degraded poor.

The augmented material prosperity and the vitiation of the power of happiness engendered an abundant progeny of physical and nervous disorders. The art of vaticination was devoted to the cure of both the one and the other. A dream temple of Aesculapius was erected on the Island in the Tiber at Rome itself, and many other of his fanes, part monastery and part spa, arose in the healthiest places in Greece and Italy.<sup>69</sup>

The art of the charlatan has never, except in the age of Louis XV of France, been so remunerative or so much in demand. Enterprising seers raised spirits by fires of fossil salts, incense and Etruscan wax; or by contrivances of glass-bottomed cauldrons and deceptive reflections. Others had recourse to the commonplace frauds of ventriloquism, through tubes and trumpets, and of reading their clients questions, which, having been written in sympathetic ink, became visible on the application of chemical reagents.<sup>70</sup>

Alexander,<sup>71</sup> the most celebrated imposter of antiquity, after serving an apprenticeship to an elderly quack, set up a temple of Aesculapius at Abonoteichus in Greece, of

<sup>68</sup> Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, ed. Bury I p. 433.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. the interesting case of Alexis Didier, *Journal of Am. Soc.* XXIX no. 12, and XXX no. 1, who believed that he had the power of discovering and curing disease.

<sup>70</sup> Hippolytus, *Refutation of all Heresies*, LV, 28-42, gives a circumstantial account of the methods of ancient necromancers. It is interesting to note that the reagents named by him to render visible characters written in invisible ink are the same as those in use today. See *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, article *Ink*.

<sup>71</sup> Lucian, *Alexander the False Prophet*.

which he was appointed hierophant in accordance with the dictates of his own ingenius system of numbers. His clients delivered their questions in sealed packets, which he was able to open surreptitiously. In his responses he prescribed panaceas of bear-grease ointment, made ambiguous prophecies of financial and political advantage, and even accorded visions of a fleshly and voluptuous after life. The passion for travel, which was a characteristic of his age, aggravated the curiosity of the gullible rich, and he reaped an annual income of over thirty-five thousand dollars. To a similar perplexity of quackery and theurgic extravagance, Cagliostro<sup>72</sup> owed an even greater affluence. In all ages the fears of valetudinarians have been assuaged by promises of an easy health in this life and of a specious, because sensuous, happiness in another.

Every kind of superstition luxuriated in the courts of the emperors themselves, and a host of astrologers attempted to set straight the neurotic aberrations of an uncertain society. Nero, who professed an open contempt for the established religion tried to propitiate by magic the ghost of the murdered Agrippina; and at the end of his reign his will was emaciated through contradictory pronouncements of the seers that exploited his hopes and fears. For they alternately predicted that he would one day be deserted and betrayed, and that he would found a new empire with its capital at Jerusalem. The incredulous Tiberius and the devout Domitian alike maintained astrologers at their courts; and even Marcus Aurelius is said to have consulted the Chaldeans in regard to a lapse from virtue, an event that was not of rare occurrence, on the part of his amorous wife.<sup>73</sup>

Such were the moral and intellectual qualities of the age in which systematic explanations of avowed prophetic coincidences, which had received but passing notices by the early philosophers, were first propagated. It was widely ad-

<sup>72</sup> T. Carlyle, *Miscellaneous Essays; Cagliostro*. An identical combination of superstitions is revealed in Casanova's *Memoirs*, I ch. 17; II, 14; III, 12, 15, 14.

<sup>73</sup> Dill p. 450, who quotes Spartianus (?) *Marcus Antonius* ch. 19.

mitted that, after purificatory rites, which included temperance in food and drink, the mind, or a part of it, could attain to a preternatural knowledge; and, in accounting for the relations of the soul with the unseen world, which this admission involved, the sages of antiquity were no less ingenious than the theorists of the twentieth century.

In their cosmogonies, the elder gods, although they multiplied with divine prolificity, became also more genteel. Since it was held to be inconsistent with the dignity of deity to enter into personal relations with a mortal, a host of incorporeal beings were recruited to perform the menial offices of mediation. Their terrestrial habitations were in all the lands from the Indus to the Forth, and their distinguishing features were no less varied. As nymphs, heroes, or demi-gods, they were the fruit of the illicit loves for mortals, which were the pastimes of the bad old gods. As cherubim and seraphim, or thrones, dominations, principalities, and powers, they were the angelic messengers of ancient Semetic religion. From England, Egypt, and India were recruited numberless levies of genii and demons: and the souls of departed men, metamorphosed in accordance with the popular tenets of the Pythagoreans, might be of their ranks. They had the intelligence of gods, but the passions and the mortality of men. They were generally good, although they might also be malevolent or deceitful. It was widely believed that each man had his tutelary spirit, which was sometimes identified with his soul. The speculations of the hospitable Greeks tended rather to increase their numbers than to fix their status in relation to one another. The latter task fell to the Christian fathers, who, having set them in their hierarchies, provided a theme for academic exercise which, enduring through the Middle Ages and beyond the Reformation, does not seem yet to be exhausted.

The ethereal residences of these beings were not in the homes of the gods, but in the dusky region below the moon, where they were conveniently upheld by the exhalations from the globe. The universe was composed of five ele-

ments; earth, air, fire, water, and soul or substance; to which their psychology found a useful but arbitrary correspondence in a five fold division of the human soul, of which the rational element was the head. The world substance is the material cause of all natural phenomena. Sometimes the demons are believed to be its guardians and purveyors; sometimes the elements are agitated in an arithmetic or geometric connection. For a diversity of movements<sup>74</sup> conforms to a diversity of form and nature in the cosmic elements, which are related to one another, like musical chords, in a mathematical proportion.

Divination is like memory, an exercise of an inherent capacity in the soul, which, when abnormally developed, manifests itself in frenzy. For divesting itself of its fleshly bonds, it is able to converse with the spiritual creation, who imprint upon it the knowledge of things to come. It was optimistically believed that all things happen by Fate. In accordance with it all causes and effects are linked in an inevitable succession. Time is like the unwinding of a cable, which unfolds each event in its order and presages what is to come by signs that are not justified only through faulty interpretation.<sup>75</sup>

But Cicero, commenting on the diet that purifies the prophet or prophetess, fears that the danger may be that the soul and not the stomach, be filled with wind. Plutarch's friend asks whether the soul of the Pythia in frenzy is congealed and dilated, as it were, like metal, by the application of natural agents, which render the preliminary sacrifices unnecessary; or whether the rules that govern

<sup>74</sup> Kineession. I should like to translate this word as 'vibrations', for which there is no other word in Greek, but in this context (*Why the Oracles Cease their Answers*) it more probably refers to an upward and downward movement of the elements, somewhat as Heraclitus conceived it. The whole passage is extremely confused. Charming man of letters though he was, Plutarch's 'speculative faculty was atrophied', and his philosophic system shows unmistakable signs of having been 'debauched by an eclectic promiscuity'. In my summary I have followed chiefly the dialogue before quoted and Cicero's *De Divinatione*. Plutarch says much the same thing, but not more clearly, in *Why the Oracles at Delphi are no Longer Given in Verse*. These theories were 'in the air' so to speak, at the time, being suggested by many writers, but they are nowhere systematically developed.

<sup>75</sup> *De Divinatione* I, li.

her behavior are those vouchsafed by the heavenly powers to serve as a channel for their relations with men. They too were distressed by the burning questions of interactionism and psycho physical parallelism.

Plutarch in his solution may well have had in mind the dim system of Pythagoras, who had his prophet in Apollonius of Tyana<sup>76</sup> and his sect of votaries in the Elchasaïtes.<sup>77</sup> What were the tenets of this ancient seer is doubtful, although we are not perhaps more ignorant of them than the Pythagoreans; but, aside from his peculiar diet, there were with some reason, imputed to him two doctrines that coloured much of the popular philosophy of the day; namely, the transmigration of souls and the resolution of all things into a system of numbers, in accordance with which divination was widely practised.<sup>78</sup> Plutarch, at all events, who was certainly not blessed with a knowledge of the modern doctrine of atomic weight, denies that there is an opposition between things spiritual and things material. Their relation is in some sort mathematical, although geometry and arithmetic relieve one another with a happy, but ill defined sense of mutual convenience. Perhaps it is some such optimistic sentiment of a general congruity that prompts Plutarch to affirm that the prophetic inspiration occurs when the soul of the Pythia is in a 'harmony or proportion', which is evidently of a mathematical nature, with the spiritual substances who perform their evolutions with the rhythm of the universe.

But laws purloined from mathematics, no more than those of physics or the natural sciences, are applicable to the human soul. It is a law, a province, and a science in itself. Eusebius, with the militant intellectual force that gained the victory for Christian teaching over the decadent

<sup>76</sup> Philostratus *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*. Apollonius imitated Pythagoras in his vegetarian diet and some chatter about the transmigration of souls, but little else. The book contains notices of levitation, both of men (III, 15, 17), and of tables (III, 27); and a circumstantial account of the appearance of a ghost (IV, 11, 12). But since it was written at least a century and a half after the death of the subject, and much of it is fabulous, it is scarcely credible evidence.

<sup>77</sup> Hippolytus *Refutation of all Heresies* IX, 8-11.

<sup>78</sup> *Ib. id.* IV, 14, 15. Casanova used a similar method. *Memoirs* II, 3, 4, etc.

philosophy of Greece and Rome, derides the pagan demons who are at the beck of every necromancer.<sup>79</sup> If they are truly spiritual beings, they are not subject to necessity. But even he, although he distrusts the agents, confesses to the possibility of fore-knowledge.<sup>80</sup> From the opening to the close of a brilliant civilization, the facts of clairvoyance were more largely admitted and utilized than they are today. Their theorists, however, do not appear to have defined its relation to the soul more successfully than our own.

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<sup>79</sup> *Praeparatio Evangelica* IV, 6.

<sup>80</sup> *Treatise against Apollonius*, XXXI.

# A Letter from England

BY DR. NANDOR FODOR

*(Research Officer, International Institute for Psychological Research)*

March, 1937.

## OUT-OF-BODY EXPERIENCES

It is a sign of the times that out-of-body experiences have become respectable. Sax Rohmer, the mystery writer, has recently stated in the Sunday Referee that by weeks of practice "concentrating at the same time each day, memorising the exact route between my study and a friend hundreds of miles away . . . I projected myself . . . across the thundering miles. My distant friend knew nothing of the experiment. Yet he told me later that at that exact moment he had seen me plainly, standing beside him. Given concentration, almost any one can do this sort of thing."

It seems, however, that Sax Rohmer himself was not aware of his success. For this reason his experience lacks the subjective element which is so illuminating. We find it one hundred percent in another account which Sir Auckland Geddes read out to the members of the Royal Medical Society in Edinburgh on the occasion of the bicentenary of the society. He called it a unique document and requested that those in the audience who knew to whom this strange experience befell, should respect the anonymity and professional secrecy in which the communication was veiled and which had been taken down immediately on the patient's return to the body in shorthand by a skilled secretary.

The record describes how the patient began to be aware of another consciousness than that of the body and how the ego attached itself to the former.

"Gradually I realised that I could see not only my body and the bed in which it was, but everything in the whole house and garden, and then I realised that I was seeing not only 'things' at home but in London and in Scotland, in fact wherever my attention was directed it seemed to me; and the explanation which I received from what source I do not know, but which I found myself calling to myself my mentor, was that I was free in a time dimension of space, wherein 'now' was in some way equivalent to 'here' in the ordinary three-dimensional space of everyday life.

"I next realised that my vision included not only 'things' in the ordinary three-dimensional world, but also 'things' in these four or more dimensional places that I was in.

"From now on the description is and must be entirely metaphorical, because there are no words which really describe what I saw or rather appreciated. Although I had no body I had what appeared to be perfect two-eyed vision, and what I saw can only be described in this way, that I was conscious of a psychic stream flowing with life through time, and this gave me the impression of being visible, and it seemed to me to have a particularly intense iridescence.

"I understood from my mentor that all our brains are just end organs projecting as it were from the three-dimensional universe into the psychic stream and flowing with it into the fourth and fifth dimensions. Around each brain, as I saw it, there seemed to be what I can only describe in ordinary words as a condensation of the psychic stream, which formed in each case as though it were a cloud, only it was not a cloud.

"While I was just appreciating this, the mentor who was conveying information to me explained that the fourth dimension was in everything existing in the three-dimensional space, and at the same time everything in the three-dimensional space existed in the fourth dimension and also in the fifth dimension, and I at the time quite clearly understood what was meant, and quite understood how 'now' in the fourth-dimensional universe was just the same to all intents and purposes as 'here' in a three-dimensional universe—that is to say a four dimensional being was everywhere in the 'now', just as one is 'everywhere' in the 'here' in a three-dimensional view of things.

"I then realised that I myself was a condensation, as it were, in the psychic stream, a sort of cloud that was not a cloud, and the visual impression I had of myself was blue. Gradually, I began to recognise people, and I saw the psychic condensation attached to A, B, C, D, E, F and to quite a number of men that I know, especially to G and H.

"In addition I saw quite a number of people that I know had very little psychic condensation at all attached to them. . . . Each of these condensations varied from all others in bulk, sharpness of outline, and apparent solidity.

"Just as I began to grasp all these I saw "A" enter my bedroom; I realised she got a terrible shock, and I saw her hurry to the telephone; I saw my doctor leave his patients and come very quickly; and heard him say or saw him think "He is nearly gone". I heard him quite clearly speaking to me on the bed, but I was not in touch with the body and could not answer him.

"I was really cross when he took a syringe and rapidly injected my body with something which I afterwards learned was camphor. As the heart began to beat more strongly, I was drawn back, and I was intensely annoyed, because I was so interested and just beginning to understand where I was and what I was 'seeing'.

"I came back into the body really angry at being pulled back, and once I was back all the clarity of vision of anything and everything disappeared, and I was just possessed of a glimmer of consciousness which was suffused with pain."

I quoted this account at length as I consider it highly unusual and edifying outside the importance of its presentation to the Royal Medical Society of Edinburgh by a former professor of anatomy. He was quite certain that the account was not a fake. But he refused to say whether it was a dream or a symbolic vision of one aspect of reality translated into inadequate words. He admitted, however, that it helped him "to define the idea of a psychic continuum spread out in time like the plasmic net. It does more; it provides a comprehensible background for the soul palaeontology of Jung, and it seems to throw a flood of light on the meaning of soul abysses discovered by the method of Freud. It brings telepathy, clairvoyance, spiritualism, and, indeed, all the parapsychic manifestations into the domain of the picturable. It also provides a rational seeming background for such ideas as the group or national soul and such a conception as the psychic atmosphere. But, most important, it makes the idea of the lifelong unity of body and soul much simpler to grasp."

I am particularly interested in the role which an apparent "mentor" plays in the account. It strikes a chord of memory within me. When, some time ago, I had myself injected with mescaline and a glorious panorama of symbolic visions opened up before my mind, I, too, found a certain intelligent sequence in the presentation. It appeared to me as if I were being taught. As soon as I grasped the idea which the symbols represented, they dropped away and something else took their place. This, in turn, persisted until I understood its meaning. In other words, I was conscious of a guiding influence in my stupendous experience but this influence was not a personality; it never occurred to me to call it a "mentor" and my notes describe it in an impersonal manner "as if teachings were given to me". However, I was definitely in the body. Mescaline is a unique drug in this respect, it does not inhibit the normal consciousness, it only causes a dissociation or an awareness of a cosmic plane. At least, it appeared to cause this in my case. Others had terrifying experiences. In fact, one of the doctors who watched me during the time the stupor lasted frankly told me afterwards that he had the worst experience of his life when he had himself injected with mescaline. He was pursued by demons and snakes and he was horribly frightened. Nothing, he said, could ever tempt him to undergo the experiment again.

*WAS IT THE PROJECTION OF THE DOG?*

Returning to the subject of astral projection, I heard the pattering of an invisible dog in my own flat the other night and this is the story:

I had to give away my dog. He behaved like a true bookworm: eating up, literally, my best books. The going of the dog, however, was a bad day for us. My daughter sobbed bitterly and we were all upset as the dog was very affectionate and we loved him.

The dog used to sleep in a small passage in front of my bedroom. At night, I suddenly woke up from a deep sleep. Something was scratching my bedroom door as if seeking admission. Then, distinctly, I heard the pattering footsteps of a dog. They died away in the direction of my drawing room.

As I was sitting up in bed, greatly wondering, something still stranger happened.

The dog used to play the piano. That is, my daughter taught him to jump on the stool and bang the keys with his fore-paws. My piano was shut. My daughter was asleep. Outside myself and my wife there was no one in the flat.

Suddenly, two notes were struck on the deep end of the piano, then another two on the treble end.

Then silence.

I could not help associating the notes with the dog. Was he dreaming vividly of the old home which he had lost through misbehaviour?

Something more has to be postulated if we are to explain the physical effects which were produced. Was he, in his 'dream body' as a phantom paying an actual visit to me?

As I never suffer from hallucination and I was certainly not dreaming, I confess that this seems to me the only explanation that covers the case.

*WILLIAM GERHARDI'S PROBLEM.*

An absurd story was published the other day in the Sunday Chronicle about William Gerhardi, the well known novelist. In an interview he was quoted as saying that he will undergo tests for self-projection (in which he had some remarkable experiences) at the International Institute for Psychical Research by being placed in a tank in which his astral body is going to be photographed.

The reporter had dished up an old story in a badly confused form. Some two years ago when we built a Cloud Chamber at the Institute to check up on Watters' claim regarding the intra-atomic quantity, I suggested to Gerhardi that if in a deep hypnotic state he could exteriorise an astral hand and place it in the Cloud Chamber we

could photograph it by the usual cloud chamber technique. There was no question, however, of placing him into a cloud chamber as, for reasons of physics, no cloud chamber of that size could be built. Moreover, the experiment would be an extremely risky one.

The absurd story went well in the Press and Mr. Gerhardi has received offers for an exclusive story. He then rung me up and proffered his excuses. The whole thing was very silly, he said, but at the same time he desired to know if anything could be done to check up instrumentally on self-projection if he would be successful in it at some future date. He has these experiences from time to time but cannot command them. He thinks that the astral body is of varying density because, on some occasions, he was able to pick up and feel a wire, on other occasions his hand went right through it.

The wire suggested to me a solution of Gerhardi's problem. It is possible that, by force of habit, the astral body would leave through the door. If then an infra-red projector would be set up in his bedroom, the ray of which would be passing in front of the door, the astral body, on leaving, would cross the line and, if sufficiently solid to cause an occultation, would either ring a bell or fire a flashlight and thus photograph itself on a plate prepared in a duly focussed camera.

I warned him, however, that the chances of obtaining any results are extremely small; but if he did obtain any, it would be of the utmost importance.

The proposition has fired Gerhardi's imagination and I shall be looking forward with keen interest to hear of his future adventures.

### *THE FACE ON THE WALL*

I had to deal with a curious problem a few weeks ago. There was a house in Chelmsford from which the tenants, a Mr. and Mrs. Kear, had to move because a strange face kept on appearing in the mirrors of the various rooms. Mrs. Kear busily "rubbed him off" but it was no use, the face always came back and finally appeared, in the form of a wet mark, in the plaster of the kitchen wall. They scratched it off but it stayed there just the same.

I have always been fascinated by similar problems. The face of Dean Liddell on the wall of Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford is a classical instance. I found a similar one in Llandaff Cathedral, Cardiff where Dean Vaughan's face appeared on the wall two weeks after his death. This was about 40 years ago. As in Oxford, the face was covered up but I was fortunate in obtaining an original negative which was taken shortly after the appearance of the face. When I heard of the face in Chelmsford, I arranged for a personal

inspection and examination of the parties concerned on the spot.

I was disappointed in the face on the kitchen wall. It was no more a face. Just a discoloration. It could not even be photographed. Whether it was a clear-cut face before, rests on the testimony of people who were already in a state of high excitement because of the apparitions in the mirror. I think that the story of the face on the kitchen wall has to be discounted. On the other hand, the mirror apparitions well deserves attention.

As I was told by Mrs. Kear, a bluish mist appeared over the mirror, leaving a greasy mark behind. In that mist, looking from a certain angle, the face of a man was clearly visible. The face was always turned to the left and showed the same features on every occasion. Now and then, the whole figure of the man appeared. On the first occasion, he was lying in bed, on another he was in a business suit, apparently going out. The visions had a purpose which Mrs. Kear seemed to grasp. The man who had built the house died in it. His widow left it. The message which the apparition conveyed to Mrs. Kear's mind was that the widow should return to the house and continue living in it. Neither Mrs. Kear nor her husband had known the man in life but they found that the description of the apparition in the mirror tallied with the dead man's features.

The vision in the mirror has been seen simultaneously by several people. Mrs. Kear's children saw it and the neighbours saw it. On one occasion, the face appeared simultaneously in the right and left hand side mirror of the same wardrobe. It could never be wiped off completely, though Mrs. Kear tried it hard. She is not a spiritualist, and knows nothing of psychic phenomena. The notoriety which these apparitions caused and the excitement which followed finally unnerved her. She insisted that they should move out of the house before their monthly rent expired. Since then, the house has been broken into by the curious.

Under cross examination, conducted by my companion-in-the-adventure, Mr. Eric Cuddon, a barrister and a member of the Council of the International Institute for Psychological Research, both Mr. and Mrs. Kear acquitted themselves well. We could not shake off the impression that their experience was not of a hallucinatory character and the house was the scene of a curious form of haunting.

It is rumoured in Chelmsford that the widow of the owner had to move out of the house for the same reason as the Kears did. She saw the face, too, and was so upset that she had the mirrors turned, backs to the wall.

I have not yet obtained confirmation of this story. I would like to find somebody to rent the house and watch for the apparition in the mirror. Perhaps I shall succeed.

## The Autobiography of Rudyard Kipling

BY JOCELYN PIERSON

In his autobiography entitled "Something of Myself", Mr. Rudyard Kipling expresses his opinion of "psychics" and gives an account of a veridical dream which he experienced himself. We are constantly coming across fresh instances of these "glimpses of the future" revealed in dreams and they always renew vain speculations on the nature of time and the fourth dimension. Mr. Kipling calls his experience "a roll of life-film."

"I am in no way 'psychic'. Dealing as I have done with large, superficial areas of incident and occasion, one is bound to make a few lucky hits or happy deductions. But there is no need to drag in the 'clairvoyance' or the rest of the modern jargon. I have seen too much evil and sorrow and wreck of good minds on the road to Endor to take one step along that perilous track. Once only was I sure that I had 'passed beyond the bounds of ordinance.' I dreamt that I stood, in my best clothes, which I do not wear as a rule, one in a line of similarly habited men, in some vast hall, floored with rough-jointed stone slabs.

"Opposite me, the width of the hall, was another line of persons and the impression of a crowd behind them. On my left some ceremony was taking place that I wanted to see, but could not unless I stepped out of my line, because the fat stomach of my neighbour on my left barred my vision. At the ceremony's close, both lines of spectators broke up and moved forward and met, and the great space was filled with people. Then a man came up behind me, slipped his hand beneath my arm and said:—'I want a word with you.' I forget the rest; but it had been a perfectly clear dream, and it stuck in my memory.

"Six weeks or more later, I attended in my capacity as a member of the War Graves Commission a ceremony at Westminster Abbey, where the Prince of Wales dedicated

a plaque to 'The Million Dead' of the Great War. We Commissioners lined up facing, across the width of the Abbey Nave, more members of the Ministry and a big body of the public behind them, all in black clothes. I could see nothing of the ceremony because the stomach of the man on my left barred my vision. Then my eye was caught by the cracks of the stone flooring, and I said to myself:—'But here is where I have been!' We broke up, both lines flowed forward and met, and the Nave filled with a crowd, through which a man came up and slipped his hand upon my arm saying:—'I want a word with you.' It was about some trivial matter that I have forgotten.

"But how, and why had I been shown an unreleased roll of my life-film? For the sake of the 'Weaker brethren' and sisters—I made no use of the experience."

It seems extraordinary that Kipling should have been filled with superstitious fear by psychic manifestations. An attitude of complete skepticism would be understandable, but Mr. Kipling speaks of his experience as "passed the bounds of ordinance", and asks "Why had I been shown an unreleased roll of my life-film?" It seems a great deal more likely that this dream was one of many such experiences, but the only one retained in the conscious memory after waking. Its triviality points to such an explanation. As the dream prophesied nothing of importance, it hardly belongs to the class of prophetic dreams. The question arises: Why did Mr. Kipling remember this dream and not others? It is impossible to answer, but over-fatigue or ill health might easily account for a trick of memory.

Kipling speaks twice again of circumstances that might be said to demand a supernormal explanation. In his account of the Boer War, he tells of his first meeting with Rhodes and describes him thus:

"He was as inarticulate as a schoolboy of fifteen. Jame-son and he, as I perceived later, communicated by telepathy."

It is probable that by "Telepathy" Kipling means that rare understanding that sometimes develops between

friends, that makes much verbal expression unnecessary.

The second instance is much more puzzling. It concerns his lengthy discussion of his "Daemon." If it were not for his earlier question "Why was I *shown* a roll of life film?" which indicates a blind acceptance of some sort of guiding providence, it would appear definite that Kipling was indulging in allegorical whimsy. The "Daemon of Socrates" is nowadays used as a metaphorical simile. Though F. W. H. Myers in *Human Personality* takes a different view. As the definition of the word "Daemon" has great bearing on Kipling's "Inspirer" it is necessary to go into the meanings of the word from the Greek times, though we shall never know exactly what Kipling meant. It is doubtful if he quite knew himself.

In Greek Mythology a daemon is a supernatural agent or intelligence lower in rank than a god; a spirit holding a middle place between Gods and men, one of a class of ministering spirits, sometimes regarded as including the souls of deceased persons; a genius. It did not mean an evil spirit as the word *demon* suggests today. Lecky says:

"A daemon in the philosophy of Plato, though inferior to a deity was not an evil spirit, and it is extremely doubtful whether the existence of evil daemons was known either to the Greeks or Romans till about the time of the Advent of Christ."

Myers (*Human Personality*, vol. II, page 95) discusses the Daemon of Socrates:

"The Founder of Science himself,—the permanent type of sanity, shrewdness, physical robustness, and moral balance,—was guided in all the affairs of life by a monitory Voice,—by 'the Daemon of Socrates.' This is a case which can never lose its interest, a case which has been vouched for by the most practical, and discussed by the loftiest intellect of Greece,—both of them intimate friends of the illustrious subject;—a case, therefore, which one who endeavours to throw new light on hallucination and automatism is bound, even at this distance of time, to endeavour to explain. And this is the more needful, since a

treatise was actually written, a generation ago, as "A specimen of the application of the science of psychology to the science of history," arguing from the records . . . in Xenophon and Plato that Socrates was in fact insane.

"I believe that it is now possible to give a truer explanation; to place these old records in juxtaposition with more instructive parallels; and to show that the messages which Socrates received were only advanced examples of a process which, if supernormal, is not abnormal, and which characterises that form of intelligence which we describe as genius. For genius . . . is best defined—not as "an unlimited capacity for taking pains"—but rather as a mental constitution which allows a man to draw readily into supraliminal life the products of subliminal thought.

"I have already urged that beneath the superficially conscious stratum of our being there is not only a stratum of dream and confusion, but a still subjacent stratum of coherent mentation as well. This thesis, I think, is strongly supported by the records which have come down to us as to the Daemon of Socrates. We shall see that the monitions which Socrates thus received were for the most part such as his own wiser self might well have given, and that where the limits of knowledge attainable by his own inmost reflection may possibly have been transcended they seem to have been transcended in such direction as a clairvoyant development of his own faculties might allow, rather than in such a way as to suggest the intervention of an external power."

It is highly improbable that Kipling believed his inspiration came from an external entity. That does not mean, however, that it did not. In reading the description that he gives of his daemon below, the reader must keep in mind these two possible explanations of Kipling's genius; an external guide or Greek mythological daemon inspiring him from outside, and the "mental constitution" of Myers which fits its possessor to use the vast unknown regions of the "subliminal self".

Kipling writes:

"This is the doom of the Makers  
Their Daemon lives in their pen.  
If he be absent or sleeping, they  
Are even as other men.  
But if he be utterly present, and  
They swerve not from his behest,  
The word that he gives shall continue  
Whether in earnest or jest."

"Most men, and some most unlikely, keep him under an alias which varies with their literary or scientific attainments. Mine came to me early when I sat bewildered among other notions, and said, "Take this and no other." I obeyed and was rewarded. . . . My Daemon was with me in the *Jungle* books, *Kim*, and both *Puck* books, and good care I took to walk delicately, lest he should withdraw. I know he did not because when those books were finished they said so themselves with almost the water-hammer click of a tap turned off. One of the clauses in our contract was that I should never follow up 'a success', for by this sin fell Napoleon and a few others. Note here. When your Daemon is in charge do not try to think consciously. Drift, wait, and obey."

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## A Study of Clairvoyance

### PART I

BY JOCELYN PIERSON

Men in the fields of physical and biological science are finally beginning to admit that there are definite and important problems in the psychic realm that should be attacked with purposeful intelligence. A marked change in their attitude has been noted in the last year or two. This change is due, alas, less to the brilliant work done by psychic researchers, than to a realization of the inadequacy of present materialistic theories to account for little understood phases of life.

Scientists and intelligent laymen have long contended that no significant progress is likely to be made until the mode of attacking the problem approximates that of the established sciences. Dr. Rhine, whose experiments at Duke University have recently received so much attention, has come closer to an adequate mathematical method of tabulation, than any other man working with extra-sensory material. But Dr. Rhine's method is only practical for conditioned experimental clairvoyance. The work in thought transference and clairvoyance that has been carried on with the Rhine cards is limited to the five symbols reproduced upon them; symbols that are already known to the recipient. It

is therefore possible to make an exact statement of the accuracy or error resulting. With clairvoyance which is partly spontaneous, such as that studied in the pages that follow, no such exact statement can be made. The term "partly spontaneous" is employed because objects were used to create contact with the subjects of the readings, and the results were obtained at a series of sittings held regularly for the purpose. "Spontaneous" without qualification indicates the kind of clairvoyance received without warning at any time or place, either as a strong impression or a sudden vision. In discussing the means of tabulating such phenomena, the following studies are classed as spontaneous in contradistinction to the Rhine Conditioned Clairvoyance.

The method of Mr. Pratt, as set forth in a recent Bulletin of the Boston Society for Psychic Research, in evaluating material similar to that used in the following studies, is to classify a whole reading into divisions of right and wrong and take a percentage. The object of the following studies, although they do not lay claim to Mr. Pratt's precision, is to show the inadequacy of this method for the purposes of scientific tabulation. It is not my intention to depreciate Mr. Pratt's analysis, but only to appeal to those of the JOURNAL's readers who have more than average ingenuity to put their minds on this problem and discover some new way in which to prepare such clairvoyant material for a fairer criticism.

It will be shown in the following pages that the relative importance of the sensitive's impressions makes a comparison by percentages utterly false. The sensitive may hit upon the most important undercurrents of a person's life, and yet by a series of relatively unimportant errors he may pull his score of accuracy down to almost nothing.

This article would perhaps more properly have been called, *A Study of Psychometry*, because objects were used to establish a line of contact between medium and subject. But as the objects, themselves, were usually not named, and no attempt was made to trace their histories, clairvoyance seems a more descriptive term.

The sensitive in question is a very gifted lady whose only reward for her patience and kindness in devoting the time necessary for these studies, is the gratitude of her fellow workers and the knowledge that she has added a little more to what is already known of this extraordinary faculty. The writer wishes to take this opportunity to thank her very cordially.

The impressions received from each object are chiefly connected with their owners. The objects were collected by the participants. Some of them were personal possessions and some were borrowed from friends. Since the readings are of a personal nature and closely connected with the participants in the experiment, it is obviously impossible to give their names and they will be designated in the record by arbitrary initials. In one case the reading was so nearly correct throughout that a few phrases have had to be changed to prevent identification. However, the score remains the same. All names and original records are kept on file at Hyslop House and may be seen upon application.

Beside Mrs. L., the sensitive, her secretary and myself, there were present three gentlemen; a physicist, Dr. C. B. E., a Trustee of the Society, Mr. S. E., and a European visitor to this country, Mr. A. W. The sensitive's daughter and a friend joined the group once or twice. Those present at each meeting are enumerated in the record.

Several schemes were tried to vary the conditions and if possible to rule out mind reading and telepathy. The circumstances are given in full in the record. It is sufficient to say here that the articles used for contact remained sealed in identical envelopes while in the presence of the medium throughout the experiments. In only two instances were the owners of the objects well known to the medium and in both cases the readings were total failures. The personal objects contributed by Dr. C. B. E. and myself drew no recognizable material though they were presented at each meeting. Mr. A. W., on the other hand, had a fair amount of success with all three of his contributions. Among all the sitters he would be the most difficult to find out any-

thing about in the normal way, as he was only making a brief visit to the country and has few acquaintances here.

A large number of the readings were failures and yet there is some good scoring, far beyond the possibilities of guesswork, in those that were successful. If all the correct statements were compared to all the errors the medium's average would not be very high, yet in a number of instances, points were brought out that could not possibly have been known to the medium through normal channels and which were quite startling in their significance. The record is particularly interesting because the conditions were made so difficult, and in all but the last sitting there was some real success. This last sitting was full of confusion: people walking in and out of the room and talking in whispers. The results are very poor and not a fair example of the medium's powers and are not reported in this article. However, had the medium been giving reign to her imagination only, there is no reason why she should not have had as many lucky hits in this sitting as in the former ones. And had she been obtaining information by other than supernatural channels, it would seem as if this last sitting should have been the best one. The same objects were used as in the previous sitting and more time had elapsed in which a collection of such information could have been made. However, just the opposite was the case.

Please keep in mind while reading the record the purpose of the article: to show the inadequacy of such mathematical calculation in evaluating spontaneous clairvoyance.

#### Psychometry Test with Mrs. L., December 28, 1936

Those present were: Mrs. L., her secretary, her daughter Miss L., Mr. A. W., Dr. C. B. E., Mr. K. a friend of Mrs. L.'s, and the writer.

The objects were collected by me from among my friends. By special request I received them already sealed so that I did not know their contents and was not sure that they were the personal possessions of the friends who gave them to

me. They were sealed in identical white envelopes marked 1, 2, 3, and 4. Mr. A. W. added a fifth envelope to these, a personal belonging, wrapped by himself in plain paper and sealed with a signet ring impression. This packet marked No. 5 was dissimilar in shape from the others, and in this sitting no attempt was made to conceal the identity of this package from the sitters. It is possible therefore that mind-reading played some part in the reading for No. 5.

In the readings below, all statements made by Mrs. L. concerning each object are listed, unless a special note to the contrary is appended. Statements of a *general* nature that would be likely to be applicable to a number of persons, are marked G. and count 1 point if correct. Statements of a *specific* nature that are likely to be applicable to the subject of the reading only, are marked S. and count 2 points if correct. Specific statements that are correct in part and about which the sensitive appeared to be hesitant, are marked  $\frac{1}{2}$  and count 1 point.

*Object No. 1.* (On later inspection this object proved to be a bracelet belonging to Mrs. M. It had been given her by Mr. M. on the anniversary of their marriage about fifteen years ago and had the initials of both Mr. and Mrs. M. and the date of the gift inscribed inside.)

This object is connected with a man who is dead. He may not be dead but if he is not, he has suffered from a long illness.	Mr. M. who gave the object to Mrs. M. is not dead but has suffered from a long illness. $\frac{1}{2}$ (S.)	1
He died at the age of 63 or 65.	His present age is 64. $\frac{1}{2}$ (S.)	1
He had two operations.	Correct.	(S.) 2
One five years before his death.	The last one five years ago.	(S.) 1
He had something the matter with his kidneys.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He had a long suspended hit and miss illness neither ill nor well.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He had jaundice.	Wrong.	(S.)

And indigestion.	Correct.	(S.) 2
His death was sudden from a stroke.	He has had a stroke. ½	(S.) 1
His birthday was in July.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He had been dead for six or seven years.	Wrong.	(S.)
The most painful and unhappy part of his life was between 1901 and 1922.	Impossible to determine. (Not counted.)	
He has had much bad health.	Correct.	(S.) 2
Difficulties.	Correct.	(G.) 1
Reverses.	Correct.	(G.) 1
The kind of time that made the close relationship connected with this object very difficult.	Correct. Really two statements. The close relationship connected with the object is inferred. The difficulty due to reverses is especially applicable.	(S.) 4
This man is clear minded, precise.	Correct.	(G.) 1
He had a technical mind.	Correct.	(S.) 2
Science.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He was reserved.	Wrong.	(G.)
He had a tendency to write.	Wrong.	(S.)
He never had much money.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He was a bad business man.	Correct.	(S.) 2
There was difficulty about money.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He was not very happy at home.	Correct.	(S.) 2
Sensitive.	Correct.	(G.) 1
Not able to give expression to his thoughts.	Along certain lines. ½	(S.) 1
I think there was a German grandmother.	Wrong.	(S.)
The names Franklyn and Louise.	Wrong.	(S.)

They passed out before he did.	Wrong.	(S.)
A signet ring is connected with this.	A signet ring might have significance in the relationship of these two.	(S.) 1
The initials W.E.H.	Unrecognized.	(S.)
The person who submitted this is a woman.	Correct.	(S.) 2
She is alert.	Correct.	(G.) 1
Sensitive.	Correct.	(G.) 1
She does not deviate from her purpose.	Correct.	(G.) 1
She has a predisposition to delicacy of digestion.	Correct.	(S.) 2
She had a sister who passed out.	Wrong.	(S.)
Her name was Emma or Emily.	Wrong.	(S.)
Her death was not recent.	Wrong.	(S.)
There was a strong link between them in childhood.	Mrs. M. has a sister living with whom she had an exceptionally strong link in childhood. $\frac{1}{2}$	(S.) 1
The object has been near a picture in a box or drawer in which were old pictures connected with this sister.	Wrong. As far as Mrs. M. knows the bracelet has been in a sewing basket for a long time.	(S.)
She is worried about someone named Robert or Roberts who flies.	Wrong.	(S.)
There is the loss of a child connected with this lady.	Correct. She lost a child.	(S.) 2
The loss of a brother.	Correct. She has lost two brothers.	(S.) 2
The loss of a sister.	Wrong.	(S.)
The loss of a father.	Correct.	(S.) 2

In the above record there are 47 statements. One of these is not counted. There are 38 specific statements and 8 general statements.

The perfect score would be 84. The sensitive's score is 52, or 61.9 percent correct.

May I now again point out the inaccuracy of this method of evaluation? In marking this reading with the assistance of Mrs. M. I have taken scrupulous pains to be as exact as it is possible to be with this type of material. I have avoided trying to find some round-about explanation for a fact not obviously applicable. For example, Mr. and Mrs. M. know two Louises living and one dead. But no particular connection could be found with any of these ladies and the object in question. Louise is therefore marked as unrecognized. 61.9 percent is a good score but it does not indicate the really startling excellence of the first part of the reading. For example, the following facts peculiar to the owner of this object were enumerated:

The object belongs to a woman. It is closely connected with a man who has a technical mind; who is in fact a scientist; and who has suffered from kidney trouble and a stroke. This man has had years of ill health and money reverses. He is about 63 years of age and his birthday is in July. A close relationship between this man and the owner of the object is indicated. The owner has a predisposition to delicacy in digestion and has lost a child.

Do these indications fit the average person male or female, young or old, who might have been the owner of the object concealed in a plain white envelope; an object, the owner of which, and nature of which, was unknown to anyone present at the time of the reading?

*Object No. 2.* (Mr. A. W.'s envelope containing an empty note case with his initials on it, and the initials of a deceased uncle taken off an old note case of his for sentiment's sake. The second initials are mentioned because it is possible that some of the sensitive's impressions were associated with the first owner of these initials.)

This is a bank book.

It was in reality a case  
for paper money.  $\frac{1}{2}$  (S.) 1

Something to do with securities or figures.	Partly correct. ½ (S.) 1
It contains papers and a letter.	Wrong. It was empty. (S.)
It belongs to someone not in good health.	Wrong (as far as he knows Mr. A. W. is in excellent health). (S.)
There is a tendency to inflammation in the shoulder due to a deeper seated trouble.	Mr. A. W. has suffered recently from a rheumatic pain in the lower part of his back. The cause is unknown though he associates it with a severe case of lumbago contracted in the trenches during the war. (S.) 1
The gall bladder.	Unknown (not counted).
His business has been held up by recurring ill health.	Wrong. (S.)
He has excellent business prospects in spite of the fact that such has been far from the case up till now.	Two statements; one prophetic and one wrong. Business has not been particularly bad for Mr. A. W. of late. (S.)
His sister is also in bad health from acute nervousness.	Wrong. Mr. A. W.'s sister is very well. (S.)
He is contemplating a change of dwelling and climate.	Correct. Mr. A. W. is considering returning to the tropics to live. (S.) 2
Logic tells him to wait and intuition tells him to go ahead.	Partly correct. ½ (S.) 1
He is wondering if he really ought to make this change.	Correct. Mr. A. W. has found it difficult to make a decision in regard to this step. (S.) 2
The change would be advantageous from every aspect; health, activities and pursuits.	Prophetic. (not counted).
A woman connected with him suffers very much.	Correct. His wife has been very ill with a nervous breakdown. (S.) 2

She has something like secondary anaemia.	Correct. She has suffered for a long time from an anaemic condition. (S.) 2
I think he is divorced.	Not divorced but legally separated. (S.) 2
This woman might be his wife.	Correct. (S.) 2
He has a sentimental concern for someone or some people at a distance.	Correct. Mr. A. W.'s wife and family are in Europe. He is much concerned about them. (S.) 2
Perhaps in the Northwest.	The true direction from N. Y. would be north-east. $\frac{1}{2}$ (S.) 1
I see that he no longer lives with his family.	Correct. (S.) 2
He is a very charming person.	Correct. (G.) 1
He is comprehensive in a nice way.	Too indefinite. (not counted).
He is not a person to be advised by as he has difficulty in making up his mind.	Mr. A. W. does not feel this is characteristic. (not counted).
He had a very fine father.	Mr. A. W. does not agree. (S.)
He was a New England type.	Mr. A. W.'s father was a northern European, but in looks not unlike the New England type. $\frac{1}{2}$ (S.) 1
He might have been a German. No, I think there is no German blood. It is Scotch.	Mr. A. W.'s father had both Dutch and Scotch blood. (S.) 2
His mother's name was Helen.	Wrong. (S.)
His father died when he was about eighty-two.	Wrong. Mr. A. W.'s father was 73 when he died. (S.)
He had a clear skin.	Correct. (G.) 1
Had lost his hair.	Wrong. (G.)
He looked a little like Sir Oliver Lodge.	Wrong. (S.)

He was tall and well built.	Correct.	(G.) 1
Stanley, Michael or Mitchell.	Wrong.	(S.)
He had a sister Mary who passed out at the age of nine or ten.	Wrong.	(S.)
He is a sentimental gentleman.	Correct.	(G.) 1

In this reading we have 34 statements. 3 are not counted, 26 are specific and 5 are general. The perfect score is 57. The medium's score is 28. The medium's percent of accuracy is approximately 49.1.

The beginning of this reading was poor and pulled down the score. Yet the following important points were brought out: Mr. A. W.'s unhappy family situation, his separation from them; his wife's ill health due to anaemia, and his contemplated change of residence. The sensitive had never before seen Mr. A. W. and it is most unlikely she would know or have any means of finding out anything about him. He has never been interested before in psychic gifts and has never been associated with a psychic society or group of people pursuing such research. He is a European and was on a brief visit to this country where he knows very few people. Mrs. L. did not know that any of the packets presented to her had any connection with Mr. A. W.

*Object No. 3.* (This envelope contained a very small letter written to Mrs. G. by her daughter but pretending to be written by Mrs. G.'s grandchild, then only a few weeks old. The child later died, causing great sorrow to Mrs. G. and she has a great sentimental attachment for this little letter. I received the envelope already sealed from Mrs. G. so I did not know before the reading what it contained. I knew a good deal of Mrs. G.'s character but as I was not able to tell the order in which the envelopes were placed in Mrs. L.'s hands, I did not know when Mrs. G.'s envelope was presented for impressions. One or two points, the strained ankle and Mrs. G.'s relationship to her mother and sister were completely unknown to me. Mrs. G. has no interest

in psychic matters, has never attended a séance, and has never seen or heard of the sensitive, Mrs. L.

This is a sentimental thing. It is just like lavender and old lace.	The character of the object described above bears out this statement. (S.) 2
This belongs to a most sentimental woman.	Correct. It is almost the first impression one receives about Mrs. G on making her acquaintance. (S.) 2
Her mind runs like this. God is good. The Lord will provide. You must not make up your mind because you never know.	These statements are hard to score but Mrs. G. says they are correct. (G.) 1
She is no judge.	Indefinite statement. She is a poor judge of some things, and an excellent judge of others. (not counted.)
She has been brought up on maxims.	Mrs. G. says this is true. (S.) 2
She is very warm hearted and generous.	Correct (G.) 1
She is very nice.	Correct. (G.) 1
She never believes the worst of anybody.	Correct. (G.) 1
She has a great deal of courage.	Correct. (G.) 1
She is able to meet difficulties.	Correct. (G.) 1
She is hoping God will provide for a meeting with someone . . .	Mrs. G. has been anxious to remarry for ten years but until this year difficulties, financial and otherwise, have made it quite impossible. (S.) 2
His name is Arthur.	Wrong. (S.)
She also hopes to meet her sister.	Correct. (S.) 2
In May.	Correct. Mrs. G. expects to meet her fiancé and be married in May in Eu-

	rope. Her sister is abroad now and will meet her at that time according to present plans. (S.) 2
Her faith brings things about.	Mrs. G. believes this to be true. (G.) 1
She feels that it is about time Arthur changed his mind about something.	Mrs. G. affirms this. (S.) 2
She is small.	Correct. (G.) 1
Is still pretty.	Correct. (G.) 1
And dark.	Correct. (G.) 1
Her hair is beginning to grow grey.	Correct. (S.) 2
She gets a little flustered easily.	Correct. (S.) 2
She is quite tired.	Correct. She is a business woman and has worked especially hard lately. (S.) 2
She has hurt her ankle.	Correct. I marked this wrong in my preliminary scoring before I referred it to Mrs. G. On seeing her the following day I was amazed to find her ankle bound up. (S.) 2
She seems to walk a little heavily on one foot.	Correct. Due to a temporary strain. (S.) 2
She showed extreme fatigue around October.	Correct. Mrs. G. had a tonsil operation in September and felt very tired and listless during October. (S.) 2
She seems to have had an early marriage.	Correct. She married at about 20. (S.) 2
A tragic one.	Correct. (S.) 2
She must have been married about 20.	Correct. (S.) 2
Somebody to whom she was devoted died early.	Not placed. (S.)

His name was Harold.	Wrong.	(S.)
She is expecting a letter from Europe.	Correct. Mrs. G.'s two married daughters and her sister live in Europe.	(S.) 2
She must have someone over there.	Correct.	(S.) 2
Perhaps it is a niece travelling or a sister or sister-in-law.	Partly correct. All Mrs. G.'s family live abroad.	(S.) 1
She was devoted to her father.	Correct.	(S.) 2
Charles Manville or Mandel.	Wrong.	(S.)
Her mother was delightful but closer to her sister.	Correct. (Unknown to me.)	(S.) 2
She doesn't face realities.	Mrs. G. counts this correct but as she became a successful business woman when the necessity arose and educated her two daughters, I consider the statement incorrect.	(G.)
She is not very religious except perhaps sentimentally so.	Mrs. G. considers this peculiarly correct.	(S.) 2
She should look after her health.	Prophetic. (not counted.)	
I think she will soon change her glasses.	Prophetic. (not counted.)	

In this reading there are 40 statements, 3 of which are not counted. 26 of them are specific and 11 general. The perfect score is 63. The medium's score is 53. The medium's percent of accuracy is 84.1.

The fact that I did not know that Mrs. G. was suffering from a strained ankle is significant in this reading. I was in the habit of seeing Mrs. G. frequently about this time and it is possible that I had subconsciously noted the bandaged ankle. The strain is due to a chronic weakness rather than a special accident and Mrs. G. is in the habit of binding it up now and then. It was therefore impossible to be sure that I had not at some time seen it bound. However, I know that I was not consciously aware of it as I have my x mark against my first note made at the medium's house.

*(To be concluded in the June issue)*

## An Experiment in "Control" by Post-Hypnotic Suggestion

(Reprinted from "*Psychic Science*")

BY ERIC CUDDON, M.A., B.C.L.

The account which follows of an experiment in post-hypnotic suggestion recently conducted with the collaboration of the B.C.P.S. may indicate a possible explanation of the Trance Control of some mediums. The type of mediumship which particularly lends itself to such a solution is that of the Public Trance Addresses which are a weekly feature of Spiritualist meetings throughout the country.

It is not intended to impute directly or indirectly to any medium any CONSCIOUS fraud nor is it suggested that, because a semblance of spirit control may be obtained by this means in a suitable subject, therefore no genuine control by a discarnate entity is possible or indeed frequent.

It is, however, submitted that the experiment shows the possibility of a medium being hypnotised and told in that state the gist of an address that is to be delivered at a public meeting; the medium will duly become entranced at the appointed time and upon regaining consciousness will be wholly unaware of what has occurred; indeed, the medium will not recollect being hypnotised provided the hypnotist took the precaution of giving the necessary suggestion during the hypnosis. Further, quite apart from any question of hypnosis, it appears probable that in some cases the "Controls" of mediums may be merely temporary rôles assumed by their subconscious minds to give voice to knowledge or ideas which are foreign to their normal consciousness; but these do not necessarily imply any paranormal activity, nor is the acceptance of Spirit Intervention necessary to explain them.

Although the powers of hypnotised persons vary considerably a good subject will usually display three striking phenomena:

### 1. AMNESIA

At the termination of hypnosis the Subject is consciously unaware of anything that has occurred during the hypnosis unless, whilst in trance, the Hypnotist has specifically directed the Subject to recall something upon awakening. If, however, the Subject is rehypnotised and the subconscious mind questioned, then all that the Subject did in the previous hypnosis will be faithfully reported.

(N.B.—But see below for modification of this Phenomenon so far as this particular experiment is concerned.)

### 2. IMPERSONATION

The Subject readily assumes the rôle of any character suggested, so long as it is not repugnant to the subconscious mind, and behaves in the way in which he or she believes to be natural to that character.

### 3. POST-HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION

Subsequent to the termination of the hypnosis the Subject will behave in the precise manner and at the precise time suggested in hypnosis. Whatever can be successfully suggested to the Subject in hypnosis may usually be made to reappear as a post-hypnotic suggestion. It will, however, be found that the Subject will refuse to carry out a suggestion that is contrary to his moral sense.

The experiment reported below provides an interesting study of the operation of the phenomena just described. So far as AMNESIA is concerned Miss X is still consciously unaware that she ever left the writer's flat on Dec. 13th; the Hypnosis was not terminated until the Subject was again sitting in the same chair in which she had earlier been hypnotised. It will be seen that the post-hypnotic suggestion took effect on Tuesday, Dec. 17th, after an interval of roughly ninety hours (10 p.m. Friday, Dec. 13th to 4 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 17th). In this connection it is worthy of note that on Saturday, Dec. 14th, Miss X was under hypnosis at Dr. Nandor Fodor's flat and there carried out several post-hypnotic suggestions—yet these do not appear to have affected the successful issue of the experiment.

A couple of days after Dec. 17th the writer asked Miss X how she had enjoyed her tea with Mrs. Hankey. In reply she inquired whether she had been given a post-hypnotic suggestion as she had felt so very sleepy and had been given Eau de Cologne.

This question was parried with a suggestion that her sleepiness might have been caused by the strong psychic power inevitably pervading the rooms of the B.C.P.S. She was further asked whether she did in fact go to sleep but she answered that she really didn't remember.

Subsequently she was questioned in hypnosis by the writer as to what had occurred, but again she could only remember feeling sleepy and being given Eau de Cologne.

This was surprising (see *AMNESIA ante*).

It may perhaps be accounted for by the specific suggestion given on Dec. 13th, namely, "I shall have no knowledge of having gone into trance at all"; the subconscious mind really remembered, but knew it was not supposed to remember and was merely continuing to carry out its instructions!

The experiment, so far as Miss X is concerned, represents an advance in three directions:

1. It was the first time a post-hypnotic suggestion of this nature had been given, although "SILVER MIST" had often been invoked in the course of previous hypnoses.

2. The interval between the hypnosis and the carrying out of the post-hypnotic suggestion was the longest yet attempted.

3. No attempt had previously been made by means of suggestion or otherwise to remove the Subject during hypnosis from the building in which the hypnotic trance had been induced.

The experiment involved two car journeys between St. John's Wood and Kensington and necessitated taking the Subject into a strange building to see an unknown person (Colonel Clarke).

When reading the report which follows, a careful comparison should be made between what was originally suggested, what "Silver Mist" said immediately afterwards, and what "He" said finally on Dec. 17th.

It is obvious of course that the speech of Silver Mist on Dec. 17th is only the merest skeleton of what was originally suggested, but the main ideas of bustle, taxis, and the good of the Soul are none the less present. The mere fact that the experiment should succeed, even in some measures, is surely sufficiently remarkable to open up several avenues of speculation.

The author's thanks are due to Colonel Clarke for his kindness in lending his flat and to Mrs. Hankey for her admirable shorthand report and general co-operation.

\* \* \*

## NOTES OF EXPERIMENT

(A) *Friday, 13th December, 1935*

### THE GIVING OF THE SUGGESTION

*Time: 9.40 p.m. to 10.35 p.m.*

*Present: Mr. Eric Cuddon, Miss X (Hypnotic Subject), Colonel N. P. Clarke, Mr. Talbot, Miss Geraldine Talbot, Mrs. M. W. Hankey.*

By previous arrangement, Mr. Cuddon and his friends met Mrs. Hankey at 15 Queen's Gate about 9.30. Owing to some misunderstanding, the College was closed, and Colonel Clarke kindly offered the use of his flat in Queen's Gate Terrace for the experiment. Mr. Cuddon said that Miss X (in his car) was already in a hypnotic state and unaware of what was happening.

On arrival at the South Kensington Hotel, Mr. Cuddon told Miss X they had arrived in Victoria, and he led her into the hotel, to the lift, and to Colonel Clarke's flat on the second floor. There he suggested she could remove her coat and hat.\*

Miss X: "*What more? Do you want me to undress completely?*"

Mr. E. C.: "You don't want to sit in a hot hotel lounge with your coat on. Just you sleep. Put your hands in your lap. Just sleep. You will hear no sound except my voice."

Miss X: "*I keep on hearing your voice, nothing else.*"

Mr. E. C.: "Exactly."

Miss X: "*Nice voice: nice voice, your voice.*"

Mr. E. C.: "Keep quiet. Stop washing your hands. They are quite clean. Put your hands flat in your lap, palms downwards. Uncross your knees. Sleep . . . Sleep . . . Sleep. Sleep . . . Sleep. That's right."

Here Mr. Cuddon told the sitters that as the Research Student of the S.P.R. had asked him to take part in some experiments, he had told Miss X he would like to do a preliminary test with her. She had come to his flat this evening as she thought for that purpose.

After dinner, in the presence of his father and Mr. and Miss Talbot, he had put her to sleep, and then told her that they had to go to Victoria to catch the 9.40 train to Brighton. Reasons for the supposed journey were given. Miss X went down the passage and put her things on with his help, Mr. Talbot followed, and they got her into the car, and brought her here.

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Colonel Clarke now attempted to rouse Miss X by saying to her. "Come on, Miss X we are going home now. Come along. We are going home." The subject showed no response.

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\*On reaching Hotel subject told she had arrived at Victoria. To account for steps of Hotel subject told mounting subway to platform. When in lift, subject thought she was in train without any such suggestion from me and said, "Well, thank goodness we've caught the train all right."

The passage from the lift to sitting-room accounted for by suggestion of going to get a cab. Subject sits on sofa upon suggestion it is a cab, and order given to drive to Bedford Hotel. Subject gets up to alight from cab and suggestion is given she is now in Hotel.—E. C.

Colonel Clarke said he was unable to test Miss X but as far as he could see she was in hypnotic sleep.

*Needle Test.*

A needle was sterilised and Mr. Cuddon suggested to the subject that her arm had become absolutely rigid, including the hand. "You have absolutely no feeling in this hand or arm whatever. You can feel absolutely nothing. It is devoid of any feeling at all."

Colonel Clarke pressed the needle into the left wrist, but the subject showed no reaction. The only perceptible movement was flickering of the eyelids, which continually occurred throughout the experiment. The eyes did not open, and no other muscle moved in the face.

Mr. Cuddon then told the subject she could now move her arm; it had become flexible. He added: "You may close your eyes; sleep . . . sleep." (Query: Had the subject opened her eyes? M. H. was making notes and did not see.)\*

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Mr. Cuddon asked for a suggestion as to the subject on which Miss X should be asked to speak whilst under "control."

The advantages and disadvantages of taxi-cabs compared with horse-drawn cabs, resulting in hurry and bustle, and the result of these was selected as a subject, and Mr. Cuddon gave the following suggestion:

Mr. Cuddon (*to the subject*) 10 p.m.:

"You know, Tommy†, it is going to be your great privilege to-night to be controlled once more by your great spirit guide, Silver Mist, and he is going to-night to give us the benefit of a discussion of the most important subject . . . one that is affecting our present life to a very considerable extent . . . he is going to talk about the evil of taxi-cabs . . . how much better it was in the old days be-

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\*As far as I remember the suggestion "Close your eyes" was given in attempt to counteract excessive flickering. The eyes of the subject were open in response to suggestion when she walked down the passage at my flat to put her coat and hat on and remained open until I had her safely in the car when she was told to sleep. Her eyes were likewise open from the moment of getting out of the car at Queen's Gate Terrace until the first suggestion of sleep given in the sitting-room of Colonel Clarke's flat.

I always make her open her eyes as a safety measure even if I only propose moving her about a large room.

It does not affect the hypnosis. The suggestion given is, "You may open your eyes but you are not to wake up." E. C.

†"Tommy" is my nickname for the Subject.

cause in those times there was much greater leisure for higher contemplation, and after all, higher contemplation is the food of the soul, which is so much more important than the body. In the old days when there were horse cabs just trundling along and not so much traffic, it was not necessary to look at Belisha Beacons, and so the drivers and indeed the passengers, could allow their thoughts to dwell upon higher things. There was not that constant mental strain. The deplorable result of the increased use of taxi-cabs, and so many people using them, is that—this is frightfully important!—the filling of the taxi-cabs has resulted in the emptying of the churches, and indeed we hope and pray that the time may come when super taxi-cabs become small churches, and so once more we will be able to get that communion of the soul with the higher elements. That is what Silver Mist is going to say . . . that taxi-cabs have been a terrible drain on the churches; that it was much better in the old days when there was more leisure for higher contemplation, which is so important for the soul, in the days of the old horse cabs, when they trundled along, and there wasn't so much traffic. It wasn't necessary to watch for the pedestrian crossings and Belisha Beacons. There was no mental strain and the drivers and the passengers could concentrate upon those higher thoughts that are so necessary for the salvation of the soul. The results of the increased use of the taxi-cabs, the filling of the taxi-cabs has resulted in the emptying of the churches, and the time will come, we pray, when the taxi-cabs will become small churches, and we can all once more devote ourselves to higher things. Now, Silver Mist, your great control with the magnificent voice, from the Fifth Sphere, he is going to control you for this address to the waiting audience. Come, Silver Mist. Come, friend. Silver Mist, come along, friend. (*Hypnotist placed his hand on subject's head*).

"Come along, Silver Mist is going to control you and give the address I told you. Ladies and gentlemen, Silver Mist will now give his address through Miss X. Stand up, and give your address."

(*Here the medium stood, with one hand on arm of couch.*)

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"Silver Mist's" Discourse. (*This lasted for five minutes, the same time as Mr. Cuddon's suggestion, but it was given more slowly.*)

"I am the Great White Spirit, Silver Mist."

E. C.: "*Speak up, Silver Mist; we can't hear you.*"

"Silver Mist . . . the Great White Spirit . . . who has descended upon this earth . . . the earth, where there is so much turmoil and trouble and deceit . . . and I want to help you. Away! away! with this falseness and dishonesty. The world to-day—what is it? what is it? Truth? Very little truth, and I have come down to just give

a little help to those who are in doubt. The present moment—it is nothing but worry and tear, and driving . . . driving. What have we now on your earth plane? Flying here; flying there. Taxis . . . taxi-cabs here and taxi-cabs there . . . what good emptying the souls of those that might . . . (?) There are churches for you. Do you respond? No! It is nothing but hurry, hurry, and I come down just to warn you, you people, (*Right hand lifted up*) There are days to come . . . days to come . . . Beware!"

Here Miss X fell back on the couch, and Mr. Cuddon gave her a suggestion of "Sleep . . . Sleep."

*Pulse* (taken by Colonel Clarke) 90.

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The sitters discussed the details of the post-hypnotic suggestion to be given to the subject, and the following was decided:

POST-HYPNOTIC EXPERIMENT. (10.17 p.m.)

E. C.: "I want you to listen very carefully. This is very, very important. Now, are you going to have tea with Mrs. Hankey soon?"

Miss X: *Yes; she rang me up the other day, you know. I told you.*"

E. C.: "Well, when are you going to have tea with her?"

Miss X: *"Let me see. I mustn't forget. I couldn't go one time, you know."*

E. C.: "No. Well, when are you going?"

Miss X: *"Let me see . . . Tuesday. Tuesday afternoon. I hope to goodness I don't forget."*

E. C.: "Oh, you won't forget."

Miss X: *"I don't know. I have got several things on just now."*

E. C.: "You will *not* forget. It is very, very important. Now listen very carefully."

Miss X: *"Oh, well, if it is very important, then I must not forget."*

E. C.: "Of course you mustn't forget."

Miss X: *"If it is so very important!"*

E. C.: "Listen carefully: repeat this after me."

. . . "When I am at tea with Mrs. Hankey next Tuesday—

(Miss X repeated the words and those which follow after Mr. Cuddon.)

"As soon as I have drunk my first cup of tea—I shall be controlled by Silver Mist—My Great White Spirit Guide—I shall go into trance—And be controlled by him for five minutes—And he

will give the same address as he has given to-night—Exactly the same address—After he has given the address—I shall awake—I shall feel very refreshed—And I shall be unaware—That I have gone into trance that afternoon.”

“Now, then, what is going to happen when you go to tea with Mrs. Hankey on Tuesday?”

*“When I have drunk my FIRST cup of tea—and I am going to have more than one evidently—my FIRST cup of tea, I shall go into trance for five minutes—And my Great White Spirit—Silver Mist—will give an address.”*

“Yes; what sort of address? . . . What address will he give?”

“Exactly the same address as he gave to-night!”

“What is going to happen after he has given that address?”

*“I will awaken.”*

“How will you feel when you wake up?”

*“Well, I hope refreshed”*

“You will feel refreshed.”

*“After the first cup of tea.”*

“You will feel refreshed.”

*“I hope so.”*

“But you will.”

*“I will.”*

“That is right; and you will have no knowledge of your having gone into trance at all.”

“You can’t forget that. It *must* happen. It *will* happen. Next Tuesday! at the British College of Psychic Science! Fifteen Queen’s Gate. That is where you are going.”

*“Oh, I know the address! I know the address!”*

Here Mr. Cuddon repeated the whole instructions twice again, and they were repeated word for word by Miss X.

*Suggestion re sugar.*

Colonel Clarke suggested that when Miss X came out of trance she should ask for an extra lump of sugar in her next cup of tea.

E. C.: “There is one other thing; when you have wakened from your trance next Tuesday, when you have wakened, you will want another cup of tea.”

Miss X: *“Really! How do you know? You know everything!”*

E. C.: “You said you will be refreshed, and you will ask for another cup of tea, and you will ask for an extra lump of sugar in it

because you haven't been given enough in your first cup. Say, 'I shall ask for an extra lump of sugar in my next cup of tea.'

Miss X: "*It will be extra sweet.*"

E. C.: "You will like it; very nice. You hadn't had enough sugar in your previous cup. Remember that, won't you; it is very important—gives you extra red corpuscles in your blood, you know. Say, 'I shall ask for an extra lump of sugar in my cup of tea when I wake up on Tuesday.'"

Miss X: "*Yes; I will ask for an extra lump. They will think me greedy.*"

*Time: 10.35 p.m.*

Mr. Cuddon now told Miss X that they must leave the Hotel to catch the train back; he helped her on with her coat, and took her down in the lift, and put her into the car.

(B) *Tuesday, 17th December, 1935*

EXECUTION OF POST-HYPNOTIC SUGGESTION

(These notes dictated 18th December from notes made at the time, Dec. 17th.)

By MRS. M. W. HANKEY

On Wednesday, December 11th, I telephoned Miss X and invited her to have tea with me at the College. Tuesday, 17th December was appointed and I wrote to Mr. Cuddon telling him of the arrangement.

Miss X arrived just after 4 o'clock and was shown into my office where Mrs. David Gow was sitting with me. After greeting Miss X I showed her the record of the psychograph experiment made with her on November 25th. She was very interested in this. I stopped unrolling the graph at the point where it says, "General conversation. Mr. Cuddon and Mrs. Hankey" and told her that the water had entered the tubes here and spoiled the graph. I casually showed her the straight line made by the water without letting her see the writing matter.

During this time tea had been brought into the office. Mrs. Gow sat facing me at my desk, Miss X in the armchair pulled up to the corner of the desk between us. Miss X seemed quite at home and we had general conversation. I asked her if she liked milk and how much sugar, and she replied, "One piece, please." When she had nearly finished her first cup of tea she seemed to lose her vivacious manner and become drowsy. She finished the tea, put down the cup and rubbed her eyes and said in an abstracted manner, "Oh, I do feel so funny, I do feel sleepy," etc. She seemed to fight against it. I asked her if she would have some more tea and I poured out

another cup and passed it to her. She put down the cup on a small table and said again, "Oh, I do feel funny, I do feel so sleepy." She yawned several times and rubbed her eyes and seemed generally drowsy and different from her usual vivacious manner. She was most apologetic about feeling sleepy and then said she felt as though someone wanted to take possession of her. I laughed and said, "Oh, we are used to that sort of thing here," and suggested she should lie back in the chair and rest while Mrs. Gow and I talked. Miss X leaned back with closed eyes while Mrs. Gow and I conversed in low tones. Then from Miss X came the following:

(Time: 4.29.)

"I am Silver Mist."

Mrs. Hankey: "*Good afternoon, Silver Mist. Welcome to you.*"

" . . . Great White Spirit come down to this earth to help where there is so much bustle and hurry and turmoil. Not good and I want to help."

Mrs. Hankey: "*That is good of you.*"

"This taxi-ing here and taxi-ing there, taxi-ing one's brain away, right away. It is hopeless. It is for the good of the soul that I come here to help. So much wants enlightening. The faith of many is small and I want to help, to do my duty."

The above words were spoken slowly, quietly and reluctantly and took about four minutes to say, Miss X sitting in the chair the whole time. Mrs. Gow has an impression that she kept her hand over her eyes.

After saying "my duty" Miss X rubbed her eyes again and used practically the same words as she had five minutes earlier, "I feel so sleepy, I am so sorry." I said: "Do you feel faint? Is the room too hot?" And she said, "Oh no, not at all." I was taking some eau de Cologne out of my bag and offered it to her. She took a dab and we talked about eau de Cologne and colds in the heads, etc., by which time Miss X seemed quite normal and alert again. She picked up her cup and saucer and stirred it in an absent kind of way and said, without tasting the tea, "May I have another piece of sugar, please?" I passed the sugar and conversation became general. Soon after, Mrs. Gow left us. Miss X stayed for about 40 minutes. At no time did she make any reference to having felt tired, nor did she mention anything about having been "controlled." During the conversation she said that on the day when she had broken a previous appointment with me she had gone to a Reception (I think she said a Reception) and that though the people she was meeting were interesting and important, all the time she had an uneasy feeling she

ought to be somewhere else, doing something else.\* I remarked: "Oh, yes, one does feel like that when two or three appointments clash."

Miss X's manner throughout the visit was happy and interested, except during the period when she was apparently reluctantly yielding to the post-hypnotic suggestion made by Mr. Cuddon on December 13th.

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\*Miss X had been given a post-hypnotic suggestion for that occasion on November 25th, 1935, but she had had to break the appointment.

## Correspondence

The Editor,  
JOURNAL A. S. P. R., New York, N. Y.

April 1, 1937.

Dear Sir:

In the January JOURNAL I note that it is stated (by Dr. Fodor) that I am "retiring from psychical research." There is no truth whatever in this statement. On the contrary, I have just taken new offices at 19 Berkeley Street, Mayfair, and our activities are increasing, not decreasing. It is a fact that my library, records, and equipment have been transferred to the University of London, the reason being that the lease of our old premises (at Roland Gardens, S. W. 7) expired on March 25th.

I shall be glad if you will kindly insert this letter in an early issue of the JOURNAL.

Yours faithfully,

HARRY PRICE,

*Honorary Secretary,*

University of London Council for Psychical Investigation,  
19 Berkeley Street, Piccadilly, London, W. 1.

## “Parapsychology”

The sudden vogue for articles on psychic research and kindred subjects in popular magazines and newspapers that was brought to the attention of the readers of the JOURNAL in our December issue, appears to be still in full swing. Dr. Rhine's work has been largely responsible. His methods have apparently brought home to the general public facts concerning Telepathy and Clairvoyance, now designated by the longer and more confusing name of Extra-sensory perception, that have been well known to psychic researchers for the past fifty years. Everyone interested in the furtherance of this subject will heartily commend Dr. Rhine and his fellow workers. However, his experiments are not the only scientific and methodical ones ever conducted to discover the truth of these gifts, as some of the recent eulogies of Dr. Rhine's work would lead one to suppose.

The *New York Times*, in a recent editorial announcing the birth of a new magazine *Parapsychology* to be published quarterly by Duke University as a vehicle for Dr. Rhine's work, wrote:

“A rose by any other name may smell as sweet, but when ‘psychic research’ becomes ‘parapsychology’ we no longer pinch our nostrils. We seem to breathe the bracing air of the laboratory rather than the sticky incense of darkened séance rooms in which frauds hold forth.”

In 1886 a book was published called *Phantasms of the Living*.<sup>\*</sup> To-day it still remains the best, the most scholarly, and the most scientific work done with Telepathy and Clairvoyance. We suggest to the Editors of the *Times* that they read it before making any more statements about mental phenomena in connection with incensed séance rooms. The rest of the *Times*' article which is given below will at least in part express the sentiments of every serious psychic researcher:

“Yet it would be unfair to the editors of Duke University's new Journal of Parapsychology to charge them with resorting to a verbal subterfuge in choosing a name. They make it clear in their first number that ‘psychic research’ is an ‘illogical and unsatisfactory designation’ of obscure and inexplicable phenomena that deserve the earnest consideration of scientific men. Parapsychology—it is a German term—is narrower in its scope than psychic research. It is limited to the controlled experimental study of strange divinations and manifestations of mind rather than of the survival of personality after death and of the kind of fortune-telling that passes for spiritualism. In a word, the editors of the Journal have wisely decided to follow the lines of least academic resistance.

“A more propitious moment for launching the Journal of Para-

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<sup>\*</sup> By Edmund Gurney, F. W. H. Myers, and Frank Podmore.

psychology could hardly have been chosen. The physicists have discovered that 'objectivity' has not the validity that they thought it had; that their supposed laws of nature are merely statements of statistical averages; that the old machine universe created for us by Galileo and Newton is not only creaking badly but falling apart. Though much nonsense is talked about the reign of free will in the cosmos—and this for no better reason than that an electron in an atom has to be mathematically treated as if it had volition—it is evident enough that what we see about us is partly the creation of our own minds. Mind and matter are two separate entities. An undeniable relation exists which must be examined. Too long have the physicists found it convenient to ignore it. Science is to them a closed system. Mind is brushed aside in every physical investigation of inanimate matter. Outside the universe stands a purely hypothetical observer who needs only one eye and a brain to note what is going on.

"This arbitrary way of looking at the universe makes no allowance for about two billion people on earth who are swayed by deep yearnings, who have unshakable religious beliefs and moral convictions for which they are willing to sacrifice even their lives, who write poetry and paint pictures which are more than mere descriptions of what the senses perceive and whose 'mysticism,' to use a vague word, governs their vital decisions. There is a growing realization, fostered by Professor Whitehead and his school, that the artists and seers understand nature better than does the scientist; for in their inadequate way they deal at least with the whole concrete fact—a landscape, a face, a strain of music—and not with lifeless abstractions. Moreover, Dr. J. B. Rhine's now classic experimental and statistical study of telepathy and clairvoyance leaves no doubt that there are mental processes which bear no relation to known mechanisms and which are independent of space and possibly of time. We have here the kind of investigation that the *Journal of Parapsychology* will foster. The physical scientists should not object. For the methods to be encouraged are the very ones that have brought us so far in dealing with matter and energy. The *Journal* must therefore be welcomed as a very necessary addition to the periodical literature of science. It promises to broaden our horizon—to make man and his mind more comprehensible."

## Fire Walking

The University of London Council for Psychological Investigation has recently carried out another experiment to try to solve the mystery of fire walking. Last year they conducted experiments with Kuda Bux, the Kashmiri. This year the experiment was repeated by a Moslem from Cawnpore, called Ahmed Hussain, aged 23. The experiment was again carried out in the gardens of a house in Carshalton, Surrey. Hussain not only walks over the fire himself but claims that he can take amateurs over the fire as well with complete immunity from burns. However, the demonstration did not carry out this last claim entirely.

*The Times* (London) for April 8, 1937 reports the case as follows:

"The pit in which the fire was made at Carshalton was 12 feet 6 inches long, 5 feet wide, and 15 inches deep. The fire contained the burning ashes of about four tons of oak logs with a top layer of forest charcoal. The only stipulation made by Hussain was the usual one that there should be no impurity such as cow dung in the fire. At the time of the experiments the temperature of the first was 575 degrees Centigrade on the surface and 700 degrees below.

"Before entering the fire Ahmed Hussain had his feet washed by two nurses and examined by Professor Pannett, who was in charge of the medical arrangements, and who stated that Hussain had a quite normal foot. The temperature of his foot was 74 degrees Fahrenheit, which is rather lower than normal. A small piece of zinc oxide plaster was attached to the sole of one foot.

"Ahmed Hussain then stood at one end of the pit and muttered a prayer holding out his hands in front of him, palms upwards. He then covered his face with his hands, and after wiping his face with his hands as he lowered them he strode through the fire in three calm paces. It took just one and one-half seconds. Professor Pannett immediately examined Hussain's feet, and stated that they bore not the slightest sign of burning. Their temperature was about 66 degrees Fahrenheit, or 8 degrees lower than before he walked through the fire. The plaster on the foot had remained unchanged.

"Twenty minutes later, the second experiment was carried out, and Ahmed Hussain repeated his fire-walk with three volunteers behind him. The first volunteer held his belt, while the second volunteer held the hand of the first, and the third the hand of the second.

Hussain prayed as before, and stepped through the fire, his volunteers following. The time taken was again one and one-half seconds. Hussain's feet were again completely uninjured, but those of the volunteers showed traces of blistering."

A second experiment was attempted on April 9, and is reported in *The Times* for April 10. The surface of the fire was raised to 740 degrees and the pit lengthened by 20 feet.

"Hussain declined to take volunteers this time, complaining that they had not sufficient faith." Hussain again strode through the fire calmly, taking six steps instead of three as in the previous experiment. Dr. W. D. Newcomb, who was this time in charge of the medical arrangements, found five small blisters on the left foot and a sign of blistering on the right.

A young business man, Mr. Reginald Aldcock, according to *The Times* report, did the fire-walk during the April 7th experiments as a volunteer and repeated the experiment April 9 at a quicker pace. His feet were not much more injured than those of Ahmed Hussain. The two other volunteers, Mr. A. J. Bould and Mr. D. C. Russell, did the fire walk at something like a running pace and had their feet blistered.

A large gathering of important people including Dr. C. E. M. Joad, Mr. F. Yeats-Brown, and Mr. V. J. Woolley, Acting Principal of the University of London Council, were witnesses. Mr. Harry Price, Hon. Secretary of the University Council, was in charge of the arrangements for both demonstrations. *The Times* reports that the Council will publish its findings in due course.

## Book Review

PRELUDE TO CHEMISTRY. By John Read, F.R.S. The Macmillan Company. \$5.00.

In these days when Science is becoming more aware of the spiritual and mental aspects of things and gropingly attempting to fit them into accepted theories of matter, a book on the history of chemistry is most illuminating.

John Read, a professor of chemistry in the United College of St. Salvador and St. Leonard in the University of St. Andrews, has written a delightful book. Its sub-title, "*An Outline of Alchemy, Its Literature and Relationships*," describes the contents for the layman more graphically than the title "Prelude to Chemistry".

The word, Alchemy, conjures up before the mind's eye a picture of an old man stirring a cauldron of oddly assorted materials in an effort to turn them into gold. The popular conception of this brew is a fine selection of toads' horns, witches' hair and mice tails, mixed with less precious metals than gold, and watched over with loving incantations. It is hardly necessary to state that this conception, however dramatic, is a small part of Alchemy. The word, in the accepted sense, signifies the transmutation of metals, semi-metals and minerals.

The author briefly explains the alchemist's theory and purpose:

"Alchemy, like modern science, had its theories, although these were often vague, ill-defined, and subject to interpretations suiting the whims of the interpreter. The chief physical theory of alchemy was that of the Four Elements, or 'simple bodies'. This is usually ascribed to Aristotle (c.350 B.C.) to whom it descended through Plato (c.400 B.C.) from Empedocles (c.450 B.C.); but the fundamental idea is said to have been recognized in both India and Egypt as early as 1500 B.C. An almost equal antiquity has been assigned to the Chinese conception of the Five Elements. We encounter here, indeed, 'one of those crude physical theories which is enunciated and accepted by races the most diverse in character, country, faith, destiny. There is great oneness in the human mind in the matter of broad principles in crude cosmical ideas.'

"In adopting Empedocles' doctrine of the four 'elements', Aristotle followed Plato in rejecting their supposed elementary nature and in considering that they were interconvertible. Briefly, Aristotle's theory postulated the existence, as abstract entities, of four fundamental properties or qualities of bodies: these were the hot and the moist, with their contraries, the cold and the dry. The four material elements—earth, air, fire, and water—were pictured as originating by pair-wise conjunctions of the four elementary qualities.

. . . Of these two pairs of contraries, fire and water were endowed with the greater significance.

"All bodies were held to be composed of the four elements in different proportions. As a corollary, one body could be changed, or transmuted, into another by altering the proportions of the elements present; further, this supposed transmutation was correlated with the idea of a *prima materia*, or primordial matter, from which all things came and to which they all reverted. An 'eternal principle' was recognized also in ancient India under the name of Brahma, and the 'primal matter' of the ancient Chinese was known as *t'ai-chi*.

"The theory may be illustrated by quoting a simple example of a supposed transmutation. Water is wet and cold; when the cold is expelled through the application of heat, the water changes into air (i.e. an invisible vapour), which is wet and hot. Earth, water, and air apparently typified the solid, liquid, and gaseous states of matter, while fire typified combustibility and possible energy."

With our modern knowledge of chemistry this theory seems more than crude, yet the transmutation of elements was an idea far from absurd.

The *Herald Tribune* for Monday April 26, 1937 gave an account of recent discoveries:

"Yale University announced that a method by which the size of the nucleus of any atom may be estimated has been developed in its Sloane Physics Laboratory, thus solving a chemical mystery that has baffled investigators for many years.

"The discovery was made by Dr. Ernest C. Pollard, of the department of physics, and two graduate students, who hit upon the method while successfully converting chlorine into potassium and argon into calcium—a milestone in the field of transmutation of elements."

In 1500 B.C. the conception of the possibility of the transmutation of elements may have been germinating in the mind of an ancient Egyptian.

Professor Read explains that Alchemy, in its wider sense, was the chemistry of the Middle Ages. Of its beginnings he writes:

"From the evidence available, it is impracticable to assign the origin of alchemy to a definite place or time. Quite apart from ultimate origins, however, there is no doubt that the incipient art was influenced during the Alexandrian age (4th century B.C. to 7th century A.D.) by the application of Greek philosophy to the technique of the Egyptian and other ancient cultures. Holmyard deals with this aspect of alchemy in the following words:

"'Although there are dissentients, it is commonly believed that chemistry arose in the early years of the Christian era, as a result of the fusion of Egyptian metallurgical and other arts with the mystical philosophies of the Neo-Platonists and Gnostics. Unluck-

ily, the Neo-Platonists regarded matter as the principle of unreality or evil, from which the disciple should attempt to detach himself, while the Gnostics cared little for the phenomena of the sensible world, being much more anxious to attain to a knowledge of the invisible cosmos. It is significant for the later history of the science that one of the earliest chemical writers, Zosimos the Panopolitan, was a Gnostic, while the Neo-Platonic conceptions of sympathetic action, action at a distance, the distinction between occult and manifest properties, the influence of the stars, and the mystical powers of numbers, all permeate chemistry from its beginnings at the time of Plotinus until the close of the seventeenth century. It would, indeed, scarcely be going too far to say that some of these ideas are with us still; nitrogen is manifestly inert but occultly active, and the structure of the atom is ultimately a matter of the relations between numbers'."

Though the subject of Alchemy is only remotely connected with supernormal phenomena, yet the element of mysticism, the belief in the power of the mind and its influence on matter, bring the subject into the realm of the psychic student. For example the "forms of the vessels used in the practical operations were supposed to exert a mystical influence upon the character of the product. The form of the 'double pelican', for example, was mystically connected with the process of conjunction."

And among certain of the recipes for transmutation, spiritual attributes were as necessary to the alchemist as the ingredients of his brew: "for example, the attempt to transmute ordinary mercury. The successful adept must be endowed with a knowledge of the material of the Great Work; also with faith, silence, purity of heart, and prayerfulness."

Beyond the basic principles, the greater part of alchemy was no doubt a mixture of superstition, tradition, and fantasy. But the study of it gives a picture of the development of groping minds: the set-backs and side tracks and inspirations. *Prelude to Chemistry* is a fascinating study of the Middle Ages and a valuable source from which to study ancient books and manuscripts. It contains a profusion of interesting illustrations, as Alchemy was extremely "pictorial in its expression". For those interested in symbolism, and emblematic engravings, this book is a gold mine. Because of its charming style and fascinating matter, this book should interest almost everyone.

J. P.

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### The Handwriting Expert Studies Automatic Writing

(PART I)

BY LOUISE RICE

Twenty-five years ago, when I was just becoming known as a handwriting expert, a woman came to me with a problem which was causing her anxiety and alarm.

She was possessed of a grammar school education, was not very well read and had lived all of her life in Jersey City, New Jersey, in a section occupied chiefly by self-respecting and higher class working people. Her contact with even the very ordinary college-trained person was *nil*. She read a New York newspaper which had a Magazine section in the Sunday edition, but knew absolutely nothing of such reading as that to be found in the better magazines. I present this background of hers, not as I first knew it, but as I afterward verified it.

This woman, a Mrs. Elliott, born of third generation German descent parentage, and married to a man, second generation English descent parentage, was far freer from crass superstition than might usually be true considering her environment and education, and therefore she had dismissed with a shrug something which had begun about four years before she heard of me.

This "something" was that her hand often seemed to move of itself, even if there were no writing implements at hand, but when there were, the movement, she said was "out of my control" and produced writing which she could not recognize as hers.

Once she had seen a woman friend "taken to the hospital", because of delusions and as this incident constituted almost the only alarming event of her placid life, she carefully concealed her strange affliction, believing that it was only some form of nervousness, due to her lonely existence. Her husband had very long hours at his work and was so tired when he came home that he usually ate his dinner, smoked a pipe and went to bed. She had never had any children and, while a friendly soul, was not especially interested in talking with her neighbors. As she had never learned what reading can do for a solitary life, she often sat in her clean, very quiet kitchen, with her cat on her lap, and *absent-mindedly scribbled*. It was in the process of this scribbling that her hand was one day seized with the uncontrollable "something" which produced writing.

When Mrs. Elliott came to me she brought me a good many samples of what her hand automatically produced, and in the course of talking to her I obtained the history of her life as I have just related it.

In the face of this history, the exhibits of her "uncontrolled writing" were astounding. They remain, in my various case histories of this matter, as the most unusual and baffling I have encountered, for the reason that her own writing was, while legible and neat, obviously that of the totally uncultured person, and the automatic writing was that of many varieties of cultural background.

One, small and delicate, had the characteristic "Greek" small *d* and *e* (see Figs. A and B), with all beginning and ending strokes clipped off and straight lines for loops above and below the base line. Aside from the extreme difficulty involved in an uncultured person's trying to imitate such a script, there was the fact that Mrs. Elliott regarded this specimen as more freakish than any of the others that her

d day  
 end end

FIG. A.

May is the  
 June three

FIG. B

*Notation for Mauve and Red  
 correct difficult Perspective*

FIG. C.

We shall soon have  
 contact with you but  
 remember

FIG. D.

*Figs. A and B illustrate the small delicate writing with characteristic "Greek d and e" of Mrs. Elliott's control. The beautiful printing of Fig. C also produced by Mrs. Elliott suggests an artist's notation. Fig. D shows a jerky cultured script of a third type.*

hand produced. She said at first she had almost thought it was in some foreign language, for she had never seen such writing. Having never had close contact with the literary Brahman, she could not know that this script is almost a standard for that type.

Another script which was often produced was that of the almost printed letter forms (see Fig. C), forms which are very beautiful, forms which, with the utmost labor, she could not even approximate by conscious effort.

These exhibits were on all sorts of paper, but as the urge increased to sit, silent and waiting, in her kitchen, for the movement of the hand which was, she said, so urgent that it was like the itch, Mrs. Elliott had begun to buy large pads of coarse yellow paper and to have sharpened pencils at hand, in order that she might "feel easier" by letting go of the tension which held the hand motionless. She described this tension as exactly like the impulse that can be felt when we are trying to refrain from scratching some spot of the body—that muscular tremor which all but actually causes movement.

The two most singular exhibits were the delicate, cultured script and the fine printed script but there were others equally hard to explain as having been produced by her, one being a very elaborated, rightward leaning, flowing script with very individual letter formations. Others seemed like the writing of children, but there, of course, the evidence was not good, since anyone using Mrs. Elliott's very ordinary script could easily break it down by deliberate effort into the still cruder writing of the unformed script.

I never succeeded in getting Mrs. Elliott to write in my office although I tried again and again, under the most favorable conditions such as that of the evening, with the telephone muted and lights in the reception room out, and only a low light where she and I sat very still and quiet together, but I saw her writing about half a dozen times in her own kitchen. The usual script was the flowing, rightward one and once, to my intense interest, the cultured one. A new script appeared during these sittings of ours in

which a direct message seemed to be given me. This was an angular, very jerky script, large and of heavy pressure, and was the only direct "message" Mrs. Elliott ever had. This frightened her so that she ran away from me. She persuaded her husband to go to some unknown destination in Pennsylvania, writing me that she would try to stop "all this writing" and with stiff formality thanked me for trying to help her. I have never heard from her since.

This case was a very odd one because the statements that the various scripts wrote seemed entirely in accord with the type of writing produced, and this I considered extraordinary, because Mrs. Elliott could not possibly have known enough to write such things. The very cultured script, for instance, once wrote this:—

"If we consider the history of the Mesopotamian valley culture, we may confidently assert that it antedates all but the very earliest periods of Egyptian culture."

This was in a four page exhibit which was concerned with the very early history of civilization. A pertinent fact as to this statement is that it is only in the last ten years that archeologists have come to the conclusion given in it, that the Mesopotamian culture antedates that of Egypt. I consider this important, because, by no possibility, could Mrs. Elliott have read it anywhere. She *could*, by a long chance, have read some of the statements made in this script, but not that particular one. Moreover, I was then and am now an amateur archeologist and I do not believe that anything written in this cultural script was copied, consciously, by Mrs. Elliott, having to do with that science.

The messages in the jerky script (see Fig. D) were vague, but seemed pointed at me. This script also used "we" instead of "I" as in all the other scripts. Excerpts from these messages usually were in the shape of warnings.

"We tell you that you are facing long years of hard and discouraging work, Sister. You know writings but you must learn people. Your mind is still untrained, Sister. We will watch over you but we cannot save you from the fiery furnace of tribulation."

"Work hard Sister-who-sits with US, for your path is long and hard but there is light at the end. God is with you, but he will afflict you. For his own uses. Throw away all thought of joy except in Service."

"We shall soon lose contact with you but remember that you are dear to US, Sister, when this way of reaching you is lost."

This last "message" came on the last occasion when I saw Mrs. Elliott and when I sensed that she was getting into a state of fear about both the writing and my connection with it.

The printed script was always concerned with what an artist would write, perhaps in a note book of sketches. Such as: "notation for mauve and red. Construction of left side indefinite. Correct difficult perspective."

There was never anything in this script which seemed to be other than such terse statements. I have seen many such printed on the margins of an artist's sketchbook, but I cannot believe that Mrs. Elliott ever had.

The movement of her hand was especially interesting to me, since I was and am more familiar with the variations of this bodily member than the person who usually observes automatic writing. Her own script was produced, as is usual with very ordinarily educated people, by grasping the pencil tightly with thumb and forefinger close to the point, bending the forefinger sharply inward at the finger joint. The slow, laborious forming of each word caused the pressure to be heavy.

The cultured script (Mesopotamian excerpt) was made by holding the pencil much farther from the point, the forefinger straight, and the weight of the hand resting on the outer edge of the palm. The motion of the hand was not slow and not rapid.

The production of the flowing script brought the grasp on the pencil farther away from the point and produced the easy, swift action of the hand which writes assuredly—without much steady pressure on the outer edge of the palm.

All of these methods of movement are characteristic of the type of writing produced.

The state of Mrs. Elliott when doing any of these scripts was not that of trance but it could not be called normal consciousness either. It was a state which resembled that absent gaze, still body and indifference to sights and sounds of the moment which can be perceived in a person plunged into deep revery, or wholly concentrated upon a difficult mental action, such as endeavoring to recover a lost memory. I could not, for instance, check the action of her hand in the slightest degree by persistently talking to her or by producing noises, such as banging the big tin dipper hanging over the sink, or by suddenly overturning a chair. Her eyes would turn toward the sound exactly as they might had she just been recovering from a faint, but the hand moved steadily.

I also tried holding a stiff piece of paper before her eyes so that she could not see the writing being produced and for several moments this seemed not to check the action at all, but after that the hand made irregular, wide gestures with the pencil which produced only meaningless scrawls.

As to the messages seemingly addressed to me, there is an oddity in them in that they are a bit prophetic. At that time I was a handwriting expert only, and it was not for several years that I realized that I should have to add psychological training to this special field of mine if I were to become a vocational expert and personal adviser to clients, as the indications of character and vocation in handwriting that I had recognized seemed to demand. This was, indeed, a difficult path, and the statement that it would be later before anything would be really "light" for my professional career, in this combination, was very true.

This experience of so many years ago started me on the study of various forms of automatic writing, viewed from my special slant of a person dealing with scientific aspects of writing in all its forms.

I found a woman the next year who came to me, having heard that I was hunting for an automatic writer. She

presented a very different problem to me than had Mrs. Elliott. I will call her Miss Rose.

Miss Rose was a rather neurotic, unmarried woman of about forty-five, whose normal writing showed her to be a queer compound of the superiority and inferiority complexes. Her manner was mincing, sly and too familiar, but had moments of real charm, when a much more truthful and sincere nature seemed to suddenly emerge. She assured me that God held her hand, and that all her automatic writing was thus augustly produced. She did a lot of it for me in my office, sitting very erect and ostentatiously not looking at what she wrote. The material thus produced was a jumble of incorrectly quoted old proverbs, or misquoted and misunderstood bits from the Bible. It was ungrammatically expressed, in a script which was only a little different from her own commonplace one, which was a shade more easily written and more cultured than that of Mrs. Elliott.

I considered that Miss Rose was a deliberate fraud, but encouraged her to come to the office as an experiment in how much of a show could be thus put on for my benefit, but one day something odd happened.

Miss Rose had come all prepared to write more communications from God, but I was having a long distance telephone conversation and she sat quietly waiting for me to finish. It was raining heavily and very dark, although the middle of the afternoon, and I had turned out all but the floor light, as I usually did when seeing what Miss Rose would produce. When I turned from the telephone I sat very still for Miss Rose was writing rapidly with her *left* hand, which I have never known her to use before. Moreover, she was not looking at the paper at all, but straight before her, with a look of intense interest and attention which was strange to her usually silly and vacant features. After about fifteen minutes she sighed and let the pencil drop, and then leaned back in the high backed chair. As I continued still, she finally turned to me her usual baby stare and said, could we begin now? I said we could and walked

behind her chair and took away the sheet she had written on with her left hand.

So far as I could tell, she seemed utterly unconscious of having written anything and at once began her careful writing of religious and spiritual statements.

The sheet on which she had written with her left hand was covered with a very neat, leftward angle script (back hand), which seemed to be part of a letter. It might have been written to me, but it might, on the other hand, have been the pleasant and friendly letter of an old friend who had not seen the person to whom it was written for a great many years. Miss Rose's usual productions were exactly in her own absurd phraseology but this was the good English of the easy, conversational sort which only cultured people are able to write.

Miss Rose denied that she had ever written with her left hand, and her family confirmed this. I did not tell her about the left handed production, and almost a month afterward I was rewarded, during a deliberate effort on my part, to reproduce the conditions (it being again a rainy, dark afternoon) with a production of the left handed writing which was a very delightful letter. It said, in part:

"Writing to those who are our congenial friends from a great distance is always a thrilling thing, isn't it? Strange how the thought reaches out, overleaping time and space and feels at one with that other mind so far away. I am not sure that I can write you often but, after all, the act of writing is not the truest thing, but the act of sending out the thought waves which must reach and touch that other."

Unless Miss Rose had read this somewhere and her memory had carried it consciously or subconsciously, I knew her incapable of such English, to say nothing of such a thought. Again I slipped the sheet away and she did not seem to know that she had written. Then I made the mistake of showing her the two left-handed productions and explaining what had happened. She solemnly declared that this was the "control" she had known was coming and that it was

my "astral friend from the angels and God had sent him."

She then, I am sure, went home and spent days in practicing the use of the left hand, for when she next arrived, on a bright, sunny day, she at once produced "a letter" in awkward left-handed scrawls, in which the supposedly cultured friend of mine who had previously written apologized (in Miss Rose's own language) for the poorness of the writing. He was, he wrote, just getting used to dear Miss Rose and I would have to have patience while he taught her to write his style.

She came periodically for a long time and continued with this farce but on an evening when she was extremely tired and in a dull and specially stupid state, I saw with a real thrill that the familiar and fine leftward script was flowing steadily from her pudgy left hand. This, however, was a great disappointment, for the writing, although every word was clear and properly spelled, did not make sense. Combinations like "I do not like", "where are", and "it is" appeared but the rest would be words not related and sometimes just words like "photograph", "Mountains" and once, underscored, and spelled with a capital "Fraud".

This was the last time that the real left-hand angle ever appeared, although Miss Rose continued to do her own left-hand scrawl and her right-hand messages from God until I got tired of her.

On the last occasion on which the real left-hand writing appeared, one might believe, taking the ground that it was some sort of a genuine communication, that a discouraged superior intelligence was trying to push through the miasma of a sly, ignorant and lying mind. The word "fraud" so emphatically presented gave me pause. It was exceedingly appropriate, and, as far as Miss Rose's conscious mind was concerned, was a word she would never have used. She hated all words such as "lie", "fraud", "stupid", "false" and "deceit", since her handwriting would invariably fumble with such words, when I asked her to write them. She claimed that it was an odd fact that she had never been able to spell "treacherous" correctly.

About this time I encountered a man who professed to be a spirit medium and who wrote messages in the usual dark room. The procedure was the familiar one. There was a table around which the participants at the séance sat, while the medium's two hands were held by the sitters on each side of him. Before him, but an arm's length away, was a large yellow pad of writing paper and several ordinary pencils. In total darkness, we who sat with him would hear the scratching of a pencil and sometimes paper being shoved about. When lights were turned up there would be scrawled messages for this and that one, in the customary form of generalized statements about being so happy "over here", of being always at the side of loved ones, of being anxious to "communicate".

Myself and an even more skeptical sitter usually held the medium's hands, and after several such occasions we decided that our medium was a contortionist and a very clever fellow who was able to so manipulate his left hand as to give each of us the impression that our joined hands were holding both his right and left, but that he really slipped out the right one. We also suspected that, concealed in some way, he had a pencil on a thin, steel rod which he could write with, although the pad was so far away, because it was jointed in such a way that the pencil was at right angles to the rod. During some irregular time in which we continued these sittings there was never a message which seemed to be anything but the production of his own acute mind and facile hand, but several other sitters assured us that at times these messages were quite unusual and that the medium was very much exhausted in consequence.

Finally, when my co-experimenter and I were holding the medium's hands, during the singing of a hymn, and before any sound of writing had previously been heard, the sheets of paper (seven or eight of which were always torn loose from the pad) were loudly rustled. My friend and I had agreed, this time, on a special handhold that we thought would prevent the medium from fooling us.

Immediately afterward the medium sighed deeply and slipped down in his chair so that we tightened our grips on him. The sound of writing was very loud, with the sound of paper being moved. The medium continued to slip down until we put our respective right and left hands (the others clasping his hands) over, and held him by the arms. Neither one of us could feel the slightest tremor or tension in either of his arms. They were, on the contrary, utterly limp. For some reason, both of us felt alarmed and asked to have the lights. The medium was, even if faking, in a bad physical state, with cold sweat on his forehead and on his hands, his mouth hanging open and his half closed eyes rolled back in his head.

The other sitters stated that he had experienced several other attacks and that they always brought wonderful messages. We revived him with a prosaic drink of whiskey produced from a hip flask of a sitter, and then we looked at the papers.

There were six sheets written on, sometimes only two lines being on a sheet. Each one was addressed to sitters and each sitter declared that they were remarkable, but that which deeply interested me was that even to such a sharp eye as my profession had given me, they seemed to be in totally different scripts.

They were not the vague sentimental messages, either. The thing which astonished me was to find my familiar, clean, leftward angle writing, just one line of it.

"Not Fraud. Perhaps again can"

The word fraud was underscored.

I did not explain why this message, meaning nothing to others, was one that I "recognized". The medium was not only faint but so ill that he regurgitated the very small nip of whiskey which he had been given, and gave every evidence of feeling the symptoms of seasickness. We got off his collar and shoes, put him on a coach and with a blanket over him he soon fell into the deep sleep of exhaustion.

I missed two other similar expositions of this state of his, which was entirely different from the sighing, eye-

rolling act with which he usually "came out", and when I looked him up again I was told that his health was poor and he had gone down south. On a lecture tour almost ten years afterward I encountered him in the front row of my audience in a mid-western town, no doubt attracted by the fact that I was speaking on normal and abnormal handwriting. I doubt that he really wanted me to talk to him but he did wait for me in answer to the note which I had an usher hand him.

He said that he had felt that the work of a medium was too much for his health. He was now a chicken farmer and grew roses for certain commercial rose firms. He liked the life. He had married. No, he really never did any more spiritual work.

I asked him point blank if it was not true that there had been times when he had faked the whole business and he owned up that he had had such a rod and pencil as I had surmised, but he insisted that he performed this trick only when "the spirits would not come and I could not disappoint my friends".

The interesting thing, to me, aside from the fact that there did seem to be genuine writing at the time I have specified, was that he told me that he now spent all of his few leisure hours writing. He said that there was no sense to what he wrote, that it was the mere act of writing that amused him; he had, he said, improved his penmanship very much, and often took a sentence from the Bible or from something he had read with which to practice.

"I just can't help writing whenever I have a few spare moments," he told me. "Seems like my hand moves of itself, but I never get any real messages."

He agreed to send me samples of what he wrote. All of these were in the man's usual handwriting, except an occasional one, which showed a strong, angular, heavy-pressure, upright script resembling that well-known angular and aggressive signature of Mussolini's—the medium's script being loose, awkward and sprawling.

*Part II of this article will appear in our July issue.*

# A Study of Clairvoyance

(PART II.)

BY JOCELYN PIERSON

**EDITOR'S NOTE.** For those who did not read Part I of this article in our May issue, these experiments were conducted to obtain information through extra-sensory channels pertaining to a number of objects collected and submitted by the experimenters.

Second series of readings, received through the clairvoyance of Mrs. L. on January 12th, 1937.

Those present: Dr. C. B. E., Mr. A. W., Mr. S. E. a trustee of the A. S. P. R., Mrs. L., her daughter, her secretary, and myself. The objects were collected by Dr. C. B. E., Mr. A. W., Mr. S. E. and myself. The objects contributed by Mr. A. W. and Dr. C. B. E. were personal belongings. Mr. S. E. contributed one personal object and one received by him already sealed from a friend. The articles were placed in identical envelopes, well mixed and piled in a corner of the room. Mrs. L. sat in a chair facing the window at about ten feet from the objects, with her back to them and also to the sitters so that she was at no time able to see the expression of their faces. One object at a time was selected at random by Dr. C. B. E. and placed on a chair near the other objects but isolated from them. Mrs. L. then attempted to project her clairvoyant faculty to the object on the chair and give a reading for it. Mrs. L.'s sporting spirit prompted these difficult conditions. It is small wonder that the results were somewhat confused. But there was one remarkable exception. Object No. 5. (Property of Mr. A. W.) Throughout most of the readings delivered under these conditions there are statements especially pertinent to one of the objects in the pile. But the close proximity of the isolated object with the others has obviously caused considerable confusion.

*Object No. 6.* The envelope contained the property of Miss Blagden. The reading is not applicable to her but to Mr. S. E. in part. It is given in full below and analyzed as if pertaining to his object.

The object on the chair belongs to a gentleman.	Assuming the reading to be connected with Mr. S. E. Correct.	(S.) 2
He is concerned with writing.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He is living.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He has had a difficult process of thought to face around the fifth of the month.	Correct. A business venture was suggested which required an important decision.	(S.) 2
It did not concern business.	Wrong. It concerned business and also editorial work.	(S.) 2
In company with two or three others he faced some problem.	Correct. Two gentlemen presented the proposal.	(S.) 2
He was worried from a spiritual point of view whether the right thing had been done, though he would not admit it to anyone.	He was concerned about several angles of it, especially the fact that it would take time that he had intended to use on another pursuit.	(S.) 2
He does not like to be wrong in general.	Mr. S. E. says that he takes great precautions against making an error.	(G.) 1
He is a charming young man.	Correct.	(G.) 1
Tired at the moment.	Wrong.	(S.)
He has a pain in his back.	Wrong.	(S.)
He had a fall at some time.	Wrong.	(S.)
He has recently lost weight.	Wrong.	(S.)
He has spoken of it.	Wrong.	(S.)
It is an indication of nervous tiredness.	Wrong.	(S.)

There is a man of 54 or 56.

Note: My notes and those of Mrs. L.'s secretary who kindly assisted to check me, differ as to whether Mrs. L. was speaking of the owner or another man con-

	ected with the object. Mr. S. E. is not 56. (Not counted.)	
This man is active minded.	Correct.	(G.) 1
There are great possibilities for him.	Prophetic (not counted).	
He works well with things off the beaten track.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He is interested in science and writing.	Correct. They are his two chief interests.	(S.) 2
He has made a study of the effects (properties) of light and is interested in something to do with animal life.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He has an interesting mind if it is allowed to unfold.	Correct.	(G.) 1
A sea voyage has been suggested.	Wrong. The history of Mr. S. E.'s object is peculiarly connected with the boardwalk at Atlantic City. The sensitive may have been impressed by a picture of the ocean.	(S.)
There is part of a letter written which finished abruptly or is folded or torn off.	Mr. S. E.'s object was a dollar bill with a large part torn off it. The bill was torn on the boardwalk at Atlantic City.	(S.) 2
This envelope draws two spiritual connections. One is a woman who has passed over.	Mr. S. E. has a sister who has passed over. (Not counted, too indefinite.)	
She is perhaps a sister-in-law.	Possibly Mr. S. E.'s sister.	$\frac{1}{2}$ (S.) 1
But she does not come in that connection but because she was a good companion and close friend. She was dark, charming, vital, amusing, travelled, very emotional. Her family were inclined to think her too emotional. They would say "Oh, there she goes again."	This description fits a great friend of Mr. S. E. who is still living.	$\frac{1}{2}$ (S.) 1

Mary or Marion.	Mr. S. E.'s sister's name was Mary.	(S.) 2
She was generous.	Correct.	(G.) 1
She died of heart failure about 1926.	She died about that time.	(S.) 2
There has been some contact with this woman.	She has purported to communicate.	(S.) 2
The other woman who comes with the object is quite a different sort.	This woman is unrecognized and brings the score down a great deal.	
Frances or Fanny.	Wrong.	(S.)
She was called Aunt Fanny.	Wrong.	(S.)
She was small with noble features, frail.	Wrong.	(S.)
She was quakerish. I see a picture of her in a bonnet with a white frill under the brim.	Wrong.	(S.)
She was not fond of having her picture taken. There were not many of her.	Wrong.	(S.)
She was good to this man.	Wrong.	(S.)
There is some property connected with her.	Wrong.	(S.)
She kicked over the traces a good deal when young.	Wrong.	(S.)
The literature that she read was far advanced for her time.	Wrong.	(S.)
She lived with her mother.	Wrong.	(S.)
This man lost a brother at an early age.	Correct.	(S.) 2
Not as a baby but as a youth in his teens.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He had a difficult passing.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He was fair with brown eyes.	Fair with blue eyes. ½	(S.) 1
He might have died of meningitis.		(S.)

There is a picture of him still in possession of this man, a picture of a small fair haired boy. Correct. (S.) 2

Hubert or Herbert. Wrong. (S.)

In this reading there are 49 statements. Four are not counted. 40 are specific and 5 general. The perfect score would therefore be 85. The medium's score is 45 or approximately 52.8. Without the unfortunate Aunt Fanny this would have been a very high score. It contains many statements only applicable to Mr. S. E.'s object. These are: A torn object, associated with the ocean, belonging to a man interested in writing and science who has a sister named Mary who died in 1926 and has purported to communicate through other channels. A man who lost a younger brother in his teens. It must be kept in mind that this quite remarkable reading was given for the wrong object while the right one was in close proximity. It may well be that Aunt Fanny (under another name—the names are almost always misleading) belonged to one of the other articles. We learnt from this reading that we quite definitely had made a mistake in placing the envelopes so close together.

It is not worthwhile analyzing the whole of the reading for Object No. 7. The statements are very mixed and confused. There are one or two curious facts again pertaining to Mr. S. E. in the record. The actual object on the chair was a knife belonging to Dr. C. B. E. Mrs. L. said the object was a leather purse or pocket book. At this sitting there was no purse, pocketbook or article made of leather in the collection.

I get the name Freeport. Mr. S. E.'s home is in Freeport.

Is there a place called Freeport? Answer "Yes".

The property is in Freeport. I see Freeport as a small town or resort. Correct.

A small river and country parkway runs through it. Correct.

There might be a bridge. This parkland cuts through "Charles" property. Mr. S. E. says that the town plans once called for a cut for the parkway through his property. He was worried about it.

In another part of this reading Mrs. L. speaks of a lady with a scar on her neck as from a glandular operation and says this lady has a sister called Grace. Mr. S. E. has a sister with such a scar from an automobile accident and another sister called Grace.

This reading is a very poor one and does not really give sufficient evidential material to be quoted. My purpose in quoting the above passages is to demonstrate how under these particularly difficult circumstances, clairvoyance may become mixed up and yet contain something which really pertains to reality. The facts quoted above would be found applicable to one man in a million.

*Object No. 8.* The object on the chair for this reading was Mr. S. E.'s dollar bill. The reading was unrecognized with the exception of the name Nellie which has significance for Mr. S. E. There was no further evidence so the name must be considered a coincidence.

*Object No. 10.* This article was a ring belonging to Mr. A. W. The reading is applicable to Mr. A. W. This is the only reading in this second series that fitted the object placed upon the chair. Mr. A. W. did not know of course that his object was on the chair but he began to recognize the impressions as connected with himself about half way through.

I get a strong sense of humor, decor, rhythm.	Correct.	(G.) 1
Perfect understanding.	Correct.	(G.) 1
This belongs to a man.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He is spontaneous, light and gay and has great depths.	Correct.	(G.) 1
He understands the spirit of living, he is amused by life.	Correct.	(G.) 1
Financially he is not very respon- sible.	Wrong.	(S.)
At least his family do not think so but this is of no great moment.	Mr. A. W. does not think that his family feel	

	this way. On the other hand he does not consider money questions of great importance. $\frac{1}{2}$ (S.) 1
He has luck.	Correct. (G.) 1
When things are blackest for him he gets into another path.	Mr. A. W. feels this statement is particularly true of him. (G.) 1
He is the kind of man, who, if he jumped out of a ten story window, would find someone in the street holding a nice soft blanket.	Mr. A. W. says he recognized himself by this statement. (not counted)
He meets his difficulties with a shrug of the shoulders.	Correct. (G.) 1
He is quiet, deep, philosophical.	Correct. (G.) 1
He might write.	He has distinct latent talent. Prophetic. $\frac{1}{2}$ (S.) 1
He is thoroughly observant.	Correct. (G.) 1
He would be an explorer if he had the ways and means.	Mr. A. W. is unusually fond of travel in out of the way places. He held an important government post in a tropical jungle for 15 years. (S.) 2
He would turn south toward the south seas or the ant-arctic rather than north or to the arctic.	All Mr. A. W.'s inclinations have been toward tropical countries. (S.) 2
He would make a good explorer or he might have made a good surgeon.	Undoubtedly correct. Mr. A. W. has had to do a lot of first-aid work in the jungle where doctors were not available and has a flair for it. (S.) 2
Mark that because it was once talked of.	Wrong. Mr. A. W. cannot remember ever considering surgery as a profession. (S.)
He would be able to write wonderfully well.	Prophetic. Probably correct. (Not counted.)

He has been through an unhappy episode.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He feels the loss of two ladies.	Correct.	(S.) 2
One is his mother.	Correct. She died about 3 years ago.	(S.) 2
The other is not a sister but a good companion, someone near.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He doesn't say much about it but it made a deep impression upon him.	Correct.	
His father was rugged, industrious, with a set point of view.	Not very industrious. $\frac{1}{2}$	(S.) 1
He was not very close to his father.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He had a great sympathy for his mother.	Correct.	(S.) 2
She had great sweetness and charm.	Correct.	(G.) 1
There was much love and understanding between them.	Correct.	(S.) 2
There is a ring connected with the family with scrolls on it.	Mr. A. W. wears a seal ring with three figures not unlike scrolls though they are symbolic of something else. This statement would have more evidential value if the impression of the ring had not been in the wax seal of the package contributed by Mr. A. W. in series No. 1. It is very doubtful that the sensitive noted this design but in a fair criticism all possibilities must be taken into account. The design was so small that it would be almost impossible to see it on the ring while worn by Mr. A. W.	(S.) 2

He wears a little ring under that one which has a sentimental value connected with his mother.	Mr. A. W. wears such a ring under his seal ring tho' he did not have it on at this meeting as it was in the envelope. He wore it at the previous meeting. It did not belong to his mother but to his mother-in-law.	(S.) 2
He is a person shy about opening himself at times like this.	Correct.	(S.) 2
He feels rather than seeks spiritual communication.	Correct. Mrs. L. could not have known his views though I had heard him express them previously.	(S.) 2
He would be good at chemistry.	Mr. A. W. has never tried chemistry. (Not counted.)	
He would be good at exploration and photography.	He has already been successful.	(S.) 2
He is a great enthusiast.	Correct.	(G.) 1
He is about to go on a journey.	Correct. Mr. A. W. returned to Europe two weeks after this meeting. But in the following statements Mrs. L. suggests that she means a longer journey.	(S.) 2
It was talked of last year.	Mr. A. W.'s government has asked him to make a survey of the tropical country in which he formerly held a government post. The suggestion was made last year and may still be acted upon.	(S.) 2
The nucleus of his work will be writing and photography.	Correct.	(S.) 2

The total number of statements is 39. Three are not counted. 25 are specific, 11 are general. The perfect score would be 61. The

sensitive's score is 54. The sensitive's percentage of accuracy is approximately 88.1.

These studies point to a number of conclusions. Although they are not presented to the readers of the *JOURNAL* as Exhibit A. conclusive proof of the existence of supernormal cognition, I think it is safe to say that Mrs. L. could not have gathered so much accurate information about so diversified a group of people, especially as she did not know some of them and had no means of identifying any of them.

My first conclusion is therefore that Mrs. L. possesses the gift of clairvoyance to a remarkable degree.

Out of about twenty readings about half were, as far as we know, total failures. It is probable that under other conditions the results would have been much better.

My second conclusion is therefore that these readings illustrate the uncertainty and unevenness of clairvoyance, even in as well developed a sensitive as Mrs. L.

My third conclusion is that these readings illustrate that Mrs. L.'s supernormal cognition cannot be explained by Telepathy or mind reading. In the reading given for Mrs. G.'s letter, facts were given unknown to me or anyone present. Mrs. G. was unknown to Mrs. L. and I did not even know that the letter was Mrs. G.'s personal property.

Where the clairvoyance comes from, is still as great a mystery as ever. Probably it is as much a mystery to the sensitive herself as it is to her audience. The complete failure of the last sitting was undoubtedly due to a great deal of confusion and a lack of harmony at the time. Harmony and quiet seem to be the only definite requisites for the best results.

It is perhaps well to remind the reader once more that this article is intended to illustrate to you the inadequacy of the present method of tabulation. It is sent to you in the form of a query. Are you satisfied with this method as just and scientific? If not help us to find a more accurate means of evaluating pure clairvoyance.

# A Letter from England

BY DR. NANDOR FODOR

(*Research Officer, International Institute for Psychological Research*)

May, 1937.

## THE HOUSE OF THE INSTITUTE

The International Institute for Psychological Research has moved to more elaborate and suitable headquarters. One of its generous supporters has bought a house in Walton Street, between Knightsbridge and South Kensington, to accommodate the Institute and give it much needed facilities for expansion. The name of the house is Walton House; it is a detached and imposing mansion with splendid rooms. For some time past the present headquarters of the Institute were felt to be too small. We had five rooms and they were crammed with instruments. Lectures had to be arranged in a neighboring hall. The new premises have lecture facilities. The séance room has a gallery, so that it will be possible to take all the photographs and cinematographs from above without disturbing the circle.

## TALKING DOGS OF WEIMAR

*The Two Worlds* of January 15th reprints an article by Professor Dr. Max Muller of Munich on Kurwenal and Asra, two remarkable talking dogs of Germany. Kurwenal is a Dachshund belonging to the Baroness von Freytag-Loringhoven, of Weimar. Asra is a Great Dane, belonging to Fraülein Margarete Schmidt-Leutenberg, of Weimar. Both dogs talk by barking out the alphabet according to a code.

In response to the Baroness von Freytag-Loringhoven's question as to what Kurwenal had to say about Dr. Max Muller's visit, the dog barked out, "I was very pleased you came". The doctor brought cheese and biscuits for Kurwenal. The dog, on being asked what he thought of that, barked out, "I find that charming of him". In reply to the question, "Which do you prefer, the cheese or the biscuit?" the dog answered, "Cheese". "Why?" "It tastes so nice". He was asked what he thought of the professor before he saw him. He answered, "I thought the professor was very old". When asked why, he replied, "Many of them look old and miserable".

Kurwenal often listened to the discussion of religious subjects, has definite ideas and often tells his mistress that he meditates about this or that question. "We were speaking about the slaughter of dogs",

writes the professor, "as a brutality inconsistent with our culture and civilization. Then I remarked that the topic must surely have made a special impression on the dog. In reply to the question put to him whether he had followed the conversation, he answered: 'Yes'. 'Do you wish to say something about it?' 'Yes'. 'How many words?' 'Five'. Then the dog barked out: 'The Christian religion prohibits killing'."

Asra's method of talking differs from that of Kurwenal in that he taps with his right and left paw and barks. "I was told," the professor writes, "that Asra herself thought out the method of speaking with the paw. The tapping with the right and left paw in conjunction with the deep bark of the Great Dane is very impressive during conversation with this dog, and one feels the great importance of recognizing that an animal can talk in a similar way to man".

#### RECALLING THE NEW MOTOR.

There is nothing more fantastic in the whole history of Modern Spiritualism than the story of the New Motor. Few people will remember it now. I have just gone into it and dug up the details of John Murray Spear's and Mrs. Samantha Mettler's bizarre adventure. The New Motor was to be a "living machine". It was built according to the instructions given by the trance controls of the famous Universalist Minister and abolitionist, and Mrs. Samantha Mettler was chosen as "The Mary of the New Dispensation." She was to impart the life-principle to the machine which, thereafter, would go on as a perpetuum mobile for ever. The building of the machine cost John Murray Spear's followers 2000 Dollars. At the appointed time, Mrs. Mettler who previous to this had been the subject of some remarkable psychological experiences and prophetic visions, arrived on the scene, passed into convulsions and reached a crisis following which a pulsation and undulation was observed in the extremities of the machine. There was a frenetic outburst of joy. The machine, as a new born "child" was handed into Mrs. Mettler's care for nursing and S. Crosby Hewitt, the editor of the *New Era* of Boston, wrote:

"We must confidently assert that the advent of the science of all sciences, the philosophy of all philosophies, and the art of all arts has now fairly commenced. The child is born; not long hence he will go alone. Then he will dispute with the doctors in the temples of science."

Eventually Dr. John Murray Spear, whose sincerity was above doubt, got a break. At High Rock whereto the machine was transported to enjoy the advantages of a lofty electrical position, the

mob rose and destroyed the machine, trampling its parts under their feet.

The *New Era* published a number of designs of the New Motor in 1854. There is, however, no copy of this periodical in England. Will the readers of the *Journal* help me to purchase one?

Recently, in a trance sitting, I had a communication from an alleged "nature spirit", a fairy. She was willing to serve me and, curiously, mentioned that if I ever want any book which I cannot get I should ask her help. In a flash, I answered, that I do want the 1854 volume or the full set of the *New Era*, a spiritualistic periodical published in Boston, Mass. The fairy promised that she would do what she can.

I have some misgivings. I think I gave her a tall order. Who will come to the assistance of my fairy? She will need some.

#### WILL I DIE THIS WISE?

I have received a forecast of my own death. It came in a dream to a medium in the South of England and she believes that the dream was prophetic. She felt no qualms in sending me full details and I was thrilled to receive them. This is the communication:

"My brother and I always arrange to meet in spirit. On Wednesday night he came and asked me where I was going. I said to see you. Then he showed to me a news magazine. It was rather like the *Listener* to look at, only a scientific and psychic paper. I know of nothing in psychic newspapers like it in this country.

"He pointed at a paragraph which began at the bottom of the page in block letters, large black type, and then passed into small, ordinary print in a second paragraph. I might mention that the headlines of this paper were in Old English type. I could not see the name though. It read as follows:

"THE DEATH OF DOCTOR FODOR. (The name Nandor nowhere) THE UNFORTUNATE DEATH IS REPORTED OF DR. FODOR AND FOUR OTHER MEN, TWO OF THEM BEING EMINENT SCOTTISH SCIENTISTS, AT THE UNDERGROUND STATION LAST NIGHT. THE PILLARS (details below) AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE STATION WERE STRUCK BY LIGHTNING AND COLLAPSED ON THE FIVE MEN. DR. FODOR WAS RUSHED TO HOSPITAL AND TWO OPERATIONS WERE PERFORMED UPON HIM IMMEDIATELY BUT HIS BACK WAS DISCOVERED TO BE BROKEN. HE PASSED WITHOUT REGAINING CONSCIOUSNESS.

"The news then passed to the Scotsmen, giving their names. I can't remember their names clearly; one was, I think, MacFarlan.

I woke with this on my mind. Then . . . 'Only Dr. Fodor knew the secret of the sudden rise to fame of these two men.'

"I reread the article, feeling rather stunned, and the station appeared before me like a wraith; it was in the style of an Athenian Temple with five pillars.

"On awakening, I thought over the dream for a couple of hours until my head ached. Then I went 'off' again, and the whole business began all over again, this time with photographs.

"Of the two Scots, the MacFarlan one was the most noticeable. Wearing correct morning dress, his height was 5 feet 6 inches or so, he had a rather long face, aquiline nose, a reddish blond beard turned white, high forehead and long straggly hair. The other man was small with red hair. A third member of the party was a Magyar, small and slight, elegantly dressed in black, with white shirt and black tie. His head was rather flat on top, widening above the temples, the hair shone glossy black, sweeping down from a peak in the forehead, with every hair in place; he was highly intelligent and familiar somehow.

"Then you came, all standing in the ruins of the station. I was doubtful that it was you. He was rather like you in features but the hair was black and soft dressed, the same but longer, well built but fat, nothing hard about him as in your case, rather inclined to flabbiness. The lips not like yours and I did not like the mouth, it had a cynical sneer.

"That was all. It was not England, rather the Continent and I would say, the station was not railway, rather an underground science laboratory. I don't like it, but I confess I can find little explanation."

I give the dream in full detail and I confess that I would be rather pleased if I could accept it as an accurate forecast of my passing on. The date, by the features of the dream, must be well ahead in the future, though this is contradicted by the blackness of my hair. As it is, I am slightly greying. But perhaps I shall be taking to hair dyes. The suddenness of the death appeals to me very much and I shall be sorry not to see it fulfilled. I want to place it on record, and wish to add that I have not met the prophetic dreamer for over six months and am only slightly acquainted with her. But I know a lot, from material submitted to me, of her psychic life and I consider it most extraordinary.

#### *RUDI SCHNEIDER IN LONDON*

The opening of the new premises of the International Institute for Psychical Research in Walton House, Walton Street, S.W. 3., took place on April 6th. It was a brilliant social affair at which over

two hundred people attended. The premises are very commodious and were much admired. When my turn came to speak, I made an announcement which came as a surprise and was received with pleasure. We placed Rudi Schneider under contract and he is to start sittings on April 23rd.

We do not know, of course, the state of his powers as a physical medium. In latter years he has declined. But there is reason to assume that if we can make him happy we still may have phenomena well worth our efforts.

I am not trying to duplicate previous experiments. I aim at two things: 1. obtaining infra-red flashlight photographs of telekinetic movements by an ingenious instrument which should unfailingly fire a flash if objects move near the cabinet whether they are luminous or not and whether the sitting takes place in total darkness or red light, 2. obtaining infra-red cinematograph strips of the same type of phenomena. Our cameraman is to start his cine camera, at a signal from me, in the dark. While he cranks with his right, his left will throw a master switch which will put on all our infra-red cine-lamps and, presumably, provide us, at the worst, with a few seconds of film record.

#### *HISTORY'S GREATEST APPORT*

Speaking of physical phenomena I cannot resist calling attention to an ancient story which I recently read and which, no doubt, records the greatest apport in history. Grillot de Givry, in *Witchcraft, Magic and Alchemy*, writes on p. 156:

"In the Vysehrad Church at Prague, in Bohemia, a priest named Wazlaga Kralizec, ordered a demon to leave the body of a possessed man and offered him his own in exchange if the demon could go to Rome straight away and bring him back a column from the Church of Santa Maria in Trastevere before the introit of the Mass. The demon went off and brought back the column, but the priest had finished the Mass by then and was reading the last Gospel. Out of spite the demon dropped the column, which broke into three pieces and killed several people; but he left the body of the possessed man. This column, nearly twenty feet long, is still to be seen in the church; an ancient fresco painted in the wall before it portrays the details of the occurrence. The story is thrown into strangely bold relief by the presence in the church of Santa Maria in Trastevere at Rome, six hundred miles away, of sixteen columns like those in the Vysehrad Church; these stand on one side of the nave, but on the opposite side there are only fifteen of them. An altar stands on the site of the missing column, and it, too, bears an ancient fresco illustrating this extraordinary tale."

The story is so curious that one is tempted to assume that the coincidental points between the frescoes and the columns in the two churches have been considerably embellished. I am writing to a friend in Italy in an attempt to check up on this part of the tale. It would be certainly interesting to know the date of this extraordinary happening and the contemporary sources, if any, on which the story is based.

### *MYSTERIOUS KNOCKINGS*

I just had an opportunity to look into a case of mysterious knockings, the scene of which was the house of a medical practitioner in Chelsea. When I was called in by a friend of the doctor, the knockings have been going on for weeks and have shaken the nerves of the doctor and his family. They were not so much knocks as hammer blows on one particular wall which divided the house from the next one. They were dull, so that their origin was difficult to establish and not quite mechanical, inasmuch as occasionally they sounded in quick succession as if expressing something and most often kept quiet when strangers were in the house. The doctor used to listen with his ear against the wall but could detect no vibration. Builders were called in but they found no mechanical explanation. The police were notified and they investigated next door but without result. The children and their nurse were sent away from the house. The blows still continued. A priest was called in to bless the house. It made no difference.

I was fortunate to hear the blows. They reminded me of a wooden mallet hitting the wall with terrific force. I heard three or four blows, then a few minutes later a succession of them. The blows came from above. There was a young servant girl in the house. She was in the next room on the same level as we, listening to our conversation. There was no one on the upper floors which were in darkness.

In an interview, Florrie, the servant girl, told me that she was about seventeen. Four years ago, in her father's house something similar happened. Blows of the same type were heard. She had an elder sister, then seventeen and a number of younger sisters and brothers. There were altogether ten children in the family. All the children were sent away. When they returned, the blows ceased and they were told by their father that the builder found a loose slate on the roof which was knocking in the wind.

"But I really never believed in this explanation", Florrie added. "I thought it was a ghost."

I interviewed the doctor who, I was told, heard occasional knocks on the door of his surgery. But I found him sullen and hostile to my inquiries. It appeared that he and his wife were ardent Catho-

lics and that I was invited by a mutual friend very much against their will.

So I gave them what advice I could and left.

I found out afterwards that Florrie was sent away. From that day the blows lost strength. In a week, they petered out completely and the house is now quiet.

#### *THE EGYPTIAN CURSE AGAIN*

I suppose that the sensational story of the Egyptian bone in the possession of Sir Alexander Seton has now gone around the world. It is a sacrum, a kind of limber bone in the back. It came from an Egyptian tomb near the Sphinx. Lady Seton took it as a souvenir and, at home in Edinburgh, the bone was placed in a glass case in their drawing room.

"Nothing happened until November", Sir Alexander said before a meeting of the Edinburgh Psychic College. "Then the trouble started. At that time I did not connect anything with it. But we had little things, such as illnesses that should never have happened. And now I take you to February. In that month, my nephew, a boy of nine years of age, was staying with us. He did not know anything about the bone, but one night he came downstairs in a state of sheer terror, and told his mother, my sister, that he had seen a figure walk into the drawing room. He was genuinely scared. We tried to get him to describe the apparition, if such it was, and all that we could get out of him was "It was a robed figure."

Then came a night during which Sir Alexander had "the feeling of absolute panic", the feeling that something was very wrong. He went downstairs, and was surprised to find the bone out of its glass case, and the glass case lying at the bottom of the table, two feet away, completely shattered. Lady Seton had not touched it, he had not, nor had a friend who was staying in the house.

On another occasion a glass vase containing flowers which had stood on the table where the bone had been placed, was found lying on the floor, with the flowers about six inches away from it. Not a single person had been in the room.

Last week he was alone in the house and had gone upstairs to do some writing. Suddenly he heard a "thump" from the drawing room, and when he entered he saw that one of the chairs was turned completely upside down. The table had come out about four inches from the wall and the vase was eight feet from the table.

"I was alone in the house at the time, my wife being at the theatre with a friend", Sir Alexander added.

After all these happenings Sir Alexander became convinced that the bone wants to go home to its resting place. He was perfectly prepared to believe that there was something in the curse of the Pharaohs.

There was a dramatic incident after Sir Alexander's address. Mrs. M. Bateman, a London clairvoyant, was caught up in the atmosphere of these weird happenings and added an unfortunate prediction to the burden of Sir Alexander's experiences up to date.

"I feel", she said, "that the bone should be got away in the next six weeks. It has come very strongly and most emphatically to me that if it is not away by six weeks blindness will come on those who touch it.

"My eyes are going very queer. There is a dark hand with a ring on it. They are very pathetic. They want it back and they are giving it a time limit of six weeks. I can hear a voice which is talking quickly and making me so hot. I am just going to ask them if they will take the influence away, please. It makes me so hot. It is such a strong personality."

Sir Alexander was not in the room when this prediction was made. But he was immediately informed. He was visibly impressed and offered the bone which he was carrying to several press men remarking that perhaps they could arrange for its conveyance back to Egypt through their newspapers.

The offer was unanimously declined.

### THE POPE'S CURSE

Speaking of curses, *Psychic News* in its issue of April 10th, 1937 recalls the story of Pope Leo XIII.'s Bull of Excommunication against spiritualists. Issued in 1883 and first translated from the original in the *Rebus* of St. Petersburg, the Pope is said to have had weighed in against spiritualists as follows:

"May they be crushed and swept from the face of the earth and all memory of them disappear forever, and may they be seized with terrible death and hurled alive, they and their progeny, into hell for damnation everlasting so as not to leave a seed of themselves upon the surface of the globe.

"May the few days that are yet in store be full of gall and bring on incessant disasters and unhappiness to the accursed ones.

"Let them suffer hunger, thirst and nakedness, and be visited by every unclean disease and pain, through wretched poverty and misery. Accursed be every bit of their property, and every blessing and prayer, instead of benefiting, be changed for them into a curse."

Happily, this awful malediction, if it was uttered as reported, proved less potent than the curse of the Pharaohs.

### PROBLEM OF ANTI-COGNITION

I must apologise for the word. I made it up on the urge of the moment during an address by Eileen Garrett on precognition at the

British College of Psychic Science. She was answering Mr. Tyrrell who, on behalf of the S.P.R., is checking up, with an ingenious instrument, on Dr. Rhine's work in extra-sensory perception. While they were wrestling with the problem of precognition, it occurred to me that there must be a negative aspect of precognition which, in want of a proper term, I decided to call "anticognition". I asked Mr. Tyrrell if, in the course of his thousands of experiments, he ever came across people who scored persistently below the level of chance because, I have reason to believe, I possess this "anti-psychic" gift. I find at least that hazards will always work out against me. I never play roulette or similar games as I cannot count on the small chance which, according to mathematics, I ought to have.

Mr. Tyrrell was very interested. He said that a low scoring ability would indicate extra-sensory perception as well as a high scoring ability does, only, he would conclude, there was a factor of suppression present, the study of which should be extremely interesting.

Shortly after Mr. Tyrrell's remarks I read a paper by Mr. S. G. Soal on his researches in extra-sensory perception and I noticed with interest that in the clairvoyance series he discovered a certain tendency in a number of individuals to score below chance expectation. Dr. Rhine definitely claims that there exists a negative type of extra-sensory perception. He (Mr. Soal) would want further data for confirmation.

After this, I shall accept Mr. Tyrrell's invitation to prove that I possess anti-cognition. I may, of course, fail. All I can say at the moment is that chance guessing, because of the enforced standstill or brain activity, fills me with impatience and irritation. As soon as I find myself in this anti-psychic state I lose the normal chance of successful guessing.

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## Two Recent Psychic Experiences

BY VIRGINIA PIERSON

It is often the least dramatic experiences that carry the greatest conviction of supernormality. I have had two such experiences of widely varying nature during the past year. The first is an example of physical phenomena in a sitting with "Margery".

My husband and I had the privilege of a number of sittings with Mrs. Crandon in June of this year. We have watched the "Margery" Mediumship with great interest and have participated in sittings at Lime Street at intervals for a period of eight years or more. This year we spent four days and evenings with Dr. and Mrs. Crandon and during that time we were present at eight dark sittings, two of which were remarkable for their physical manifestations, two were blanks, and the balance were of varying degrees of interest and abundance of phenomena.

The impression that we received in general was that the manifestations are in many respects stronger and more arresting than ever. The "Walter" voice is deeper and more vibrant and the trance condition quickly and easily attained except when, as occasion happens, no trance seems possible and a blank sitting ensues. Even under this disap-

pointing condition the "Walter" voice usually speaks for an instant, sometimes to advise us to desist for the time being. Psychic manifestations are never wholly confined to the séance room, but are always recurring in Mrs. Crandon's presence. Wherever she is, small inexplicable phenomena are continuous. This fact is one which greatly increases the confidence of the visitor to Lime Street, for it would hardly be possible for a person to normally bring about so many strange small happenings day after day and week after week.

The sittings which my husband and I attended in June did not take place at Lime Street but in different houses and localities near Boston. The sitting which I will describe in detail was one of the most satisfying of my experience. The number of sitters was small and the visibility was exceptionally good.

The sitters were as follows from left to right, in the order of their positions in the circle: "Margery", William H. Button, Mr. Nogouchi, myself, and my husband, Thomas H. Pierson. Mr. Button said my husband sat on the left and right of the medium controlling her hands. The room was dark and we sat around an ordinary leather topped card table. On the table had been placed a china vegetable dish about eight inches long by six inches wide and in it were placed four solid red rubber balls striped with broad bands of luminous paint. These balls gave off so much light that the inside of the dish was plainly visible. Almost at once after the electric light had been extinguished, and we had all taken hands, the balls in the dish began to rotate. The dish itself did not move and any stick or wire used to stir up the balls would have been visible above them.

After the first movement of the balls which must have occurred before "Margery" was entranced, there was quiet for some time. Then "Walter's" voice made some unimportant comments and we replied to them.

After another lapse of silence in which our eyes became accustomed to the dark, the inside of the dish was very plainly seen. Suddenly the dish moved, scraping along the

top of the table, and then began to tip. My husband was the first to see the terminal at the edge of the dish. Then I saw it. It looked like a dark band, then like a thumb in a mitten. It was sometimes blunt and sometimes more slender. The extraordinary way it changed its shape made a deep impression on me. I leaned so far forward in my intensity that my nose almost touched the edge of the dish and "Walter's" voice begged me somewhat emphatically to relax. The dish tipped first one way and then another and at such an angle that it seemed that the balls must roll out, but they did not, and the rocking continued for some minutes with a good deal of noise. Control of "Margery's" hands was announced perfect by my husband and Mr. Button. The others also announced that all hands were held. The terminal showed itself only on the left side of the dish from my position, which would be to the medium's right, and appeared to come from between her and my husband.

No other physical manifestation took place during that sitting and "Walter's" remarks were fragmentary and unimportant. Yet the evening left a strong impression on all the sitters; a conviction that they had witnessed phenomena of the most definite and remarkable character.

The second experience which I will relate was of a totally different nature. My sister, Mrs. H. L. Baggallay is able to do automatic writing, especially when I am with her. Although usually full of interest and of a constructive and intellectual type, it is not of a veridical nature. She has never attempted to work for evidence of survival. While we were together last summer in England we wrote daily, receiving interesting and encouraging messages supposedly from friends and relatives who are dead. Another sister, Mrs. Daly of Ottawa, who has always been very skeptical of the supernormality of automatic writing or any other psychic manifestation, wrote us that she would be more convinced if she could be given some personal proof and suggested a test. She wrote that she would place a name, which was unknown to Mrs. Baggallay and myself, on the bureau of her room, and also on the bureau of our brother's

room, and that the purported communicator should endeavor to read the name and give it or the initials of the name through my sister, Mrs. Baggallay, in automatic writing. We agreed, and my sister, Mrs. Daly, placed a name in large letters on the mirrors of the two dressing tables.

A message came from the communicator in the automatic script that he was unable to see into the rooms at all. At a second sitting he wrote that he was not able to get close enough to Mrs. Daly because of her attitude, to read any writing in her room, but that he had been able to get closer to our brother and in a mist had seen the letter "M".

I wrote immediately to my sister in Canada with this information and was disappointed to receive a reply that the letter "M" was completely unsatisfactory. In fact no letter "M" was contained in the name at all.

At a subsequent sitting the control wrote that he had tried again and had received the impression from our brother's room of the letters A. S. M. in a jumble.

I again wrote to my sister and she replied that A. S. M. meant nothing; that the name she had placed on the two bureaus was Lawrence Fullerton. We were all greatly disappointed that the test had proved such a failure and I again wrote to my sister expressing my disappointment and asking her whether there was any possibility of the initials A. S. M. being on the inside of a collar band or some other object on the bureau. The initials are not familiar ones in our family so it was a half-hearted suggestion. Mrs. Daly, upon receipt of my letter, went at once to our brother's room and there she found a small box of medicine, upon which was printed several lines of instructions and the words: from Dr. A. S. Maclean. The medicine was addressed to a lady who had been visiting in the house some months before and had been lying on the bureau since her departure.

This incident is not very dramatic, and yet the possibilities of a coincidence are small. It seems to suggest a theory. If the control of my sister's automatic script is a separate entity as much of the writing seems to indicate, then he is

dependent upon the faculties of a third person to get impressions of this world. He wrote that he could not see the letters on Mrs. Daly's bureau because of her skepticism. But he finally managed to get a set of initials from our brother's room. Those initials had undoubtedly been seen and unconsciously noted by our brother but he would not have associated them with the test which he knew about because the name Lawrence Fullerton had been placed in a prominent position before his mirror for that purpose. Nor was the conscious impression of the letters A. S. M. likely to have been very strong, because the medicine was not his and he did not know the doctor. In fact when asked about it, he denied having ever noticed the name on the box.

In straight telepathy it is often the passing impression which is transmitted instead of the set of ideas chosen for the purpose. F. W. H. Myers gives an instance in *Human Personality* vol. 1, p. 629. A physician and his wife conducted a series of experiments in telepathy. They were remarkably successful and the record very accurately kept. In several instances, correct impressions were received which were not consciously sent. It is possible that a communicator attempting to receive an impression of a material world with which he has no physical contact would attempt to draw from the subconscious mind of someone in contact with that world. If such is the case in this instance, he picked up the impression of A. S. M., undoubtedly noted, but not retained in my brother's conscious memory. There is also the possibility of an indirect telepathic transmission from the subconscious mind of my brother to the subconscious mind of my sister in England. To my mind such an explanation would be far fetched as my brother in Canada and my sister in England never see each other and are very rarely in even written communication. I do not pretend to offer any explanation for the means by which the transmission was effected, but that the incident was beyond the bounds of coincidence I am quite confident.

## Using the Resources of the Extra-Conscious

BY JOHN J. O'NEILL

The field of consciousness is but a small bright band of visibility in the complete spectrum of our minds. In the spectrum of electromagnetic radiations the band of visible light is a very narrow strip between the vastly more extensive areas of invisible or black light that range below the red and above the violet ends. In the former range we have the very useful heat rays and radio waves and in the latter we have the ultra violet rays and X rays, all powerful agents capable of producing intense physical effects although the rays themselves are entirely invisible to us. We have been able to adapt these rays to useful purposes because the scientists have learned how to detect, measure and control their production and application. A similar task faces the workers in the field of psychical research. A vast array of supernormal phenomena has been recorded. Its nature must be determined and also the mechanisms by which it was produced and made available to our conscious knowledge. Before we can make much progress in our efforts to solve our many mysteries we must learn more of the possibilities latent in the human mind. Some very common experiences give us important clues to the manner in which the extra-conscious realm of the mind works. The following incident is a case in point:

The question — "Do we dream in natural colors or do the dream images always appear in black and white?" was submitted to me by a friend. I could not answer the question with any certainty from my own recollections, and none of the reference works available at the time touched on the subject. He was in no hurry for the answer so I promised to do some further research work at my earliest opportunity. The matter slipped my mind and I failed to make the promised inquiry. Nevertheless, the answer came in a most unexpected way.

Not only did I learn the answer to the question but it came in a way that demonstrated the existence of a source of knowledge within ourselves that can be consulted, if we know how to operate the mechanism. The source is in an extra-conscious realm of our minds. The answer came in the dream state, transferring the knowledge from the extra-conscious to the conscious realm of my mind.

I usually enjoy dreamless sleep but about three weeks after the question was submitted by my friend, during which period the query was completely absent from my conscious mind, I had what was for me a most unusual dream.

There appeared to me a line of about a half dozen automobiles standing beside the curb in a parkway. The cars were new, each of a different color and all of them resplendent in their new enamels. The color scheme of each of them was emphasized by the manner in which contrasting colors were used in various parts of each vehicle.

Behind the line of vehicles was a wall constructed of large rectangular blocks of rough faced stones. Every block was of a different color. It looked as if thousands of mineral varieties were built in that wall. The wall was the facing of an embankment, along the top of which there was a stretch of grass and beyond there was a flower garden in which a profusion of blossoms of an endless variety of vivid colors grew.

Above the embankment I saw a large area of sky. Parts of it were clear and in the remainder there were clouds of several types. The high thin veil-like bands of clouds exhibited a wide range of pastel shades while the fluffier cumulus clouds were decorated with the more vivid pinks and other hues. The sky background ranged by invisible gradations from deep midnight blue to a shimmering opalescent white.

As I studied the strange colorful view, strongly impressed by the range and brilliance of the colors, flames sprang simultaneously and spontaneously from the gas tank of each of the automobiles. The flames exhibited a

kaleidoscopic change of most intense color effects. Above the sheets of flame there appeared intensely black and dense clouds of smoke that partly blotted out and made vivid contrasts with the brightly colored sky background.

At this point I was awakened by the dream itself and there remained with me a very distinct memory of it. There came to me quickly, to the newly awake and conscious portion of my mind, the knowledge that this dream contained the answer to the question that had been brought to me: whether we dream in black and white or in natural colors.

The dream demonstrated that we can dream in colors, but it does not demonstrate whether we normally do so. I do not dream often, or if I do, the memory of these dreams does not carry over to the waking state. Such recollections as I have of dreams since the one described, do not furnish me with any clear cut memory on the color problem. Perhaps others who are better dreamers can furnish some definite information on this point.

The phase of this incident which interests me most concerns the manner in which some agency beyond the realm of my consciousness took over the problem of ascertaining the answer to the query, formulating that answer in a very definite, concrete and easily understood way, and presenting it in the manner described.

Immediately after the dream I sat for some time trying to recall an experience which could have precipitated it. The setting of the dream, that is the landscape was one which has never been a part of my conscious experience. It was a highly synthetic one, almost completely idealized, as if created for that particular occasion. I could not associate the dream with any recent experience, or with anything I had heard or read.

The initiative for the dream, excluding the original query, came entirely from some extra-conscious source. In keeping with sound scientific principles which call for a minimum amount of hypotheses, it will be assumed that while the initiative and mechanisms for assembling the information

and presenting it operated in an extra-conscious realm, nevertheless this realm is a part of the totality of my mind. This dream demonstration gives evidence of the useful purposes to which this extra-conscious realm of the mind can be adapted if we knew how to use it and control its mechanisms. If we knew how to control these extra-conscious mechanisms we could set them to work solving the problems that come to us in our conscious states. They could work twenty-four hours a day without interfering with our efforts in the conscious realm. We would probably find that they could arrive at the answers to problems with much greater rapidity than we can achieve in the conscious realm.

It is not only possible, but probable, that the extra-conscious realm of the mind is continually solving problems that arise in the conscious realm but we do not have access to these solutions because of the lack of controlled communication between the two. In the case of the color dream, three weeks elapsed between the time the problem was presented to my consciousness and the time the answer came from my extra-consciousness. There is no means of knowing when the extra-conscious formulated the answer. It may have been complete as soon as I received the problem or it may not have been until the time the dream was produced. If the answer was formulated at the time I received the query then it had lain unutilized awaiting the time when conditions would permit a bridging of the gap between the conscious and the extra-conscious.

The most probable situation is that the solution was arrived at by the extra-conscious almost instantly after the problem was presented. In the course of my duties as editor it has been my business to arrange for illustrations of articles designed to emphasize or make clear some particular point. Greatly to the annoyance of the artists I would always select the point to be illustrated and make a rough sketch of the drawing I wanted, seldom requiring much time to show them the composition required, and always regretting that I did not have time to make the illustration myself. I mention this merely to demonstrate that it would

be well within my conscious ability to design a picture illustrating the point that dreams do appear in natural colors.

I would undoubtedly have arrived at the construction in a matter of minutes, perhaps seconds. If this could have been done by my conscious mind, it would seem reasonable that my extra-conscious mind could work with equal speed.

The knowledge which the dream answer contained was undoubtedly somewhere in my mind when the problem was propounded. It was not, at any rate, assembled through my conscious processes between the time I received the query and the time I received the dream answer. While the knowledge was in my mind it was not apparently in the memory reservoir that was available to my thinking mechanisms. It was, however, in some memory reservoir. This memory reservoir received and stored dream experiences so that access to them was available to the extra-conscious realm, as its use of them by this realm in this case illustrates.

If this extra-conscious realm is continuously solving problems for us and has a memory function available to it, as seems to be demonstrated by this case, with an apparent memory storage for three weeks, then we have in our minds a vast array of knowledge got through other than conscious processes.

With a storehouse of knowledge like this existing in the mind in its unconscious realm it would be surprising if there were not frequent intervals in which the gap separating it from the consciousness were bridged. When this happens we have the well known flash of inspiration, the hunch, or the solution of a problem that comes to us after we have slept on it.

If a person were to have continuous linkage between his extra-conscious realm and his consciousness he would undoubtedly exceed in mental power our greatest geniuses.

Dr. Frederick Tilney, of the New York Neurological Institute, a world famous brain specialist, is authority for the statement that we now use a very small portion of the total capacity of the brain.

There are large areas of the brain to which no functions

can be assigned as far as sensory and motor functions of the body are concerned. These principal silent areas are located immediately behind the forehead. The functions which these areas control are not known, but it is definitely established that they have some very active function because otherwise they would atrophy. Surgical operations which separate these areas from the remainder of the brain result in a deterioration of the higher creative functions of the mind, or in other words a loss of the imagination.

This area of the brain has only recently (in the evolutionary scale of time) attained its full development and this coincides with the rise of man to his higher creative status. It undoubtedly has vast possibilities for more complete utilization which will make man a more understanding individual and one capable of more profound mental accomplishments.

A spontaneous experiment was injected into a series of tests, designed to explore this extra-conscious realm, and conducted by the late W. L. Orton, of Brooklyn, and the writer. Mr. Orton was an accomplished hypnotist. Two friends had explored a little known portion of a foreign country. One was a writer and the other an artist. They contracted with a publisher to produce a book on their experiences, one to do the writing and the other to make a dozen etchings as illustrations. The writer turned her copy over to the publisher in good time but the artist procrastinated. Several unsuccessful appeals by the publisher for the etchings resulted in a threat to tear up the contract and reject the book. The artist was panic stricken. She confided in her friend Mr. Orton that the two weeks' time allowed was totally inadequate for making the etchings, and asked him to help her in any way he could.

Mr. Orton worked out a plan, the nature of which he did not reveal to the artist. He merely told her that he would use hypnosis as a means of getting her out of the highly excited state into which she had worked herself so that she would be able to do her work under the best possible conditions.

This plan was based upon the theory that we could bring the extra-conscious faculties into close co-operation with the conscious faculties. The purpose was to gain the advantage of the time she would necessarily spend in sleeping for planning and to transfer the results to the consciousness in the waking state.

In order to accomplish this result the young woman was hypnotized and instructed that she would have no conscious memory of what transpired during the hypnotic trance. The extra-conscious realm of her mind was then addressed and it was instructed to become engaged immediately on the task of making complete detailed plans for the artist for the following day, working out while she slept every movement of her scribe on the copper plate and every movement of her hand in applying the acid, as well as every other operation involved. The schedule included waking her at 7 A. M., getting her to work at 8, to lunch at 12, and finishing the etching by 5 o'clock, at which time, she was instructed, she would telephone to Mr. Orton, report her success and invite him to dine with her. When she was brought out of the trance she had no conscious memory of the instructions that had been given to her, as far as could be ascertained. She reported that she felt greatly relaxed and at ease.

The next evening at 5 o'clock Mr. Orton received the telephone call. The artist was overjoyed. She reported that she had finished one etching and could hardly believe it possible she had done so. She could not understand why she did not want to tackle the next etching, but since she had the evening free she wanted to celebrate by dining with Mr. Orton. He did and after dinner he again hypnotized her and gave to her extra-conscious mind the same set of instructions.

The following day the artist reported similar success with her second etching. That evening her extra-conscious mind was given two days planning to do. It was eventually given the task of arranging a whole week's work on a day by day basis. The plan worked perfectly. On the last day of the

time allowed the artist delivered her etchings to the publisher.

The artist said she never knew how she was able to accomplish the task as it seemed an utterly impossible one when she started. She was never told of the method used. As far as she could tell, her success was due entirely to the soothing voice of Mr. Orton when he was putting her in the hypnotic trance and telling her to be completely relaxed and entirely free from worry and with full faith in her own ability.

While the experiment lacks elements of conclusiveness yet for all practical purposes it is a very good illustration of what can be accomplished by calling upon some of the unused portions of the mind to co-operate with the limited facilities available to the conscious mind.

# The Handwriting Expert Studies Automatic Writing

(PART II)

BY LOUISE RICE

I class some of the writing done by people who never heard of automatic writing, as being exactly that. A friend of mine is a woman writer, who usually produces pleasant and rather gay love stories. Her writing is, as might be expected by any handwriting expert, forward leaning, rather flowing, rather light pressure, with rounded letter formations. These stories are the result of the deliberate attempt at writing. The plots are formulated beforehand, the characters blocked out, the telling bits of dialogue carefully written and rewritten. After the first and second draft, with much recasting of plot and word, the story is finished.

Occasionally, however, and especially while at loose ends for the day, my friend seizes a pencil and a paper pad and writes furiously for perhaps an hour, when an entirely different type of story is concocted, complete at one sitting. These stories puzzle my friend, who says she cannot imagine where she gets them, since they have background and characters all entirely unknown to her, and outside of her experience. Sometimes they are laid in Asia and sometimes in various periods of history. They are vividly and almost breathlessly told, in bold, smashing strokes. She sells them under a man's name, and the irregular, forward-leaning, heavy-pressure, ardent writing in which they are done is not only utterly different from hers but is exactly what a man who would write such stories might be expected to use.

I have, I hope, made it plain that I have no desire to present a case for "controls", nor to deny the possibility of such a matter as possession, but I do assert that when automatic writing is really worth considering as something outside of what science can explain, the message conveyed is

in accord with the kind of person that would write that script. So far as I know, this point is seldom brought up by those who have studied the matter of automatic writing. It is especially worth considering when the communication is supposed to be from persons whose scripts are well known.

I recently had some automatic writing sent me from England which purports to be a message from Arthur Conan Doyle. All I can say is that if Doyle is using this script, he has returned to about a mental age of eight—a sad outlook for any of us who want to think that no matter what death is, it is, at least, a progression. Mediums have brought me a good many alleged communications from Houdini, whose script I happen to know especially well, and again the comment is that the script is expressive of a state of mind which, if really existing, must cause that proud and alert mind and spirit of Houdini the most acute distress.

A recent specimen of automatic writing, shown me by a person interested in the matter, and purporting to be a communication from an eminent poet, is startlingly like his script; in fact, if brought to me as a handwriting expert, would have been certified as his. This case is similar to one which I encountered about fifteen years ago when a well educated woman, but not one of literary attainments, produced very lovely essays and sketches (slight and delicate tales) of merit, which were invariably signed "Hawthorne". As a bit of literary imitation, the contents of these scripts were actually of the master's own spirit, a *tour de force*, as mere imitation, but as for the handwriting, it was so perfect that, in taking it to various other handwriting experts, I received instant assurance of the identity, until another inspection would reveal the modern paper and ink. All these experts stated that it was a "master forgery".

The woman who produced it, however, could not even copy other scripts, and was unable to disguise her own script in the least. She did not have many of these communications, and when she married very happily, for the second time (after a disastrous first union) she entirely lost any ability to write automatically.

One thing which has constantly been brought to my attention is the matter of a member of a family seeming to receive communication from another member who has passed on. The similarity of the writing to the known writing of the communicant is often striking, but here my training in the observation of handwriting comes into play, making objection to the claim that the automatic writer cannot produce the alleged spirit writing unless under automatic control.

The whole matter of handwriting, indeed, is so deeply enmeshed in the most mysterious aspects of human consciousness that it offers very baffling and misleading evidence, at times. Thus, the memory which tucks everything once seen or heard away in neatly filed containers, is a great trickster. Psychologists regard it with mingled exasperation and awe. I have made some very interesting experiments as to how much the subconscious memory knows of the handwriting of the great, for instance.

A boy who was the subject of many of the interesting experiments conducted in the psychological department of Duke University spent an entire summer working with me to find out how much his subconscious remembered of the writing of famous characters.

We would try, say, Napoleon as the subject of the experiment and I would then throw him into a very slight state of hypnosis in which I suggested to him that he was Napoleon and that he was now writing a letter to which he should affix Napoleon's habitual signature. He never failed to write a very excellent reproduction of that strange signature, although he had again and again searched his memory and could not remember ever to have seen it.

We tried Thackeray, Schiller, Wellington, President Grant, Paderewski and many others, with about seventy five percent of success. We then tried very hard to run down all possible chances that he would have had to see those signatures, finding about ten which he might possibly have seen once, and fifteen which we found out he had seen more often.

The slightest tendency to automatic writing always interests me and therefore I have had a good deal of experience in the fact that writing, without the writer's knowledge, "puts on a show" with true theatrical skill. As my practice often demands that I shall try to find out whether a client with a psychological problem is telling me the truth or not, by the process of observing the writing, this theatrical subconscious self is often to be seen at work.

One of my cases was a neurasthenic and neurotic man who persisted in telling me the most harrowing tales of his sorrows, as accounting for his state. He was convincing, but still I doubted him—and had no direct way of getting at the facts. His writing, the basic line dropping steadily down hill with every line, the t bars short and broken, the pressure uneven and the letter forms straggling, all backed up his assertion of an utterly broken spirit but somehow, the chirographical picture was *too* perfect. I tried the usual mild hypnosis and got an entirely different writing—high, compressed, with long and cruel t bars, and a firm base line.

That man was not a conscious liar, but was a pathological liar—all his sorrows being more or less imaginary, but that image being caused by a great maladjustment of his life. The secondary writing was the true one, the other "the show".

The man had not the slightest knowledge of the way in which handwriting can indicate character or states of feeling, and yet—his subconscious produced the perfect picture, which would convince any handwriting expert that the man's conscious statements were true.

There are endless cases in my records of this ability of the subconscious to do incredible things with handwriting. The young man from Duke with whom I experimented on lost memory of famous signatures, also spent a good deal of effort in writing, during a long, quiet session, such scripts as would express a certain type of character. He knew nothing whatever of the science, but he did have a certain facility with his pen or pencil.

Under light hypnosis this young man would produce the

type of writing characteristic of—say—a small town business man. A writer of fiction. A gentle hearted, simple minded person. A proud and determined middle aged woman of good education. A person of poor education but with a strong will.

The reproductions were about eighty percent correct.

So, to return to the matter of the automatic writing which purports to be that of a person who has passed over and whose writing must be, at least subconsciously, familiar to the automatic writer, I cannot but accept even the most surprising exactness of reproduction with some scientific suspicion. I know that the subconscious can produce astonishing evidence of all sorts, and that there is a strange lack of communication between the consciousness and the subconscious. The instinct by which we delve into the depths of another's mind and spirit, our capacity for penetrating to the root of the thought and action of another, is not yet understood. Therefore, if automatic writing is extraordinarily like that of the alleged communicator, and if that handwriting is at all familiar to the automatic writer and if the spirit and mind of the alleged communicant is familiar to the automatic writer, then I find it impossible to get any real and actual evidence with which to support the claim of a real communication.

When the automatic writer is either ignorant of a handwriting or of the inmost self of an alleged communicator, or of both then even a pretty fair resemblance to the writing and to the spirit seems to me to be worth attention.

No amount of effort on my part to do automatic writing has ever attained an iota of success, although I have helped to develop the power in others.

Books and literary compositions in general, which are produced by automatic writing, in which the script is entirely that of the automatic writer, may or may not have evidence to show, but it is not in the handwriting, even when the writing used in the automatic writing *seems* to be different from the accustomed script. It suffices only to remind the reader that many a forgery which deceives even

the eye familiar with the real script, is revealed as false by the expert, and that, in declaring that many automatic writings do so reveal their identity to the expert, I work only on the straight scientific evidence which also brings the criminal forger to the bar of justice.

Unconscious forgery—as when the automatic writer seems to invent and use a different script for the writing of an “inspired” book, is part of that tricky old subconscious, up to all sorts of dodges and artfulness.

The “mirror” writing, involuntarily done by a few people, almost from childhood, has never received the attention it should from those interested in clearing away the mists from all forms of real or alleged psychic phenomena. It is my experience that the average mirror writing is done by people who are extraordinarily open to hypnosis, and who will slip very easily into various states favoring spiritualistic development.

The mirror writing is, of course, that which is practically unreadable except when held before a mirror, all the writing processes being reversed. This is practically impossible to learn and hard to use with ease, even if learned, and is seldom used except by people with some very odd powers, which are sometimes never understood by anybody. I recommend this field for new and interesting experimentation.

## Book Reviews

BEYOND NORMAL COGNITION, An Evaluative and Methodological Study of the Mental Content of Certain Trance Phenomena, by John F. Thomas, Ph.D., with a Foreword by Professor William McDougal, F.R.S., D. Sc., M.B. Published by the Boston Society for Psychical Research, 1937. 320 pp. cloth, octavo.

This volume contains a study made by Dr. John F. Thomas, a Detroit educator, of material selected from transcripts of trance sittings by a number of mediums, over a period of nine years, most of the sittings being held in this country, the remainder being held in England.

The subtitle is an accurate description of the volume, *An Evaluative and Methodological Study of the Mental Content of Certain Trance Phenomena*, while the main title contains the author's conclusions as to the means by which the content of the messages was obtained by the mediums—"Beyond Normal Cognition".

Dr Thomas' chief contribution in this work is the method which he has worked out for obtaining a quantitative value of trance communications. His method is to strike from the transcript all references, or statements, concerning affairs not associated with the earth plane or concerning the medium's descriptions of her means of obtaining the information. The residue concerns persons or events and it is divided into two categories—those which cannot and those which can be verified.

The residue which Dr. Thomas submits to his method of analysis contains, he states, 525 records from which he has listed 1,908 points, or individual statements of fact. He tabulates the following results:

Total points .....	1,908
Unverifiable .....	97
Inconclusive .....	89
Verifiable .....	1,720
Points correct .....	1,587
Percent correct of total .....	83.2
Percent correct of total verifiable.....	92.3

Dr. Thomas presents his summary and conclusions:

"1—Of the total of 1,908 points, 83.2 percent of the total were correctly applicable, and 92.3 of those verifiable were correctly applicable. This rules out the explanation of over-interpreted generalities.

"2—Fraud was highly improbable, under the circumstances and conditions, but it cannot be established that fraud was entirely impossible.

"3—Statistical studies indicate that chance success is improbable as the explanation.

"4—Supernormal forces for the knowledge displayed are, therefore, strongly indicated."

He closes the main portion of the volume with this set of conclusions on the applicability of the various theories to his results:

"1—Telepathy from the observer present might account for much of the supernormal knowledge shown in Group I. (Sittings at which Dr. Thomas was present).

"2—Extended telepathy (mind reading), plus some clairvoyance, might account for the supernormal knowledge shown in Groups II and III. (Sitting at which Dr. Thomas was not present but associated friends were in attendance).

"3—Some unknown means of selective 'rapport' is necessary to explain (1) the Mrs. Allison records of Group III and, especially, (2) the composite cases of Chapter VII.

"4—Trance personalities of a type other than the secondary personalities that have been scientifically studied and elsewhere reported are evident in all groups.

"5—The survivalist theory covers all the facts, but it is not necessitated by the evidence available in this book, because of the possibility of the alternative extended mind reading explanation."

The volume is made up almost entirely of material which was written by Dr. Thomas in the thesis which he submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy which was granted by Duke University in June 1933. Dr. Thomas became interested in psychical research while a student in the University of Michigan through an article by Dr. James H. Hyslop, and became a member of the American Society for Psychical Research. He became a member of the Boston Society for Psychic Research and the Society for Psychical Research (London) about ten years ago. He took up active research work following the death of his wife in 1926. The trance communications studied in this volume largely concern persons and events associated with the author and his deceased wife.

Dr Thomas is a native of Parker City, Pa. He attended high school at South Bend, Ind., and carried on his studies at the University of Michigan, Columbia University, University of Chicago and Duke University. He has been connected officially with various school systems in Michigan since 1898. For the last twenty-five years he has been in administrative positions in the public school system of the City of Detroit and is now First Assistant Superintendent in charge of General Administration and Finance.

A more extended critical review of Dr. Thomas' work will be published in a later issue of this JOURNAL.

J. O'N.

GHOSTS. By René Bache. Edited by Violet Biddle. Dorrance & Co., Philadelphia. \$1.25.

This little book covers an unbelievable amount of ground in its one hundred and six pages. It takes up every form of ghostly apparition including phantasms of the living, ghost ships, traditions concerning the return of the dead among the Japanese and the American Indians, the ghost of John McCullough, the famous actor, that haunts the stage of the National Theatre in Washington, and even the ghost of an old negro janitor that is heard wielding an unseen pail and brush on the floor of the basement in the Capitol.

It is not exactly a serious book. There is a touch of whimsical amusement in most of the comments of the author. The following statement seems to indicate that he hasn't much faith in the reality of ghosts.

"There does not seem to be any evidence to show that any monkey ever saw a ghost. That is because the monkey possesses no imagination. Without imagination there can be no ghosts. The man and the ghost must have begun to exist in the world together, practically."

What of the dogs and cats and horses that have been reported as shying from unseen spectres! Have they more imagination than the monkey?

Yet in another chapter Mr. Bache says that "although modern thought is disposed to reject them (ghosts) altogether . . . the subject cannot be dismissed so lightly." He then proceeds to give us a quantity of apparently evidential cases, some of them to be found in the early annals of the Society for Psychological Research in England and the periodicals of the A. S. P. R.

One of the most interesting stories is that of the ghost ship, *The Flying Dutchman*, because the account is contained in a book still extant, *The Cruise of the Bacchante*, the published diary of the young English princes, the Duke of Clarence and his brother, later King George V, when they were in the British Navy.

Their diary records the episode as follows: "At four A.M. the *Flying Dutchman* crossed our bows, a strange red light, as of a phantom ship all aglow; in the midst of which light the masts, spars, and sails of a brig, three hundred yards distant, stood out in bold relief as she came up on the port bow."

The phantom ship was seen by others as well as the young princes and was officially recorded in the ship's log.

J. S.

# A Letter from England

BY DR. NANDOR FODOR

(*Research Officer, International Institute for Psychical Research*)

June, 1937

## THE RUDI SCHNEIDER SITTINGS

In my last month's notes I spoke of Rudi Schneider's impending visit to the International Institute for Psychical Research. The visit is now over. I regret to say that it failed to fulfill our expectations.

We took no end of trouble to provide the best possible conditions and to have all our apparatus in perfect working order. There was no hitch in the arrangements and there was no complaint against our instruments, séance room or sitters. Rudi Schneider was happy and completely satisfied with everything. "Olga", his control was delighted with the séance room, with its constant supply of fresh air, with the cabinet and with our infra-red equipment which would have given us automatic and instantaneous flashlight records of any telekinetic phenomena.

Everything worked to perfection, except the medium. He did not function at all.

Under our contract, Rudi was to spend three weeks with us, giving two sittings weekly. If phenomena were forthcoming, the contract was to be extended to cover a longer period. One sitting after another turned out to be a complete blank without even the suggestion of any phenomena. The cabinet curtain had luminous brooches and sleigh bells sewn on it. Visual observations regarding the movement of the curtains would have been confirmed by the tinkling of the bells. The cold breezes, so often felt in Rudi's séances, were to be checked by a thermograph within the cabinet and a maximum and minimum thermometer outside it. The breezes were felt once or twice but the instruments remained completely unaffected. Six cameras were trained in front of the cabinet on the Warwick Automatic Trumpet Control. This is the original instrument, with slight adaptation, which Mr. F. W. Warwick, the chemical manufacturer and well known psychical researcher, used in his telekinetic experiments with Mrs. Deane. Had the light celluloid trumpet on top of a small platform been thrown over or lifted, an electric circuit would have been closed, giving an instantaneous infra-red flash.

Nothing happened. Rudi Schneider was controlled by his hands and feet at his own request. He continued hour after hour with his steam engine breathing. "Olga", in a hoarse whisper, repeatedly spoke of the power which was nearing the curtain. She admonished

us to look out, to hold tight, and to count to five and six. About one o'clock at night, after five weary hours, she invariably admitted that she could not make the power work and we had better postpone the sitting.

After the fourth negative séance, Lord Charles Hope, who is much concerned with Rudi and has considerable knowledge of the delicacy of his psychic mechanism, suggested that in order to remove the sense of failure from the medium, the last sittings should be held elsewhere. In fact, he suggested a room where Rudi has sat before and with a small group of his old sitters.

We agreed and handed Rudi completely over to Lord Charles Hope with the stipulation that if phenomena was forthcoming, Rudi would return to the Institute. After all, our séance room has not yet been used for physical phenomena. It represents a new departure in séance room technique in many respects. It has not yet been saturated with that intangible something which mediums emanate and which might be conducive to good results. It seemed only fair to give Rudi every possible chance. Lord Charles Hope's offer was very sensible.

I attended one of these two sittings. We were eleven as against twenty-one or twenty-two at the Institute. However, the group was almost the same as at the Institute because we too had taken great care to surround Rudi with his old friends. The room was smaller and consequently it soon became stiflingly hot. Towards midnight, the air became almost unbearably stale. It occurred to me that Rudi with his rapid rate of breathing, requires considerably more oxygen than the sitters. Now I understand why he dislikes heat and clamours for fresh air. The breaks in his long sittings, no doubt, originate in an unconscious thirst for more oxygen. As a rule there are two breaks. Rudi comes out of trance and retires with the sitters to another room while the windows of the séance room are opened without putting on white light. Had Rudi always had a large room, with a constant supply of fresh air, at his disposal his mediumistic habits might have formed along different lines. It stands to reason that the breaks must dissipate much of the psychic power and make it more difficult to reach a culmination point. Rudi, in this respect, is a victim of our psychic superstitions. We have too many of them, the principal one being that the sitting must take place in a small room with the greatest possible discomfort both to medium and sitters, leaving no room for instruments and giving no facility for photographic work. It is no use to explain that it is not the room in which the psychic power is to be conserved, but the cabinet. With the prevailing ignorance as to what constitutes the ideal conditions of a séance, people will always jump hastily to the wrong conclusion. Because our séance room is large and high, I had to listen to endless objections from the very beginning that it would not be suitable for

physical phenomena. Well, it is quite true that Rudi Schneider produced no phenomena. But Rudi did not produce anything worth while in the old and small séance room under Lord Charles Hope's direction. The hygienic conditions of the two rooms simply could not be compared and Rudi, at least subconsciously, must have been well aware of this.

There were claims of some slight curtain movements. But the bells did not ring. From my position, I, and those near me, could see no movement. So the sitting was as near blank as it could be.

As the further sittings brought no noticeable improvement, with much regret we had to terminate Rudi's contract with the Institute.

His powers, if still latent, need very careful nursing. Lord Charles Hope was of invaluable assistance to us in trying to coax any such latent powers into activity. The sittings which he held after those at the Institute were really not experimental. They were more like developing circles. There was no apparatus in the room and no cameras were set up. Lord Charles Hope wished to do away with any possible psychological tension. Not that Rudi objects to any experiment. He is very enthusiastic about instrumental recording and was delighted with the arrangements we made to secure a permanent record. However, subconsciously he may have been afraid. In any event, the relaxation made no difference; the results were negative.

All that we had for our trouble was a short infra-red cinema film of Rudi's trance movements and breathing. We "shot" it in the fourth sitting. At a bell signal from me, the infra-red lamps were thrown on by a master switch and, simultaneously, a cine-camera with a 1.8 lens commenced to turn. My friend, Mr. Arthur Kingston, a cinematograph engineer stood behind the camera and secured an excellent film.

It is a great pity that we could not do more. Had Rudi been able to produce his famous materialised hand coming out from behind the curtain; had we been able to take automatic flashlight photographs of this hand overthrowing the trumpet, or a cinema record of the formation or dissolution of the hand we would have had something of very great value as contemporary evidence of the reality of physical phenomena. But Rudi's powers have been known to be failing since he married. It would appear that they are now completely gone.

He told me that in the last nine months he had only sat five times. He was sorry that he had no opportunity to "practice" before his coming to London. "Olga" herself demanded "practice sittings" in between the séances at the Institute. While the ordinary physical medium has to be safeguarded against oversitting, Rudi demanded more sittings. This is another curious feature of his psychic history on which, however, we are now unable to throw more light.

It is a matter of genuine regret to all of us that he failed, as he

is putting himself at the disposal of psychical research in an excellent spirit, and no doubt can be entertained as regards his sincere co-operation with science.

#### *FUTURE OF INFRA-RED CINEMATOGRAPHY*

The Rudi Schneider film is the fifth infra-red cinematograph picture taken at the Institute under my direction. This is a unique record. No other psychical research laboratory has a similar equipment at its disposal. I believe, therefore, that I can speak with authority on the future of infra-red cinematography. It is bound to be of inestimable service. While it can be considerably improved, it is already far ahead of the phenomena themselves. You may hear of materialization mediums producing full form phantoms and doing a thriving business. But you will not hear of them in connection with infra-red cinema experiments. Five seconds of cinema record might blow the phenomena sky-high. In fact, ordinary infra-red flashlight photographs threaten to do just that. The modern materialization medium, therefore, will not be photographed. All respect and honor to those who eventually will! At present, in England, there is no contemporary scientific evidence for the reality of materialization. This is more to be regretted as important new developments are expected in infra-red cinematography. With the use of incandescent lamps behind infra-red filters it is impossible to eliminate visible red light. There is sufficient visibility to see and, for the fraudulent medium, to object to. A new idea which is just being developed for the Institute promises infra-red cinematograph pictures in complete darkness. It will do away with incandescent lamps and infra-red filters. The energy will be supplied by a network of low-tension wires in front of a parabolic reflector. Theoretically, I am assured, there is no difficulty. Whether in practice the idea will work remains yet to be seen. At any rate, I spare no pains to bring about this new development. I have hopes that one of these days another Eusapia Paladino will spring up and I wish to be ready for her coming. One single successful cinema-picture taken in complete darkness may teach and prove more than decades of past psychical research.

#### *MYSELF AND THE TALKING MONGOOSE*

The Talking Mongoose of Doarlish Cashen, Isle of Man, is not very popular in English Spiritualism or, for that matter, in psychical research. My conclusions that the phenomena at the Irving farmstead are not due to ghosts, Poltergeists or to mediumship as we understand it, met with little approbation. I was made to feel that I would have given far more satisfaction if I had concluded in favor of the direct voice; in other words, obsession of a living animal by an earthbound spirit or the existence of a familiar. The

suggestion that the Talking Mongoose might be what it claims to be, and absurd as the supposition is, it is the only theory that accounts, even in part, for the phenomena, aroused no enthusiasm. There were intimations that if I could give no psychic explanation it would be better if I left the mongoose severely alone.

The only surprising exception to this attitude came from Mrs. Florence Hodgkin in *Light*, June 3d, 1937. It fairly staggered me. It speaks of astonishing communications from a Lama about "a race of people, actually in existence and living on the earth at this moment, of whom the world has never heard. They are highly developed, cultured and so advanced that their animals have attained speech." The article continues: "shortly, an emissary from this unknown race will be brought into personal contact with someone in London—whose name is given—and this chosen individual will be taken to this unknown country, and will return to report." Further, Mrs. Hodgkin says that

"The Irving family 'know'.

"Dr. Nandor Fodor now 'knows'.

"That action fought so recently in our Courts of Law (the Lambert-Lavita case) was a means of broadcasting, in a very real sense, this stupendous and almost unbelievable fact.

"Irrefutable proof will be forthcoming shortly, because, as the Lama says: 'The time is come for such revelation.'"

I regret to say that the Irving family does not know.

With still more regret, I have to add that Dr. Nandor Fodor does not know either.

At least not if Mrs. Hodgkin's words imply that the Irvings and myself are knowing forerunners of the promised stupendous revelation.

I don't believe a word of it. I would not even have discussed this fairy tale but for its psychological lessons. It shows how insatiable the instinct for the marvellous is. I have proven nothing regarding the Talking Mongoose. The fact that I could not disprove its existence at the expense of the honesty and integrity of the Irving family, the fact that I had to admit that Gef's own claim is the most sensible of all fantastic explanations that we can think of has sufficiently unleashed the trance mind of an unnamed medium to build up this marvellous story about an unknown race (in the age of aeroplane explorations) the animals of which have attained speech. I am sorry that Mrs. Hodgkin's enthusiasm has run away with her better judgment in giving the story publicity.

#### *DRUGS AND PSYCHIC PHENOMENA*

Drugs offer a fruitful field of research for the study of psychic states. Not much work has been done in it in the past. Carrington studied the disturbances in time and space relationship as caused by

certain drugs. Heymans, Brugmans and Weinberg found clairvoyance becoming more intense after an ingestion of certain substances, now thirty grams of alcohol, now two grams of bromide. Dr. Norman Jeans became clairvoyant under the influence of laughing gas (nitrous oxide) and was able to see events happening at various distant places.

Last year, in an attempt to find out whether partaking of the peyote root enables one to find lost objects or to travel in space, I had myself injected with mescaline, the drug in the peyote root synthetically produced. I had visions on a cosmic scale and was so overwhelmed by them that I scorned the idea of any clairvoyant experiments. The experience was too wonderful to be attempted again. Moreover, I failed to obtain mescaline to institute experiments on others. Now I have succeeded in getting hold of a small quantity and intend to do some research work with it. I am encouraged to do so by the experiences of Dr. Gathman, a psychiatrist attached to the Municipal Clinic for Nervous Disorders of Dresden, Germany. I received a visit from him. He had four injections of mescaline. He had extraordinary telepathic experiences on two occasions. He became aware of the thoughts and actions of another person to whom he was not in the least attached. The awareness was mutual and produced extreme fear for the safety of Dr. Gathman in the mind of the other person. The distress was not quite unfounded. Dr. Gathman took heroic doses of the drug and his adventure might have easily ended in disaster. It appears that, for safety, 0.3 gram should be the dose, the same with which I was injected. Its increase to 0.5 gram produces terrifying visions which might be followed by attempts at self-destruction. Medical supervision, in any mescaline experiment, appears to be indispensable. It takes almost two hours for the drug to take effect and the visionary state, without inhibiting normal consciousness, lasts for three hours. After that the subject must go to bed to sleep off his intoxication.

In view of Dr. Gathman's experiences I shall pursue mescaline research. The point on which I hope to obtain immediate information is: does mescaline produce clairvoyance in those who are not psychic and does it enhance clairvoyance in those who are?

Just recently, nitrous oxide was tried at the Institute on Mr. Ronald Cockersell, one of the best young clairvoyants of England today. The experiment was unsuccessful, inasmuch as it had no influence on his psychic gifts. This, however, may have been due to his subconscious resistance for, as we learned afterwards, he had a shock years before from dental gas and was hardly able to overcome his fear before he submitted to the experiment. He gave a very vivid description of his sensations under the gas and then, in complete unconsciousness, slumped to the floor. The gas was administered by Dr. Reginald Karn, a professional anaesthetist of high standing. He regarded the experiment, from the psychic point-of-view, as a failure. With this

conclusion, however, I am not fully satisfied. For after a short rest and intermission, Mr. Cockersell proceeded to give us clairvoyance and he was extremely brilliant. Did the nitrous oxide leave an after-effect? Would he have been as good without it? I cannot decide the question on the basis of a single experiment.

There are many stimulants the effects of which ought to be studied. I hope that we shall be able to explore these avenues.

#### WAS IT HALLUCINATION?

In a previous monthly letter I told a strange story of my dog; how I heard his pattering feet in the passage in front of my bedroom and how he thumped the piano with his paws in the night which followed his permanent banishment from the home he loved. He had committed the unpardonable sin of chewing up a valuable black letter pamphlet of mine, *The Reflections of the Reverend and Learned Monsieur Jurieu Upon the Strange and Miraculous Ecstasies of Isabel Vincent the Shepherdess of Saou in Dauphine*. He took his punishment like a man and because he did so I felt stricken by remorse when, in addition, amidst the tears of the family, I sent him into exile. When I made this confession to Dr. Dingwall, he was pleased to enlighten me that it was my guilty conscience which produced a hallucination. It was plain as a pike staff. I felt crushed and, coming home, told my wife. She then reminded me that there is more to the story than Dr. Dingwall was told. She was awakened by the noise at the same time that I was. I asked her: "Did you hear that?" She answered: "Yes." We both thought of the dog and felt a bit awed.

I thought of telling this to Dr. Dingwall. Then I dropped the idea. I realized that he would skip the difficulty with the ease of an acrobat: it was a collective hallucination, due to telepathic infection from me; my wife only thought she heard the noise before I spoke; in reality she only shared my hallucination at the moment that I spoke to her.

I cannot prove Dr. Dingwall wrong. But if he is right, the experience is just as wonderful as if he were wrong.

#### THE SHROUD OF TURIN

Whether the image of a crucified man on the Shroud of Turin is the authentic portrait of Jesus or not, it presents an extremely interesting problem. Dr. Vignon's researches threw considerable light on how the unique conditions of the crucifixion might have helped to bring about a chemical reaction between the sweat and blood covered body of Jesus and the linen sheet which had been treated with aloes and myrrh. I gave a lecture on this subject before the International Institute for Psychical Research and pointed out that the only psychic angle of the case is that which concerns the disappearance of the body of Jesus from the tomb. The picture on the

shroud was produced by ammoniac vapours which dried perspiration and dried blood emit. But decomposition is accompanied by the liberation of so much ammonia that the Shroud should have been, in a few hours, completely fogged in the Tomb. The fact that it was not, might find an explanation in the reported disappearance of the body.

It follows that if the Shroud of Turin is a genuine relic, the body of Jesus must have disappeared from the Tomb almost immediately after the stone was rolled before the entrance and darkness descended on the sepulchre. This is a curious bit of information. It does not really help us to understand the mystery but the condition of sudden darkness is a feature which we discover in a similar transportation mystery. Josephus, in his *Antiquities* (Book IV, Chapter VIII, Section 48), preserves for us the old legend that as Moses was talking on a mountain with Joshua, the general, and Eleazar, the high priest, a cloud obscured him, and suddenly he vanished and was never seen again. We are not told in the Bible that the Lord buried Jesus but the case certainly resembles that of Moses whose body also disappeared. This beautiful poem by Mrs. Cecil Alexander may be familiar to many:

By Nebo's lonely mountain  
On this side Jordan's wave,  
In a vale in the land of Moab,  
There lies a lonely grave.  
And no man dug that sepulchre,  
And no man saw it e'er;  
For the angels of God upturned the sod  
And laid the dead man there.

## Announcement

The New York City Authorities have given notice that the building of the American Society for Psychical Research at 15 Lexington Avenue is about to be condemned for city purposes. The Society, therefore, must soon find other quarters for its activities and this brings to the fore a question which has long been a matter of concern to the Society and its subsidiary, The New York Section.

There have always been some misconceptions in regard to the relationship between the Society and the Section. The similarity of names and the same location have resulted in much confusion in the minds of the public and even among the members of the respective organizations. Members of the New York Section became automatically members of the American Society, receiving all its publications. For many years the Section membership, in addition to paying the annual dues of its members to the American Society, contributed a substantial sum to the operating expenses and upkeep of the building, but of late, owing to the depression, the Section has found it impossible to pay anything more than the annual dues and at the same time continue with its activities. On the other hand, the Society's resources will not permit of its acquiring and maintaining a building sufficiently large to accommodate the increasing number of members in attendance at the lectures and afternoon teas conducted by the Section.

Under the circumstances, therefore, the Trustees of the Society and the Board of Governors of the Section deemed it for the best interests of both organizations that they should separate; accordingly, the members of the Section surrendered their charter received from the American Society and formed a new society, The Psychic Research Society of New York, Incorporated, with headquarters at No. 71 West 23rd Street, New York City. The American Society will remain at Hyslop House until compelled to vacate, and its members will be notified as soon as new premises have

been obtained. It is needless to say that the relations between the two societies are, and will remain, as cordial as ever, and the American Society hopes that the members of the Section will remain members of the Society at a minimum expense of \$5.00 per annum.

The objects of the Society and the Section have been in a sense the same, that is, the advancement of psychic research and the dissemination of knowledge in reference thereto, but their methods have differed. The members of the Society are widely scattered throughout the country, and, to an extent, the world, and its best service to them is through scientific research, the results of which are made available to members in its publications. The Section, on the other hand, has endeavored to bring its members into more intimate and personal contact with psychic research, by way of lectures by qualified students of the subject, social meetings for discussion and by furnishing attested mediums so that members might judge for themselves as to the authenticity of psychic communications. Thus the activities of the two organizations have been complimentary, and their separation will make it possible for each to expand its activities in the direction in which it will render the most valuable service.

Psychical research is entering upon a new era due to discoveries made in this and related fields of psychology and physiology, and the development of new sensitive instruments for such investigations. It is the intention of the American Society for Psychical Research to take an active part in these new lines of research and to foster similar investigations on the part of universities, colleges and individual scientists. It is planning budgetary provisions for making some small grants of money to individual scientists who are in a position to make valuable investigations. The results of its investigations, and those of others in this field, will be presented in the *JOURNAL* and also at meetings for members as well as at meetings to which the general public will be invited.

# THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

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### Yoga

#### (Editorial Note)

Last summer the *Illustrated London News* (June 6, 1936 issue) published a series of photographs of a "Levitation" submitted to them by a resident of Southern India. The performer, a Tamil, claimed to be a Yogin and to levitate by supernormal means. The photographs showed an Indian with fine features and an ascetic face, suspended horizontally from three to four feet above the ground. He had one hand under his head as if to support it and the other outstretched, resting on a staff which was draped with a cloth.

As far as one could see from the photograph there was no possible means of support unless the staff were a very heavy one and concealed a complicated apparatus which ran under the man's arm and held up a brace under his body. Such an apparatus would hardly be able to support a man's weight unless embedded in a cement foundation. No disciple stood near the Yogin. The *Illustrated London News* made no claim of supernormality for the phenomenon but merely presented it as inexplicable.

This summer, in their June 19th issue, the *Illustrated London News* has published a second series of photo-

graphs, together with an explanation of levitation, submitted to them by Mr. C. W. Wells, a resident of the Malay States. Mr. Wells claims to prove that levitation is no more than a clever trick. The Yogin who gave the performance in Mr. Wells' compound claimed to be a brother of the one whose photographs had appeared in the *London Illustrated News*. Mr. Wells, therefore, quickly gathered together a number of friends who between them brought to the performance seven cinema cameras.

The performance is usually described as follows: The Yogin or master who intends to levitate himself starts to prepare the chosen spot about an hour beforehand. A tent just large enough to cover the man's body adequately is erected on four small poles, the sides draped with pieces of canvas. The poles are placed in the ground. The "master" then lies down within, reclining as if on a couch, one arm under his head, the other placed upon a draped staff. An assistant may or may not be present inside the tent. A second assistant beats loudly and incessantly on a drum outside, either to help produce the trance condition necessary to the "master's" achieving rigidity, or to produce a hypnotic effect upon the spectators and at the same time cover up the noise of any operations going on inside the tent. After about twenty minutes the drumming ceases and the tent is removed leaving the performer suspended about four or five feet from the ground. The suspension may last half an hour. The tent is then replaced and the performer is slowly lowered to the ground.

In Mr. Wells' account, the disciple stood within a few inches of the performer engaged in a ritual of throwing rose petals over him. The staff was removed from his hand showing no visible means of support. However, the disciple's Sarong (a loose garment worn by the natives) was much longer than is customary, and Mr. Wells' photograph on which he bases his claim, shows the disciple so near, that a prop might have been placed under his loose clothes. Again, such a support would require a very deep

foundation to hold up the weight of a man. On examining the ground after the performance, Mr. Wells discovered small holes other than those made by the corner tent poles, which might have been made by a device.

Such an explanation is possible although it is difficult to understand how the device could be made to bear so great a weight. However we have recently received an account from Mr. R. W. F. Johnson of London, of similar experiences in India which seems to upset Mr. Wells' explanation. In the "levitations" described in the following pages, the master, instead of levitating himself, used a subject, a young girl. He did not stand near her. In fact the spectators were allowed to circle round her and even touch her, thereby making it impossible for the master's garments to be concealing a support. The stick was not draped and was of the thinness of a pencil and made of bamboo, obviously an impossible means of holding her weight. And most important of all, the actual "levitation" took place in front of the eyes of the spectators, no tent being used at all. Mass hypnotism seems the only possible alternative explanation to actual supernormal manifestation.

Mr. Johnson was an officer in a Scottish Regiment stationed in India at the time (1931). He is a young man known to the editor to be dependable as an authority. The account which he sends us seems almost beyond belief, yet it is offered in entire sincerity. It must be kept in mind when studying yoga phenomena that it is probably psychic in origin just as is western supernormal phenomena and, therefore, is as open to suspicions of fraud as our own psychic phenomena. Because one so called "Yogin" performer actually levitates himself supernormally, all others may not do so. In fact the performers are not likely to be the most spiritual and developed of their race.

In this issue we also publish a review of a new and comprehensive book on Yoga by Dr. Kovoov T. Behanan.

Dr. Behanan does not think much of the authenticity

of "levitation". He seems to believe it to be hallucination or trickery. He says:

"While the supernatural forms the kernel of such movements, (Psychic Research and Spiritualism) in Yoga it is merely a superficial crust kept alive by the weight of popular recognition. The Yogins themselves are reticent about these miracles. The tradition connected with Yoga continues to perpetuate the belief that the practitioners can do things which defy the known laws of nature. If our task were merely to narrate facts, that is if we had come across phenomena that could not be accounted for by normal means, the answer could be given in one word, "no". But the problem is not as simple as that. A critical examination of some of the claims of Yogins might reveal that the mind under certain conditions is capable of reacting in strange ways. One might see apparitions, hear strange sounds, and smell fragrant odors. Most of the Yogins know them to be hallucinations and accordingly advise the new disciples to ignore them."

In other words, supernormal phenomena is as allusive in India among the Yogins as it is in America among the mediums. The reader will have to weigh the evidence and decide for himself.

## Experiences of the Supernormal in India

BY R. W. F. JOHNSON

From earliest days of which there is record, travellers have told of their wondrous experiences in strange and distant lands. Stories told by "old salts" have regaled generations of children. Nevertheless, the more cynical have always doubted the veracity of the traveler, and even in modern times when journeys can be made so easily and roads have opened up the wildest territory, explorers still return with tales that the pedants would call a series of inexactitudes and the rest of us would mutter "so much bolony".

At the risk of incurring the everlasting displeasure of the unbeliever, the writer would like to place before you some interesting experiences he had in Northern India with Yogins and their extraordinary powers. Inasmuch as the five senses can be trusted, these stories are the truth.

The first time we saw "Levitation" was under particularly unromantic circumstances. It was at a garden party given in Peshawar by the Indian Civil Service to all the local Indian Khans and tribal potentates. The entertainment consisted of a conjuror who did the usual sort of tricks, with cards and sleight of hand. His *pièce de résistance*, however, was to execute the process of "levitation" on his girl assistant. The scene was set in the middle of a grass field, actually the garrison cricket ground. There could be absolutely no deception. The girl was reclining on the grass, her head resting on the palm of her hand; the position in general was that of a person reclining on a couch. Her unengaged arm was outstretched, and her hand was gripping a thin bamboo wand, which was about the thickness of a pencil, and stood upright in the ground after the manner of a pea stick. After sundry passes over the girl, the Yogin appeared to put her in a

trance, and the girl, with her body stiff and horizontal to the ground, seemed to float slowly up in the air to a height of about four feet. The only contact with the ground was the girl's hand that slid up the stick. It may be well to point out here that the stick could not conceivably support the girl's weight, and in any case, it would have been physically impossible for her to have held her body in such a position.

Onlookers were permitted to put their hands all round the girl and even touch her, and there was definitely no visible or concrete means of supporting her. Again, the fact that this demonstration took place in the midst of a grass field is worth noting. In short, unless we were all hypnotized, what has just been described actually happened.

An interesting point in connection with this incident is that the magician "made" a girl levitate herself. The usual practice is that the Yogin himself does the performance rather than having a subject.

A large number of people present discussed this incident among themselves and all came to the conclusion that they had seen exactly the same thing. The inevitable question of "How was it done" now arises. The average answer we got from the Europeans present was "God knows" and from the Indians we elucidated a little but not much more. They were not a bit surprised at the marvelous trick, and stated that from birth upwards Yogins or boys training to be such subjected the mind and body to such discipline that nothing was impossible.

How Yogins train, the various phases of their training and their ultimate aims can be found in many long and detailed books.

This first performance took place in March 1931. Some months later we saw a similar performance under similar conditions, the only difference being that the subject was put in a trance, during which her body became quite rigid, and she was then placed about four feet above the ground, with her body parallel to it, and the point of her elbow

was resting on the thin staff. She remained in this position for about fifteen minutes. Her master then lifted her to the ground and smacked her face vigorously to bring her around.

This second manifestation was even more wonderful than the first, because it almost gave one the feeling of being in another world to see a girl lifted into mid-air and then, to all intents and purposes, remain suspended in mid-air.

While trekking up on the Kashmir Tibet border, we came across a very holy and equally aged and dirty man, who was sitting in the shade of the one and only tree to be seen for about fifty miles. He had one arm permanently stuck above his head. One of our number, a very distinguished civil servant, knew the language and questioned the old boy. It appeared that he had held his arm in that position from the age of about twelve years old, and after some five years the arm got permanently "stuck". The first year must have been somewhat trying!

We passed the time of day with our aged friend and as we were about to depart, he asked for money. We gave him five rupees; a sum that would have kept him in food for about three weeks. He had the audacity to grouse so we told him just what we thought of such ungrateful old men. He seemed slightly surprised to be thus rebuked and started off on a long speech. The gist of his words were that as we had at least given him something we should not die, but that all of us were going to get a terrific fright before the sun had set.

We left the old man and mounted our ponies to cross one of the wide sandy plains that separate the many ranges of mountains. The whole country as seen from the air gives the appearance of a vast plowed field with the furrows of great width. We made in a northwesterly direction, taking a line on Nanga Parbat, the next highest mountain to Mount Everest. The great hill was over one hundred and fifty miles away, but even so, to look at the top, we had to gaze up at an angle of forty-five degrees.

The going was sandy and good, the morning fine, clear, and dry as only mornings in the foot-hills of the Himalayas can be. We had crossed about ten miles of the plain when a boulder about the size of a man's head crashed into the ground not a couple of yards in front of the leading horse. It was closely followed by about ten or so more falling around a cortege of six horses. When everyone had recovered from the shock, we dismounted and examined these boulders. They were almost perfectly spherical and weighed between fifty and seventy pounds and were remarkable for their smoothness and similarity. There was not a living person in sight, and we were certainly six miles from the old man with the arm. No human agency could possibly have propelled those boulders more than ten yards, and no catapult or machine could throw them more than five hundred; we could see all round us for ten miles in all directions. The only solution was that the stones had descended from the heavens. Well, if they had, they had no business to!

We were so intrigued by all this that we had our mid-day meal and returned to our friend and found him still sitting under the tree. We told him of our experience and, favoring us with a toothless but kindly grin, remarked that we were fortunate in escaping. He then announced his intention of sleeping, so we took our leave. Again, what is the answer? Somehow I feel pretty sure it was the Yogin, but what agency of the mind or celestial powers he employed, I shall never know.

There is one other incident that is a little different in manifestation from the foregoing, but in principle is the same. When visiting one of the Afridi villages west and a little north of the Khyber Pass, my stay coincided with the village annual feast. To celebrate this, they had shooting, hunting, games and feasting. This was indulged in with peculiar gusto especially as it was the month of fasting called Ramadan.

At the games there was one man who performed the most fantastic feats of athletics, and that evening produced

some parlor tricks for the benefit of the gathering. I can swear he jumped seven feet from a standing position, and he lifted in his arms a fifteen-hand horse with a man on its back. This seemed quite enough in the way of wonders for one day, but we were by no means through. That evening our friend literally walked on red-hot plowshares, and held a red-hot iron bar in his hand. We smelt a strong smell of burning flesh, but afterwards on examining his hands and feet, they were unscathed.

Now this man was of good, but normal stature, and there was nothing wonderful about his external appearance, and yet he was able to perform with ease athletic feats that our finest athletes find impossible, and to do things that we of western civilization find impossible. One might argue that the skin of his hands and feet was so tough that it could not be burned, or that some secret preparation was put thereon that prevented burning. I still don't feel that any of those theories could explain how a man could hold a red hot bolt in his hand for nigh on a minute.

The jumping part of the story is not really so miraculous, for I have often heard that the tribes in central Africa can perform similar feats.

No doubt many readers will be wondering if I have ever seen the rope-trick. The answer is no, nor have I ever met anyone who has seen it done, or heard of anyone who has even fourth-hand knowledge of it. Let me say this, however, that if levitation is possible and it undoubtedly is—then the rope trick is equally within the bounds of possibility.

# Nostradamus

BY JANE PRICE

Michel de Nostredame, or Nostradamus, the great French prophet and physician in ordinary to Charles IX of France, is such a well known historical figure that it seems almost presumptuous to add another word to the wealth of literature concerning him. However, his prophetic verses known as the "Centuries" are so extraordinary and at the same time so obscure that they have intrigued generations of scholars and are likely to interest generations more. A new book entitled *Les Prophéties de Nostradamus Dévoilées* by Dr. de Fontbrune (Editions Adyar, Paris) has just been published, which throws considerable light on the illustrious prophet. It is chiefly concerned with a study of the "Lettre à Henri II", which in the opinion of Dr. de Fontbrune, was designed to serve as an outline or guide to the rest of the works. A facsimile of this famous letter, taken from a rare old Dutch edition published in 1668, a mere century after Nostradamus' death, appears in the book.

It was evidently Nostradamus' intention to arouse the curiosity of the learned, for he prefaces the "Centuries" with the verse:

"Que ceux qui liront ces vers soient censés être réfléchis,  
Que le vulgaire profane et ignorant ne soit pas attiré:  
Et que tous les Astrologues, les Imbéciles, les Barbares s'en  
tiennent à distance,  
Celui qui fait autrement, qu'il soit maudit!"

which in translation reads:

"Let those who read these lines with ripe reflection ponder,  
That the vulgar, ignorant and profane hold off their hands:  
Let all Astrologers, Imbeciles, Barbarians stand aloof,  
Cursed be he of Heaven who acts in other wise."

The whole question of prophesy is a controversial one upon which most people hold strong opinions, especially as it affects their innermost philosophy. Nostradamus himself

gives us a clue to his own belief in making an explanation to Henry II for the obscurity of his prognostications. They are written in the form of conundrums and often the names and dates are presented as anagrams that are unintelligible until they are deciphered. Nostradamus wrote that he had not the divine permission nor the desire to transcribe the prophecies in a more lucid manner although he was capable of doing so. Because he said, "the announcement of awful calamities which are concealed, would keep many destinies from fulfillment." On which Dr. de Fontbrune comments: "A singular sentence, which replies to materialistic determinism and involves the connected existence of free human will and of divine knowledge of the future."

Michel Nostradamus was born in 1503 at Saint-Rémy en Provence, of Jewish parents. His grandfathers, by whom he was educated, were both men of great learning and were well known as scholars and philosophers. They are said to have bequeathed him valuable manuscripts handed down from the tribe of Issachar, containing foreknowledge and wisdom now being deciphered from the Great Pyramid.

Nostradamus burnt these precious books by his own testimony, for reasons best known to himself. Perhaps he felt they contained knowledge too powerful for the undisciplined human race. Nostradamus was also a physician of considerable note. He was a graduate of the University of Montpellier. He worked many apparent miracles during periods of plague, both at Aix and at Lyons, and it has been suggested that he may have been the father of antiseptic medicine. He studied Humanity and Philosophy at Avignon, and was also a profound student of Theology, Astronomy, Geometry, and Mathematics. His "Centuries" have been frequently reprinted. Among other things they foretell the end of the Papacy, addressing by name all the Popes until the last one. So far the names have been remarkably accurate with the exception of Benoit XV whom Nostradamus addresses as Paul IV. Because of this threat to the Papacy, the Papal Court condemned the "Centuries" in 1781.

Nostradamus is now a legendary figure but fortunately

we still have early editions of his prophecies so that it is possible to verify the truth or falsity of certain of his predictions that are absolutely concrete. Such has not been the case, alas, with many prophets, particularly the Scottish Seers, whose prophecies have been handed down through generations of Highland people by word of mouth only. Prophecy is usually veiled in symbolism, another pitfall for the interpreter, and it is a justifiable criticism that prophecies are usually so vague that they can be made to fit any happening after its completion. Nostradamus is not altogether exempt from such a criticism though there are notable instances in the "Centuries" when he gives both names and dates connected with events which came to pass hundreds of years after his death. These instances are indisputable evidence of his greatness as a prophet. Mr. Henry James Forman devotes two chapters of his book *The Story of Prophecy* to the medieval prophet. The following amazing example of an exact prediction is quoted from his book:

"Le Lys Dauffois portera dans Nanci  
Jusques en Flandres electeur de l'Empire,  
Neusves obturée au grand Montmorency,  
Hors Lieux prouvés delivré à clere peyne."

"The lily of the Dauphin will come to Nancy  
And carry aid in Flanders to an Elector of the Empire:  
A new prison for the great Montmorency,  
Away from the usual place, delivered to Clere peyne (or to a  
notable punishment)

"The title of Dauphin for the French heir apparent had lapsed with disuse and Louis XIII was the first French monarch in a hundred years to make use of the title before his ascent to the throne—more than half a century after Nostradamus' death. So that he was very much the 'Dauphin'.

"On the 24th of September, 1633, Louis's troops entered Nancy, capital of Lorraine, then a French province, because Lorraine supported French rebels. He marched two years later into Flanders in aid of the Elector of Trier, who had

been cast into a Spanish prison in Brussels. In protest of this Louis invested Louvain in Flanders.

"At about the same period, in 1632, Henry Montmorency, owing to rebellion against his overlord, Louis XIII, was incarcerated in a newly completed prison at Toulouse. He was turned over to a soldier named Clerepeyne who beheaded him on October 30th, not in the usual, or approved, place, the public square of Toulouse, but at the foot of the statute of Henry IV, Montmorency's godfather.

"Here appears not only the name of Montmorency, universally known as "the great" (for at seventeen he was already an admiral of the fleet) but even the name of Montmorency's executioner, a soldier named Clerepeyne!"

The students of the works of Nostradamus have long sought a key or decipher which applied to the verses would bring them out of their apparent incoherence. Dr. de Fontbrune has sought for this key in "L'epitre á Henri II". And he tells us that he has found such a key there. It contains, he says, the exact translations of the figurative terms which have so long hidden the sense of so much of the original text. Having once discovered this key, he says it became comparatively simple to solve the puzzle. The original text was written in Latin, and Nostradamus, in rewriting it in sixteenth century French, kept the special nuances peculiar to the Latin language. De Fontbrune suggests that it was Nostradamus' contempt for the "prophanum vulgus" or vulgar-minded, whom he wished to prevent from reading his works, that made him write so enigmatically. Often the sense of the words is not apparent at the first glance. They are usually Latin words to which the French endings have been affixed. This negligent translation is largely responsible for the obscurity of many of the passages. If need be, Nostradamus used Greek words causing a further confusion. Taking into account this curious "philological technique", Dr. de Fontbrune has analyzed the "Centuries" and finds new light can be thrown upon them.

"L'Epitre á Henri II", unlike the "Centuries" which include prophecies for all history, is especially dedicated to

crises of all sorts, moral, religious, and political, which begin in the year 1792 and continue into the 19th and 20th centuries. Nostradamus was more concerned in general with the trend of spiritual forces, through the centuries, than with material calamities. Dr. de Fontbrune warns us to keep this underlying spiritual purpose in mind while analyzing his writings. Nostradamus' intention is evident. He wrote concrete predictions which would be understood and marvelled at by future generations of the "initiate", in other words, scholars whose perseverance would reward them with an understanding of his works. Having once established his reputation as a prophet, he hopes to warn the wise of the spiritual course of the ages, culminating with the second coming of the Messiah, and the last judgment which he dates for about the year 2000 A. D. This date coincides with the prediction of the Great Pyramid. He undoubtedly had some foreknowledge of a Universal Plan, perhaps built on the writings of the sacred books which he destroyed, and wished to leave an outline of the plan for the awakened of future generations. Nostradamus was an ardent churchman and a good Catholic, a fact which saved him from much of the persecution usual to prophets.

"L'Épître à Henri II", itself, is certainly a most interesting document. After much profuse and flowery language addressed to a most divine and colossal majesté, Nostradamus speaks of his "prophetic computations, composed chiefly by natural intuition and put into poetic form in accordance with astronomical calculations which correspond with the years, months and weeks of the future, or with the principal towns of all Europe, and also a part of Africa and of Asia, where the coming calamities will take place." He continues: "I have interpreted future events in the light of the past and the present, tabulating them all with the countries and the eras which will experience them. I have added nothing superfluous and in spite of the fact that it is said that the future is not truly determined, I certify, O Sire, that I have not made predictions only by my natural intuition, but have meditated, replacing all the emotions, preoccupa-

tions and moods of my soul, with rest and tranquillity of spirit. To the same end, I have used to a certain extent the 'Trepied d'Airain'."

Nostradamus, referring to "Trepied d'Airain", reveals that he has used the same methods as the spirits and he defends himself against any suggestion of having used black magic or diabolical practices. His final word is:

"To those who wish to render me responsible for sayings that do not come from me, I wish to state that Eternal God is the only one to know beforehand the will of men."

In conclusion it seems fitting to quote a few predictions which Dr. de Fontbrune has chosen from the "Centuries" as applicable to our time:

"Crier Victoire du grand Selin Croissant  
Par les Romains sera l'Aigle clamé,  
Ticcin, Millan, Gênes y consent,  
Puis par eux-mêmes Basil grand réclamé."

VI-78

which de Fontbrune interprets:

"After the Ethiopian victory, Rome will proclaim the Empire at Milan in Tuscany. The King Victor Emmanuel (Duc de Gênes) will consent to it. But soon she will call the help of the great King.

"We know that it is in his resounding discourses at Milan that M. Mussolini has proclaimed the Italian Empire and has given to King Victor Emmanuel the title of Emperor. 'Le grand Selin Croissant' defines the country, half Oriental, half Christian. Selim III, Emperor of Turkey, in fact founded the order called 'Du Croissant', (of the Crescent), destined for the christian who had rendered service to their country. The English Admiral, Nelson, was the first to be decorated in 1799."

Then comes the war which will reverse this situation and will bring about a terrible Italian revolution:

"Par grand discord la trombe tremblera,  
Accord rompu, dressant la teste du ciel,  
Bouche sanglante dans le sang nagera,  
Au fol sa face oingte de laict et miel."

I-57

"Note the reiteration of the terms: 'In the Adriatic great discord will take place, while on the one hand, those who provoke the war will perish in blood; on the other, the revolutionaries will be comparatively gentle.'"

The next stanza predicts the great massacre of the priesthood:

"Des gens d'Eglise sang sera espanché,  
Comme de l'eau en si grand abondance,  
Et d'un longtems ne sera restanché  
Vae, Vae au clerc, ruyne et doléance."

VIII-98

"The blood of the people of the church will be spilt  
Like water in such great abundance.  
And for a long time it will not be staunched,  
Woe, woe to the clerics, ruin and grief."\*

War will be general by this time in Western Europe:

"L'Horrible guerre qu'en Occident s'appreste  
L'an ensuivant viendra la pestilence,  
Si fort terrible que jeune vieil, et beste  
Sang, feu, Mercure, Mars, Jupiter en France."

IX-55

"A horrible war for which Europe will prepare  
The year following there will be a plague  
So strong and terrible that young, old and animals  
will suffer.  
Blood, fire, Mercury, Mars, Jupiter in France."\*

"The English monarchy, the throne of which will be shaken by an unhappy feminine liaison will be replaced by a republic:

"Pour ne vouloir consentir au divorce  
Qui puis après sera cogueu indigne  
Le roi des Isles sera chasse par force  
Mis à son lieu qui de Roy n'aura signe."

X-22

This last prophecy concerning the throne of England has only partially come to pass and it is hoped that the prediction

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\* These English translations have been roughly made by the author of this article, for those who are not familiar with French. Dr. de Fontbrune does not interpret them.

of the end of the monarchy is one of Nostradamus' mistakes. The prediction concerning the slaughter of the religious orders, if applied to Spain, might be said to have already been fulfilled.

The prophecies of Nostradamus are to be found in any number of books, some of which are: *Nostradamus: Ses Prophéties*, by Charles Nicoulaud; *La Vie de Nostradamus*, by Jean Moura and Paul Louvet, and *Le Secret de Nostradamus*, by P. V. Piobb. Without going into detail, it might be well to note for those not familiar with the "Centuries", that Nostradamus successfully predicted the Great Fire of London a hundred years before it took place,\* the blinding of Henri II by a friend in a tournament, his subsequent death, followed by hard times for France, the French Revolution, and the flight of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette to Varennes.† There is disappointingly little in the "Centuries" that appears applicable to the Great War. A German, Albert Kniepf, published a book on the subject in 1915, choosing as the most significant lines:

"The Celtic nation should dread the hour,  
The northern naval power will too deeply involve it."  
II-99

This article, though inspired by Dr. de Fontbrune's study and Mr. Henry James Forman's essay, is not presented as an ordinary book review because the subject matter is too dependent upon technical knowledge to be of interest to the casual reader. Mr. Forman's book was highly recommended to readers in a review published in the issue of the JOURNAL for October 1936. Dr. de Fontbrune's book is indispensable

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\* Nostradamus predicted the Great Fire of London for the year 1666. It took place on the 2nd of September of that year. The prediction must have been made some time before his death in 1566, and is contained in an edition of the "Centuries" published in 1577.

† In another unusually clear stanza concerning this flight, Nostradamus mentions the names of two traitors to the King: Narbon and Saulce. Count Louis Narbonne-Lara was War Minister under Louis XVI. He was known to divide his loyalty between the Royalists and the Revolutionaries. Saulce was the Inn-keeper, Mayor of Varennes who recognized Louis and handed him over to the Revolutionaries. The prediction including the accurate names was made over two hundred years before the occurrence—certainly a good piece of evidence for the reality of the seer's gift to see into the future.

to a student of prophecy, especially scholars interested in Nostradamus and his amazing predictions. The book is a careful piece of work and certainly presents a new aspect to the interpretation of that famous document, the "Centuries".

\* \* \*

## The Algonquian Indian "Moses" Legend

A story of an inspired law-giver who led his people to a promised land of plenty and security through a treacherous swamp across which none could follow them has been unearthed by Dr. Turman Michelson, Smithsonian Institution ethnologist, among the Fox Indians.

This story of the mystic green buffalo and his Moses-like protégé forms part of the "sacred literature" of the Fox tribe, a once powerful element of the Algonquian Indian family. The Foxes now have a reservation near Tama, Iowa, where the last remnants of the generation familiar with the old ways and lore will soon disappear.

Noteworthy in this legend to students of racial psychology is the weird "green" motif which runs through it—green animals, green skies, green flames, etc.

First the future law-giver is seen by a member of the tribe standing beside a green bison. The child himself is not aware of his ghostly companion which leaves no tracks in the snow. It was a "manitou" buffalo. This marked the little boy as one with supernatural guidance.

The tribe in its migration had come to the edge of a supposedly impassable swamp. Enemies were pressing in from behind. It seemed doomed to destruction. The child, because of his observed association with the manitou buffalo, was chosen to lead the way through the great morass, in which wood would sink and marsh birds and mud turtles were sucked to the bottom.

As soon as they were safely across the tribe made an offering of tobacco to the "manitou" who had guided the steps of their child guide, and accompanied the offering with a peculiarly human request. In the words of the legend: "As soon as I see my fellow man may I slay him?"

The child rebuked them: "Indeed you did not ask for long life. You have asked for something which is frightful. You were to have asked for something right. We have safely crossed the hole in the earth. The manitou made it to be peaceful for us. Because

he told it to be peaceful is why we went across. If he had done what you ask we should indeed have all sunk in the swamp."

The prodigy grew up able to understand the language of wolves who told him of the approach of the tribe's enemies. He went on a mystical journey around the earth and came to the shores of the four seas. Always the ghostly green buffalo was appearing at appropriate times—a sort of *deus ex machina*. The boy had visions. The trees and animals talked with him.

Eventually he produced from his various visions a vague list of commandments which now are incorporated in one of the sacred ceremonies of the Fox tribe.

The legend, as gathered by Dr. Michelson, has just been issued as a Smithsonian Institution publication.

## A Letter from England

BY DR. NANDOR FODOR

*(Research Officer, International Institute for Psychical Research)*

July, 1937.

### *AN ICELANDIC MATERIALIZATION MEDIUM*

Ever since the International Institute for Psychical Research was founded I have cherished the hope of making an investigation into the phenomena of materialization. In England, however, there is not a single materialization medium who would, or perhaps could, submit to investigation of any description. To a well known professional one, I offered one hundred dollars in cash for a single sitting, with an eventual further benefit of twenty-five hundred dollars from the receipts of a successful scientific or educational infra-red film of her phenomena. I sent her a stamped and addressed envelope. Rather than reply, she preferred keeping the stamp, which she could do without risking her professional reputation.

A few months ago I heard that Iceland, which gave Psychical Research, Indride Indridason, has produced another phenomenal materialization medium, Fru Lara Agustsdottir, a thirty-five year old married woman who, in a single sitting, produces as many as forty to sixty forms, both human and animal. I made immediate inquiries and I received such excellent reports that I offered a contract to Fru Lara for 6-13 weeks on behalf of the International Institute for Psychical Research. I am glad to say that she accepted it and that we expect her to arrive in the second half of September to begin a long series of sittings to which we all look very eagerly forward.

The first report about Fru Lara's phenomena was given to me by Mr. Nikulas Fridriksson, an electrical engineer of Reykjavik. He was a member of Fru Lara's regular circle, together with an editor, two civil engineers, a chemist and five ladies. This is what Mr. Fridriksson reports:

"I was first present at a sitting with her in October 1933. Shortly before there had begun to appear materializations and direct voice phenomena through a megaphone. I found these phenomena interesting and induced some of my friends, whom I knew to be interested in Psychical Research, to attend her sittings with me. Soon after the commencement of regular sittings, the phenomena began to develop and became more varied. At these first sittings we had a very dim red light, and the medium was not in a cabinet. What appeared was, as far as we could observe: in-

complete human forms and animal forms such as lambs, dogs, birds, etc.

*A NEW NOAH'S ARK*

"On account of the darkness, the animals were hardly discernible, but we could hear them walk about inside the circle and emit sounds, i.e. lambs braying and a raven's cry, some distance away from the medium. Human voices were heard around the medium, sometimes at a distance of about two meters, also voices through megaphones floating in mid-air. The controls, talking through the medium, always came in-between, and somewhat irregularly. Hands materialized well and frequently touched the sitters.

"The human forms generally materialized inside the cabinet, after this was built, and then came out and up to the light in the centre of the circle. As a rule, they were wrapped in white veils, but occasionally partly in black. They usually only stayed for a short while outside. The animal forms were misshapen but generally recognizable as representing some animal. I remember seeing a giraffe, a camel, a horse, a dog, a goat, a seal, a bird and many more. The larger animals were, of course, not of a natural size. The giraffe, for instance, was almost two meters long, and what appeared outside the cabinet was mainly the head and neck.

"The medium frequently came out of the cabinet, wrapped more or less in white veils that disappeared outside the cabinet. Also there happened the phenomena of dematerialization. One of the medium's arms would disappear so that the sleeve of her dress seemed to be empty. But this phenomenon we could not adequately investigate.

"Every now and then direct voices were heard but the materializations appeared to be the chief object. Disturbances were rare during this period and the sittings, as a rule, were well conducted.

"At this time the medium passed some examinations, chiefly with a view to prevent her taking anything to the sittings that could be used to a fraudulent purpose, and these examinations did not in the least effect the phenomena. The most thorough and extensive investigation was made by two medical professors from the University of Iceland, a medical doctor and two hospital nurses. The medium, the sitters, and the room where the sittings were held were carefully searched. I enclose herewith a testimonial from the university professors regarding this examination."

*PROFESSOR THORODDSEN'S TESTIMONY*

I shall print now one of these testimonials. It is signed by Dr. Guomundur Thoroddsen, Professor of Surgery at the University of Reykjavik. It says:

"Thursday evening, on the 12th of April (1934) I was at a séance with the medium Fru Lara Agustsdottir, with several others who attended her séances during the winter. The idea was to ascertain whether any 'teleplasm' formed or not. After a close inspection of the medium and the room, the séance was started. Time and again white matter was seen to come out of the cabinet where the medium sat and I often touched it.

"Sometimes the medium appeared covered with a white robe. I cannot believe that she could have hidden this stuff on or in her person or got it from her surroundings after the close inspection which I performed before the séance. What especially convinced me that this was 'teleplasm' was that I saw it quite clearly and close to me; it was growing smaller and smaller and at last it disappeared altogether without any help from the medium whom I saw quite distinctly all this time in a kneeling position, with upraised hands, in front of the cabinet. The 'teleplasm' disappeared last up by her neck and head."

#### *A REMARKABLE DESCRIPTION*

Another investigator who signs himself as Guom. V. Kristjansson describes the medium's controls, a child who claims that she was never born, a Catholic nun who died in Reykjavik five years ago and a Spanish girl, Alma. Then he continues:

"When three or four spirits have appeared, we who sit next to the medium note touches as if by some substantial material, varied in shape and size, soft or hard, light or dark in colour. Then near the light, in full view of the sitters, white or dark coloured veils appear from the medium and return to her with lightning speed. The veils seem to prepare materializations. The veils may have a pleasant scent to some sitters resembling the scent of roses. Sometimes the materializations begin with a cool breath. They form near the light. At the beginning the face is rather blurred, but at each repeated appearance it seems to become clearer. The light shines on it in such a way as to make it fully discernible. At the sitters' wish forms move under the light. The materializations appear to take place out of thin air beside or in front of the medium as she sits motionless in her chair. The same form appears and often disappears with lightning speed. Frequently, too, the forms stop in front of the light and collapse. On the floor the substance writhes as if it were living, moving by its own power. Out of this living substance there begins to take form first a head, then shoulders and then the rest of the body. This time the face, as a rule, is more clearly discernible than it was before the form subsided on the floor, after which it disappears towards the medium and seems to disperse in a moment.

We, who sit next to the medium are able to follow her every movement, even though the light is dim. The medium is always clearly visible. Besides, when the forms come towards the light, the medium frequently gives us her hands and we take them and hold them, telling the sitters that we are doing so while the form is in front of the light.

"Another thing that often happens is that the shade on the lamp sometimes by the help of one of the medium's hands, is lifted away from the light as if moved by some unseen power. On these occasions the light falls directly on the medium so that she is clearly visible to all the sitters. The white substance is then seen flowing out of her mouth, over her body down to the floor to her feet.

"At the extreme end of this substance, clearly visible to all present, there now begins to materialize a form that, thus connected to the medium, moves to right and left, towards us who sit next to her, sometimes bowing its head down to the medium's face or breast. In a few moments the form disperses in front of the medium. On the instant the form disappears, the lampshade falls into place again."

I quoted at length from these statements. If we shall witness at the Institute only a fraction of what is claimed to occur in Fru Lara's sittings at Reykjavik, her case may go down in *Psychical Research* as a very important one indeed.

### *FLASHLIGHT PHOTOGRAPHS*

The documents which I received were accompanied by excellent magnesium flashlight photographs, showing the materialized nun and the medium. Both seem to be equally substantial and of flesh and blood. There is no question of the medium masquerading as a spirit. Only an accomplice secretly entering the room could explain the second figure normally. As a method of fraud, this is so crude that one can hardly entertain the suggestion. On the other hand, I am always uneasy when I see perfect materializations on a photograph. I would much prefer an imperfect one, a face partly formed, a detached hand and loads and loads of ectoplasm. Not of the bed-sheet variety but of the amorphous type which is not so easy to imitate. One of Fru Lara's photographs exhibits something of this kind. The white sheet is combined with some heavy, dough-like substance, resembling very much the type of ectoplasm which the late Mr. MacCarthy Stevenson photographed a year or two ago in some sittings with Kathleen Goligher. This bit of ectoplasm interested me far more than the nun herself and her draperies.

I am also intrigued by the animal materializations. There is no medium today in Europe in whose sittings animals appear. Kluski is inaccessible. His Pithecanthropus, his lion and birds belong to past history. I understand that his powers have considerably waned and that he sits very seldom, and for friends only. Jan Guzyk and Burgik, Kluski's contemporaries and compatriots, had a doubtful reputation. To materialize a giraffe in Iceland is certainly an uncommon undertaking. The question, of course, is how far was the identification accurate. "Stone walls do not a prison make", nor long necks giraffes. From Mr. Fridriksson's account one may justifiably entertain some doubts. Of the appearance of a camel the same thing might be said. This is how it is described to me in yet another statement:

"There came what appeared to be the head and neck of a camel. The animal built up gradually. There was a mass of ectoplasm visible at first. The head of the animal appeared inside that. Then the white mass dropped to the floor and disappeared."

What "appears to be the head and neck of a camel" is not necessarily a camel.

"Then came birds; they came out beneath the curtain, flew up on the outside and went into the cabinet over the top."

Here again one may object to the absence of freedom which one associates with birds. Kluski's hawk which Professor Pawlowski photographed, "flew around, beating his wings against the walls and ceiling".

However, the sitters of Fru Lara's circle may have concentrated on human forms. She is a medium of a few years standing only, still developing. Her phenomena should not be judged by their limitations but by their scope. That seems to be bigger and more interesting than that of any medium in Europe.

#### *PROBLEM OF SPIRIT IDENTIFICATION*

I had a remarkable psychological experience a short while ago which helped me considerably to understand why so many people can recognize their lost relations in a piece of drapery or in the dimly lit features of a masquerading materialization medium.

I was passing into a tortuous lane from Chiswick High Road. On the corner there was a car depot. In the glass window I saw a poster advertising a new Armstrong-Siddley car. It showed something like a strong arm pulling a car by a rope. I stared at it for some time as I could not puzzle out what the "arm" was. It looked more like a torch. The pavement on which I stood was extremely narrow. It occurred to me that it was dangerous to stay on that side of the lane. A skidding car would crush anybody to death.

At this moment I saw a van turning in and passing me. It had a tow-rope and attached to it was a car. I said to myself, if that rope snaps I am in for it. At that moment the rope snapped . . . and the car proceeded under its own power.

There was *no tow-rope* between the van and the car. I simply transferred a mental image from my mind to two passing cars. But for the brief moment that the van was pulling the car, the tow rope was as solid and real as the car itself.

I see in this experience an important application to séance room happenings. It explains spirit recognitions for which there are no basis. The sitter's mind is filled with the image of someone he cannot forget. The result is an unconscious transference of the image into what is presented as a materialized spirit.

The same explanation may hold for direct voice recognitions. The memory of a still voice may surge up in a wave and effect an identification for which there is no real ground.

I do not put forward this suggestion in an attempt to discredit materializations or the direct voice. I simply submit it as a solution of the problem of recognitions which must be classed as absurd and incomprehensible if the medium in question is subsequently proved to be nothing but a brazen fraud.

## Book Review

YOGA, A SCIENTIFIC EVALUATION, by Kovoov T. Behanan.  
Macmillan. \$2.50.

If you ask the average American what Yoga is, he will tell you that it is an Indian cult and has something to do with breathing exercises and ascetic disciplines. He will probably suggest that you read Yeats-Brown who is known to have tried it. Of its purpose and basic principles he will know nothing. Because the eastern philosophic conceptions are difficult for the western mind to grasp, Indian philosophies have been left severely alone by all but a few students of Philosophy and Comparative Religion. Dr. Behanan determined to make a scientific study of Yoga and to make available the results of his research to the western world. He has attempted, and quite successfully, to define the basic conceptions of the Yogic Philosophy in English terms and to compare them to philosophic conceptions of the West.

Dr. Behanan is in excellent position to make such an attempt. A native of Travancore, India, he is a graduate of the University of Calcutta and a Doctor of Philosophy at Yale. A Sterling Fellowship from the latter university enabled him to return to India and study Yoga under the Yogin teacher, Swami Kuvalayanda of Lonavla. He studied both the theory and practice of Yoga and in all the essential aspects conformed to the Yogin disciplines.

From the psychic researcher's point of view this book is rather a disappointment. Not because Dr. Behanan tells us that "barring the pretensions of the professional marvel-seekers, there is no basis for the popular impression that the 'Supernatural' centers around Yogins and Yoga. They would merely laugh such claims out of court provided they were at all willing to discuss the subject."

Had Dr. Behanan told us on the contrary that psychic phenomena was universal among the Yogins and of daily occurrence, psychic researchers would be the first, from bitter experience, to shake their heads and suspect Dr. Behanan of credulity. But it is unfortunate that in a book of material apparently collected and analyzed with painstaking care he should have devoted so much space to the insertion of old chestnuts about the falsity of the term *supernatural*, and the cracking of the Fox sisters' toes. Dr. Behanan seems to be on the defensive in the name of science. We are rather tired of the type of trite paragraph of which the following passage is an example:

"There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophies' is the watchword of the supernaturalist. Strangely enough, this is the fundamental assumption of science as well, for only one overpowered by the delusion of omniscience can say that he knows all there is to be known. If the above assumption is common to both science and psychic research, why is it that 'official science' considers it beneath its dignity to investigate the supernatural? When the phenomena are well-attested and have been properly investigated, they are incorporated into the body of accredited knowledge. But scientific method stops short of glorifying human foibles as scientific facts. The debunking of séances demonstrates this more than any other supernatural epidemic of the present day.

"Whatever may be its emotional value, the word 'supernatural' has no special meaning for science."

This kind of argument makes the psychic researcher feel very tired. No psychic researcher has used or thought of the word supernatural since the days of witchcraft. In fact this whole passage smacks of the kind of argument used by science at least twenty years ago. Dr. Behanan talks at some length about *wishful thinking* and makes this statement: . . . "To mix philosophy and science is to do violence to both."

Dr. Behanan dedicates his book "To all those who, like William James, are interested in the deeper and broader aspects of human motivation."

We wonder if he has ever read the following passage from a letter written by William James to Thomas Davidson in 1884:

"I confess I rather despair of any popular religion of a philosophic character; and I sometimes find myself wondering whether there can be any popular religion raised on the ruins of the old Christianity without the presence of that element which in the past has presided over the origin of all religions, namely, a belief in new *physical* facts and possibilities. Abstract considerations about the soul and the reality of a moral order will not do in a year what the glimpse into a world of new phenomenal possibilities enveloping those of the present life, afforded by an extension of our insight into the order of nature, would do in an instant. Are the much despised 'Spiritualism' and the 'Society for Psychical Research' to be the chosen instruments for a new era of faith? It would surely be strange if they were; but if they are not, I see no other agency that can do the work."

It does seem too bad that "Science" should, at least in the eyes of Dr. Behanan, find it beneath its dignity to touch such a subject.

Dr. Behanan places telepathy and clairvoyance apart from psychic research into a separate category. Of these he is less afraid.

He tells us that "Phantasms of the Living"\* has "recorded several interesting cases of spontaneous telepathic occurrences" and he finds Dr. Rhine's results and conclusions "convincingly positive."

To return to the subject of the book, *Yoga*, Dr. Behanan has given us a clear definition and analysis, in the light of western thought, of the philosophy of the Yogins. His book is a "study of the philosophical basis, motivations, and methods of a group which, through continuous psychological and physiological practices achieves and maintains a state of emotional stability."

The beginnings of religious teachings in India are to be found in the Vedic hymns and a little later in the Upanishads, philosophical dialogues in the manner of Plato, that have been handed down by word of mouth since about 1000 B.C. One of the basic principles of the Upanishads is expressed by what is known as the Brahman Atman equation. Brahman, originally the word meaning prayer, came to mean the power inherent in the prayer of the worshipper and finally, in later times it has come to mean the cosmic or ultimate reality. Atman means the Imperishable self within, or the psychological principle of man; the self consciousness. The teaching that these two are the same: that the soul is the ultimate reality, is the fundamental philosophy upon which Indian religion is founded. From the Upanishads, six classes of Indian philosophy sprang. One of these is called Samkhya and from it in turn the Yoga philosophy has developed.

The most characteristic feature of this philosophy is the element of change. Samkhya-Yoga found this element in both the mental and physical worlds and called it rajas (energy). The universe is forever in a perpetual state of flux. Therefore energy is considered an irreducible substratum.

Another fundamental principle is *tamas* (matter or mass). Although the material object may disappear in the course of time (change) it constitutes a definite part of experience. It represents inertia and lack of translucence.

A third aspect of experience is *sattva* (mind or intelligence). It is the "quality in the human mind which enables the perceiver to trace relationships, between objects of the external world and consciousness itself."

These three aspects of experience make up the basis of the universe. The Samkhya-Yoga philosopher finds these three sufficient to explain all the differences in the experienced world.

These three are called *gunas* and are contained in a potential state in *prakriti* which Dr. Behanan defines as primordial undifferentiated matter.

\* By Gurney, Myers & Podmore.

Before the beginning of the process of evolution, the *gunas* exist in a state of equilibrium. *Prakriti* is not different from the *gunas* but merely the *gunas* waiting in a quiescent state. Evolution is a cyclic process. Every period of evolution is followed by another of dissolution which comes to an end as evolution begins again. The reason for this constant alternation is not an inherent quality in the combination of the *gunas* but is the result of an outside influence, *purusha*, the soul, or pure consciousness. This pure consciousness which is devoid of characteristics and is cosmic in nature is always pulling away from its entanglement with *prakriti* or earthly experience. It is this urge in *purusha*, a basic principle in man which makes him seek salvation; escape from earthly experience. This conception which applies to all nature is expressed by man in reincarnation. The *Samkhya* philosophy teaches that man by meditation and ascendancy over earthly pleasures can free himself from this process of rebirth. *Yoga* teaches that such a release may well be achieved by a few scholars and philosophers but that everyone is not gifted enough to attain freedom from reincarnation by meditation alone and offers a system which will aid in the attainment of salvation to all those that can stand the difficult life.

It is impossible in a short review to do more than give a suggestion of these difficult eastern doctrines. For the amateur philosopher there is much meat in this book, especially for the man who is not already familiar with Indian Philosophy. The idea that at rebirth the soul inherits its parents because like draws like, and by a law of *Karma* the soul will be drawn like a magnet to a body that will suit its development, will be interesting to those who believe in survival. "The adherents of rebirth think in terms of personal responsibility rather than attribute their misfortunes to an avenging God." The theory of reincarnation is a satisfactory answer to all classes for the unequalness of station, wealth, and mental attributes. It has been said that one of the reasons Christianity makes so little headway in India is the Christian teaching concerning Creation. The Indian mind does not consider it consecutive to believe in a finite beginning and an eternal future. The conception of a creation, therefore, is puerile in the mind of even an ignorant Indian.

Nothing has been said so far about the actual practices themselves. Three chapters are devoted to the exercises known as postures, breathing exercises and mental disciplines. The physical exercises are designed to build a healthy body. They are attitudes taken and held anywhere from five minutes to half an hour. Quick movements are not used. These exercises are only practiced on an empty stomach at sunrise or sunset. An adequate

but Spartan diet is rigorously followed. Dr. Behanan has made experiments at Yale with an apparatus that records respiration. Although these breathing exercises have definite effects on the mind, they do not show appreciable difference on the respiratory charts. Dr. Behanan therefore concludes that the feeling is purely subjective.

Much can undoubtedly be gained in the field of philosophical speculation by the study of eastern conceptions and we are indebted to Dr. Behanan for his comprehensive outline of Yoga.

J. P.

## The Pharaoh's Curse

*(Dr. Fodor in his June letter told us about the poltergeist phenomena surrounding Sir Alexander Seton's Egyptian bone. Many newspaper accounts have intimated that Sir Alexander felt that he was a victim of the Pharaoh's curse from which Lord Carnarvon is supposed to have died. The account of the occurrence, reprinted from LIGHT below, tells us the bone was not taken from a tomb at all and throws a new light on the whole incident.)*

Sir Alexander Seton told a plain, unvarnished tale at the Edinburgh Psychic College, on Friday, April 9th, regarding the Egyptian curio (a bone) to which much prominence has been given recently in the Press (see LIGHT, April 8th)—told it twice, for the demand for admission was so great that an overflow meeting had to be held.

Confining ourselves to the simple facts, these are: The bone is 5,000 to 7,000 years old, probably female. It was not found in a pyramid, though got in a deep hole near a recently discovered small pyramid in the desert behind the Sphinx.

There is no reason to suggest that any Pharaoh ever owned the bone. Presumably, the curse of a camel-driver or a charwoman would be equally effective or non-effective, but would not look so well in newspaper headlines.

Lady Seton bribed an Arab to descend some 80 feet and bring up the bone. Some months after she got home, a series of illnesses affected each member of the family and the staff in turn. These, Sir Alexander said, might be due to a run of sheer bad luck.

Then other things savoring of the psychic began to happen. The bone was in a glass case on a table. One day, with no one in the room, the case was heard to fall and was found smashed to atoms some little distance from the table. The heavy pile carpet should have prevented the case from being shattered, but did not. The bone was not seriously damaged.

On two occasions a large flower vase holding about 1½ gallons of water was thrown off the table. Some of the water was spilt round it, but not in the shape of a pyramid as some newspapers have reported. On one of these occasions the bone was not in the house.

Chairs have been turned upside down and displaced, and a wine-glass mysteriously broken in a visitor's hands. A small boy of nine rushed terrified from the room when he had been playing near the table with the bone on it. He had seen a "grey robed figure." He could say no more. Only one other person claims to have seen such a figure.

It is regrettable that, immediately after the lecture, Mrs. Bateman was asked to give clairvoyance. She said that "they" impressed her that the bone must be sent back, that a time-limit was being put on it, and failing compliance, blindness would fall on those responsible.

Obviously, little value attaches to a reading given in such an atmosphere.

This prediction has been distorted by the Press into threatened blindness for all who touched the bone—100 people at least.

Interviewed afterwards, Sir Alexander Seton strongly deprecated the very exaggerated accounts of alleged occurrences which had appeared in some newspapers, especially American. He and Lady Seton are determined to have the bone returned whence it came as soon as they conveniently can, but no definite plans have yet been made.

It seems that there is no one person who can be singled out as having been present in the house on each of the occasions when physical phenomena occurred, and who might, therefore, be regarded as the possible Medium.—(*From a Scottish correspondent*).

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## The Psychic Breeze and Psynovial Gas

BY JOHN J. O'NEILL

One of the traditional signs of the presence of "psychic power" at a séance is the cool breeze that envelops the sitters. Those who have attended many séances are well acquainted with this phenomenon. It is, unfortunately, seldom given any serious attention, being accepted usually as a welcomed diversion and a relief from the stuffy conditions that only too frequently exist in the séance room. This phenomenon, however, is one of great importance. It is worthy of most thorough investigation and the inquiry should be built on a broad foundation. A complete knowledge of what takes place when this manifestation is experienced would give us a valuable means of studying other physical phenomena and perhaps make it possible for mediums to increase the extent, clearness, intensity or volume of phenomena without extra strain.

It has often been charged that this "psychic breeze" is produced by fraudulent means by fanning. No one will deny that a breeze can be produced by fanning and that it would not be difficult to produce a breeze fraudulently in the séance room. I am convinced, however, by my observations that the psychic breeze is a bona fide phenomenon.

The psychic breeze produces an effect which is comparable to that of a natural breeze but it is my belief that it has its origin within the body of the person who experiences it and has nothing whatever to do with movements of the surrounding air.

When I first experienced the psychic breeze the novelty of the event made it difficult for me to be an accurate observer. I had a strong impression that I had been imposed on. It seemed so easy to produce the effect by fraud. But if an effect is produced by fraud it is only a matter of time and observation to discover the mechanism. I settled down for a long patient period of critical observation.

Whenever a psychic breeze was reported at a séance, I made it a point to question as many of the sitters as possible. It was quite common at large séances for the majority of the sitters to simultaneously report feeling the breeze. The time factor seemed important. A dozen or more sitters would spontaneously report with almost one voice that they had felt a breeze. It was reasonable to assume that the experience which prompted the outburst came to all of these sitters at practically the same moment. Location in the room seemed not to be a factor. Sitters in all parts of the room were affected. Those who reported they had not felt the breeze were randomly distributed.

Two theories seemed tenable. The first was that there is a movement of the air outward from the center of the room, where the medium usually sits, toward the walls of the room where the sitters are located. The second was that there is a mass movement of the air through or across the room.

In order to picture this second situation one would have to visualize the solid walls of the room as permeable to air since it would have to come in through the walls on one side of the room and pass out at the other. This violated all the laws concerning the properties of matter as I knew them, so the explanation did not seem reasonable.

But that, however, is not a valid reason for not testing any hypothesis no matter how fantastic. I knew that hydrogen can pass through iron slowly and into palladium rapidly, that carbon monoxide can pass through red hot iron easily, but these facts did not seem to apply directly. If they were applicable, and indicated that solid walls are permeable to air, then the séance rooms should be very drafty places whenever the wind was blowing outdoors. This was not the case, so permeable walls did not seem to be the answer.

If there was a solid front of breeze blowing through the room in one direction then the sitters in one end, or side, of the room would feel the breeze on their backs and those on the opposite side would feel it in front. Such a distribution should have eventually become obvious, but the reports of sitters did not indicate any such directional effect. Theory number two seemed untenable.

The statements of sitters seemed to almost always favor the center of the circle as the direction from which the breeze came, which was theory number one. If the breeze came from the center of the circle then two possible explanations seemed to be available. One was that some kind of a fanning device was used to propel the air outward toward the sitters and this carried the implication of fraud involving the medium. The other was that the movement of the air was due to some natural cause. This would require the development of an area of high air pressure in the center of the room which was reduced by the outward movement of air, a breeze, which restored equilibrium.

I did some rough calculating in connection with the second explanation in order to get an idea of the magnitudes involved in case it should develop that the breeze was due to some abnormal condition that developed around the medium. The psychic breeze, I estimated, had an effect which was comparable to that produced by a natural breeze with a velocity not in excess of 15 miles per hour. Over such a short distance as the dimensions of a room

a small difference in pressure would be sufficient to cause a movement of this velocity. But there was no reasonable explanation of how such a pressure could develop suddenly. If it were due to a large volume of air held under compression and released suddenly, it would require that the air released be comparable in volume from a quarter to a half of the cubic contents of the room. If such a volume of air caused a 15 mile an hour breeze at a distance of 8 to 10 feet it would move at a much higher velocity closer to the center of the room. The rate of increase would include a cubic factor which indicates that at the point of origin, assumed to be in a very small space, the velocity would be comparable to a hurricane, or of the order of more than 100 miles per hour. If such were the case there would be sound effects simultaneous with the starting of the breeze and they would be of sufficient volume to be clearly audible. No such sounds were heard at any time. Any cause involving a mechanism such as this, whether normal, fraudulent or abnormal, seemed to be completely eliminated.

The remaining explanation of simple fraud involved the use of a fan of some kind. An almost infinite number of possibilities are involved in a situation of this kind. Not only could the medium be the culprit, but confederates among the sitters had to be considered. A fan could be smuggled into the room, or a hidden one could be secured. The medium or his confederate could use his coat, or a skirt could be slipped off and on again. A picture could be removed from the walls and used. On some occasions large vases of flowers stood on the floor so a bunch of flowers could be included among the fan possibilities. When the medium sat in a cabinet the fabric of the curtains had to be included. In cases in which there was not complete simultaneousness in the reports from the sitters in the various parts of the room on feeling the breeze, the suspicion is justified that the fan mover is giving successive service, making quick shifts from one direction to another.

Completely adequate control conditions are seldom avail-

able at séances. In the course of a long series of sittings changing conditions give some control of one factor after another and the totality of these controls usually enables one to set reasonable limits to fraud possibilities. Among such non-concurrent controls may be mentioned—complete examination of the room, stripping the medium, binding the medium, medium in holding control, bare walls, all sitters above suspicion, water filled vases on floor preventing movement around room, room sufficiently lighted.

Allowance has to be made for the ability of the medium to adjust his or her possibly fraudulent methods to avoid any controls that are effective on a particular occasion. It is my impression that skeptics usually give the medium credit for too much ingenuity. When fraudulent methods are used the results are usually so obvious that it requires but little cleverness on the part of the experienced sitter to detect them.

Dark room séances are, naturally, much more unsatisfactory for making observations, but cabinet séances in which a red light is used, gives a check against them as phenomena of the same type is produced. The illumination is sufficient to provide adequate assurances against the type of fraud that would be practical in the non-visual black room sessions.

The principal objection to the theory that the psychic breeze is fraudulently produced by fanning or similar means in dark séances is that the phenomenon has been repeatedly observed in red light séances in which all of the sitters are under visual control, and likewise the medium.

Red light observations of the psychic breeze can be considered as establishing beyond doubt the bona fide nature of this phenomenon. The dark room conditions, however, remain a fascinating challenge to use ingenuity to get observations of value without deviating from the complete conditions which the medium desires. Ingenuity may sometimes take the form of long, patient, almost passive, obser-

vations productive of a wealth of details that are sometimes more effective than physical controls.

In the course of my observations I found that I could learn more about the psychic breeze by observing myself than by trying to observe the medium or possible confederates. I laid a foundation for this by observing the effect of breezes normally produced. I sat in the open air to accurately observe the effect of the natural breeze; I fanned myself with large fans, small fans, books, papers, boards, handkerchiefs, my hands, etc.

There were differences between the natural breeze and the psychic breeze but they were difficult to describe. The principal factors involved are temperature changes, pressure changes, turbulence, sensation of air movement and area affected. If it were possible to draw graphs of the changes in each of these factors during the short period of time involved I am sure the differences would be easily apparent. It is seldom that instrumentation is either permissible or possible at séances.

The following comparative observations give some idea of the difference:

#### FANNING

#### PSYCHIC BREEZE

##### *Area Affected*

Depends on area of fan, the distance at which it is operated and location. Area affected not well localized except with small fan used close to body.

Areas affected vary from ten square inches to whole body. Smaller areas usually on face and frequently with sharply defined boundary. Ankles strongly affected. When large areas are involved they are usually confined to, or affect more strongly, the ventral or front half of body.

##### *Turbulence*

Easily observable. When small fan is used the area struck by principal vortex of air is discernible and also adjacent areas in which turbulence is due to eddies.

So slight as to be close to threshold, if it exists. Impression is gained of turbulence of surrounding air but this is not felt at skin surface. There is a uniformity in the skin areas affected.

*Air Movement*

There is a sensation of air movement past the body in addition to movement of vortex over surface of contact.	Sense of a fixed area of activity, when surface affected is small, which does not extend beyond. No flowing of air over surrounding parts is felt.
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*Pressure*

Conscious of the movement of air against the surface. A sudden peak of pressure accompanies contact of the vortex.	Sense of relief of pressure. A more uniform sensation without any localized centers of maximum sensation in area affected.
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*Temperature*

Reduction in temperature that quickly disappears.	Greater reduction in temperature estimated 10 to 20 degrees. Effect disappears less quickly.
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*Effect of Clothing*

Effect felt only through light clothing and with greatly diminished effect compared with that on bare areas.	Effect felt under heavy clothing with almost as great intensity as on bare areas.
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The reliability of such observations must be given a very low rating in the absence of corroborating instrumental data, but nevertheless it has a certain definite value in the absence of more desirable quantitative data.

Some curious experiments are performed on the spur of the moment in the course of building up a background for thinking about a problem. For example I fanned a dry thermometer vigorously for several minutes and it recorded a rise in temperature of three quarters of a degree over that of a control thermometer. I knew what would happen with a wet bulb thermometer, a rapid drop in temperature, but I did not think the dry thermometer was sensitive enough to record the effect of fanning. If our skins were absolutely dry, fanning would slightly raise its temperature. In the séance room they are likely to be moist to a greater than average extent but I don't think the evaporation of perspiration accounts for the cooling effect of the psychic breeze. This effect is included under the observations on fanning.

I held near my face and arms metal objects which had been chilled in the refrigerator and they produced a cooling effect without any accompanying air movement but the effect was not identical with the psychic breeze. There was something, ill defined, that was lacking.

The temperature effect I was sure was not a subjective one, like "cold shivers running up and down the spine". The effect is pleasurable and exhilarating and none of the fear reactions are involved.

The temperature reduction produced by the psychic breeze I was convinced is something very real and not due to any movement of the surrounding air. I gave thought to the temperature control mechanism of the body and how it might operate to give the effect of cooling. Alternating chills and fever are a common symptom in connection with some infectious diseases, and hot and cold flashes are frequently associated with glandular disorders in women. The sudden withdrawal of the blood from the surface capillaries by a nervous spasm could produce the effect. All of these could be used in framing entirely valid explanations in the case of a single individual but difficulties arose when it became necessary to explain the simultaneous development of the symptoms in a dozen persons. There is also the objection that the pathological chill is accompanied by shivering and there is no indication of shivering accompanying the psychic breeze. The cold flash is neither pleasurable nor exhilarating and the psychic chill is both. The normal physiological or common pathological processes did not seem to furnish any satisfactory explanation.

I finally had an experience which gave me a clue to the mechanism of the psychic breeze. It came at a dark room séance held at Lilydale, N. Y. With no particular purpose in mind I induced four physical phenomena mediums to join in a séance. About a dozen persons were present in the basement séance room in one of the cottages.

Toward the end of the latter part of the séance I felt a strong psychic breeze affecting almost the whole right

side of my face down to the base of my neck. It was sudden, sharply defined in area and its duration was about one second, certainly not beyond three seconds. I said nothing about it but waited for others to report their experience. No one made any such report but before they had any chance to do so I heard someone say—"Will someone on the opposite side of the room give me his voice?" I said nothing in order to give everyone else a chance to respond. Several of my neighbors spoke, but the inquirer said they were not the one wanted. I finally gave my voice and the woman said I was the one she wanted to reach. This conversation ensued:

"Did you feel something just now?" she asked.

"Nothing touched me," I replied.

"It wasn't something that touched you. It was something that came from your face."

"How interesting! What part of my face?"

"The right side of your face from the top of your head down to your shoulder."

"What did you see come from my face?"

"It was a light, a bright cloud. It just burst from your face like an explosion. It was like steam rushing out."

"Was it very big?"

"Yes, it rushed out and filled the whole corner of the room over the heads of the people on your right."

"Is it there now?"

"No. It disappeared quickly. It melted away."

"Did anyone else see this?" I asked.

No one had.

In spite of the fact that the phenomenon was one of brief duration it would seem reasonable to expect that more than one person out of the dozen present would have witnessed it since the room was a small one. Why did this one person see it? She was in an advantageous position directly across the room but so were several others. Was she seeing

with normal vision? She said she saw a bright cloud and if she saw with normal vision practically all persons in the room should have seen it. Was she seeing clairvoyantly? Others in the room had powers of clairvoyance but they failed to see it. Did she get the vision through means other than either clairvoyance or normal vision? A digression might be in order to discuss this.

The event that the woman described was entirely in harmony with the theory I had been formulating concerning the nature of the psychic breeze. I had decided that it had its origin in the body of the person having the experience, that the process produced a reduction in the temperature of the skin and was associated with a loss of energy in some form. I undoubtedly had an ample store of observations available in my memory from which to frame a satisfactory theory of the mechanism of the psychic breeze and of the effects it produces, but I had not arrived at the complete picture that the woman described.

It may be recalled that in a previous article I described how the extra-conscious mind may take over problems which are unsolved in the conscious mind and solve them giving the solution to the conscious mind when the conditions permit the operation. The problem that arises is this—did my extra-conscious mind work out the solution of the psychic breeze problem and did it, by telepathic processes, transmit it to the extra-conscious mind of the woman who saw the psychic breeze and communicate to her conscious mind the vision which she saw?

The hypothesis that this did take place is an entirely reasonable one and it fits the facts as well as any. However, it is good scientific doctrine to get along with the minimum amount of hypothesis. We can therefore drop out the theory that the psychic breeze was seen by normal vision, clairvoyantly and by telepathic transmission. About all that is left is to assume that the woman saw by means of a process of visual sensitivity in the ultra-violet range

in the spectrum, or that portion which is invisible or black light to normal eyes.

If the effluvia of the psychic breeze were seen in this way then it must be considered as a tangible substance, a fluid of some kind, that is self luminous or becomes so on emanating from the body and loses its luminosity after being out of the body a short time. The luminosity, of course, is in the ultra-violet range normally invisible. While ultra violet radiation is not visible to the normal eye it is photographically active and it should be possible to make pictures of the effluvia, particularly if a quartz lens, transparent to ultra violet light, is used. The effluvia accompanying the psychic breeze as described by the woman in the séance bears a strong resemblance to the white cloud-like masses which are seen in the so-called spirit photographs and which usually include portraits. There are other phases of psychic phenomena with which this effluvia may be considered but the discussion of them will be reserved for a later article.

I wish to confine the remainder of this article to a discussion of the possible properties and characteristics of this effluvia of which the psychic breeze seems to be constituted.

The behavior of the effluvia when out of the body indicates it is a fluid with characteristics resembling those of a gas. If self luminous this indicates that some kind of chemical activity is taking place. The most likely process to take place on a substance released into the air in gaseous form is oxidation. That this should take place spontaneously indicates that the effluvia, or gas, is in a highly unsaturated state. It is assumed, of course, that the effluvia is composed of the substance of ordinary matter and acts in the same way as ordinary chemical substances do.

What becomes of the substance after it is oxidized? Does it remain a component of the air of the séance room? If so it should not be beyond the range of possibilities to

secure samples of it from the séance room air and submit it to chemical analysis.

If, as seems to be the case, this effluvia or gas comes from a source within the body then the question arises—how does it leave the body? The first thought is that the skin must be permeable to the gas. The skin is not permeable to the ordinary gases of the atmosphere. If it were we could use our skin to take over the respiratory processes that now take place in the lungs because the skin could admit to the capillaries near the surface the oxygen needed to carry on the chemical change that takes place in the bronchioles.

If the skin were permeable to the gas then it would be reasonable to assume that the other tissues in the body were likewise permeable. If such were the case how could this gas be retained within the body? It would pass through any tissue. Or can the anatomists tell us of any tissue in the body which is sufficiently dense, or has some other properties which would enable it to retain the gas until the right conditions arose which called for its release?

An alternative theory would be that the gas does not exist in that state in the body but is produced in great profusion on the surface of the skin from some normal fluid or tissue of the body. Do the body fluids have the capacity to carry such a gas in solution and to release it as desired? If such is the case it should be possible to get some trace of the gas by physical examination or chemical analysis.

The presence of such a gas dissolved in body fluids should result in some highly energetic chemical reactions in the body tissues. Would such a gas, or fluid of some kind, solve any of the problems of the physiologists or biologists? It is a fertile subject for speculation.

There is another important problem for consideration. It will be recalled that the psychic breeze is very frequently experienced simultaneously by many persons in a séance.

What is the mechanism that brings about this simultaneous release of the gas? What is the mechanism in the body that responds to the external stimulus? The conscious mind does not initiate the psychic breeze mechanism, nor does the conscious mind, in my experience, have any knowledge of the phenomenon until the cooling effect is transmitted by the sensory nerves. The phenomenon would seem, therefore, to be associated with the extra-conscious realm of the mind and such bodily functions as are connected with it. The external stimulus which activates the psychic breeze phenomenon would seem to be transmitted through channels in which telepathic phenomena operates.

Our bodies do a great deal of living without the participation of our conscious minds. As a matter of fact our conscious minds have very little control, and that indirect, over the internal operations of our bodies. It is therefore quite within well established biological principles to assume that the psychic breeze phenomenon could be directed by some agency in the body which does not report directly to the conscious mind. That telepathic communication exists is reasonably well established and that it could take place between the extra-conscious agencies in the body is a reasonable hypothesis.

For ease in discussion I would suggest that the psychic breeze, effluvia, or gas, be given a definite name which should not be limited to this particular phenomenon because of the probability that, if its existence is proven, it may be found functioning in other phenomena. The name *psynovial gas* would seem to be satisfactory. It describes in abbreviated form a new gas associated with psychic phenomena.

### *Summary and Conclusions*

Evidence in my opinion indicates that the psychic breeze is a bona fide abnormal phenomenon and involves the issuing from the surface of the body of a fluid to which the name psynovial gas might be given.

Observations indicate that the hypothetical psynovial gas has unusual chemical and physical properties and if it exists in the body, dissolved in fluids or in any other form, should have ability to produce powerful physiological reactions.

The control of the functions through which psynovial gas is produced appears to be lodged in the extra-conscious realm of the mind and associated body organs and that its action can be initiated through telepathic processes.

## The Daphne Incident

BY JOCELYN PIERSON

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Informal reports of the work carried on by the Society's staff will be published in the JOURNAL from time to time. The following account records work with a young woman who will be known as Mrs. Ebling, a non-professional psychic, who has developed a fluent gift for automatic writing.

The use of the mental medium, either clairvoyant or motor automatist, to obtain evidence of survival or spirit identity is fraught with difficulty. Telepathy is now well established and it is impossible to tell how great a part it plays in the production of the psychic's supernormal impressions. The psychic himself does not really know from whence such impressions come, no matter how convinced he may be that they originate from discarnate minds. It may well be that such messages often come from the minds of living persons of whom the medium is entirely unaware. To eliminate the hypothesis of telepathy from communications, a scheme was originated allegedly by the spirit of F. W. Myers, known as cross correspondence or concordant automatism. Miss Alice Johnson, Secretary of the Society for Psychological Research (London) was the first to discover that a connection was to be found in messages received through various mediums as far apart as New York and India. Out of this scheme grew another known as the literary allusion test carried on by the S. P. R. and it is with the latter that we are concerned in this article.

The message in automatic writing which will be called the "Daphne Incident" seems meager at a first glance, especially as the evidence depends upon a single word. But in view of the fact that it is a good example of the "Myers style" created by the literary allusion test through the mediumship of Mrs. Piper, the incident is worthy of consideration, and of course a fact substantiated by a single word of evidence is as valuable as that fact substantiated by a thousand words.

In order to see the significance of the message it is necessary to review one of the early literary allusion tests.

I give in summary the most famous one, the "Lethe Incident."\*

In 1908 Mr. G. B. Door, a vice-president of the Society for Psychical Research (England) had a series of sittings with Mrs. Piper. One object of the sittings was to attempt to revive the literary remembrances of the communicator who claimed to be Frederic Myers† and thus to obtain evidence of his identity. Mr. Door was not familiar with Greek Mythology, did not read Greek, and had not studied Latin since his school days. Mrs. Piper claimed to have no classical education whatsoever, and did not remember ever having read the popular works on Mythology. Mr. Door chose a number of classical subjects and suggested them to the "Myers Control" in the hope of obtaining answers that showed a special knowledge of the classics.

On March 23rd, 1908 Mr. Door asked: "What does the word *Lethe* suggest to you?"

The reply seemed to him irrelevant: "Do you refer to one of my poems?"

The remark was not entirely inappropriate however, for in his translation of a passage in the *Aeneid*, Myers referred in verse to *Lethe*.‡

The first replies came through in automatic writing. Mrs. Piper was in trance. The words were scattered:§

"*Winds*—It is all clear. Do you remember *Cave? Lethe. Shore*—of course I do. *Lethe, Hades*—*beautiful river underground. Lethe*—delighted—*sad*—*lovely*—*mate*. Put them all together. — *Entwined love* — *beautiful shores*"

\* It is reported by J. G. Piddington in the PROCEEDINGS of the S. P. R., Vol. XXIV, 1910.

† Mr. Myers was in life the greatest authority on automatism. The reader who is not already familiar with his chapter on the subject in his book, *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*, will greatly profit by referring to it. Particular attention should be paid to the case of the Rev. and Mrs. Newnham, in which telepathic communications were received by Mrs. Newnham in automatic writing (848-851) Vol. II. This case proves that telepathy can be received in this form and therefore has a bearing on the *Daphne Incident*.

‡ Verse translation of *Aeneid* XI, 724, et seq., (see *Essays Classical*, page 174)

§ Only a few of the allusions are given here. Certain words are written in italics to facilitate a comparison of the significant trance utterances and automatic script with the story of Ceyx and Alcyone from which they were apparently quoted.

*"I shot an arrow through the air  
And it fell I know not where."*

The medium started to come out of trance and as she did so, spoke the following:

*"Lady — I want to say that the walls came out and in the air was a lady who had no clothes on; and in her hand she had a hoop and two pointed things and she pulled a string and she pointed it straight at me, and I thought it would hit me in the eye. And Mr. Myers put his hand up and stopped her. She had a hoop and there was only half of the hoop there."*

At the next sitting more came pertaining to the word *Lethe*. Dorr did not understand any of the references. The words, *Cloud*, *Iris*, *Mormon* (latin for sleep), *poppies*, *flower banks* and finally *Cynx* was written. At a third sitting among more classic allusions came the sentence "*No poppies ever grow on Elysian shores.*"

Mr. Dorr saw only an association between the oblivion of sleep and the *river Lethe*. The *poppies*, *Iris* who was described as an unclothed lady shooting a bow and arrow in the first sitting, *wind*, *cave* and the other allusions meant nothing to him. Mrs. Verrall of the Society for Psychological Research went through the records of these sittings and found many references which showed a real knowledge of the classics. However she could not find any particular passage in which the river *Lethe* and the other allusions were combined. The records were sent to two other classical scholars, Mr. Gerald Balfour and Mr. J. G. Piddington. Mr. Piddington, after a great deal of labor, came across a passage in the eleventh book of the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid which was previously unknown to him, containing the story of Ceyx and Alcyone. In reading the mythological story which is briefly given below, the reader is asked to note the number of words in the myth which were contained in Mrs. Piper's script. "Put them all together" in the words of the Myers control and you have an interesting piece of evidence.

*Ceyx*, in order to consult an oracle, took a sea voyage and was drowned. Alcyone, his wife, prayed to Juno for his safe return in vain. Juno, tired of Alcyone's supplications, sends *Iris*, messenger of the gods to seek speedily the drowsy court of *Somnus* (sleep) and orders him to send to Alcyone a vision in the form of the dead *Ceyx* to reveal the sad truth. Thereupon, *Iris*, taking her *bow*, seeks the abode of *sleep* hidden beneath a *cloud*. This abode is in a *cave* around which reek mists and murky fog. No living thing is there, yet the silence is not absolute because the *river Lethe* issues from a rock. Before the cavern's entrance abundant *poppies* bloom. After the message is delivered *Somnus* sends his son *Morpheus* to appear to Alcyone, who thus learns her husband's fate. She goes to the *shore* to drown herself and recognizes a body floating near the edge as her husband's corpse. She flings herself into the water and in the act of falling is transformed into a falcon by her father *Aeolus* (god of the *Wind*). The gods take pity on her and transform *Ceyx* into a Kingfisher. They are thereby *reunited*. For seven tranquil days\* in winter Alcyone sits brooding on her nest as it floats on the face of the waters. Then the waves are stilled and *Aeolus* lulls and confines the winds and secures a calm surface for his daughter's broods.

The sentence "*No poppies grew on Elysian shores,*" has especial significance. The message attempts to say in a subtle way that forgetfulness (for which the poppy is a symbol) does not exist in the hereafter.

#### *The Daphne Incident*

It is sufficient to say, in introduction, that after a few months' work of development with me, Mrs. Ebling began to get messages from purported spirit entities closely connected with the Imperator group.† The messages which

\* Our expression *Halcyon days* comes from this mythological story and Alcyone, the daughter of the god of wind.

† The Imperator Group is that band of spirit entities who purported to communicate through the mediumship of Stainton Moses. Myers, Hodgson and other prominent researchers were supposed to have joined the group after their deaths and to have dedicated a certain portion of their time to the attempt to prove survival through many prominent mediums.

were of a constructive and plausible nature were, however, very meager in the matter of evidence. Her communicators claimed to be Hyslop, Myers, and James among others. We were greatly impressed by the importance of our communicators, but a little dubious about their identity and it was not until the Daphne Incident occurred that our confidence in the supernormality of the writing was in any sense established. Mrs. Ebling is an intelligent young woman under thirty, the wife of a minister and mother of three small children. Her education, which was somewhat limited in her school days, has been greatly increased by reading and her knowledge is very uneven and often unexpected on the most obscure subjects. She has read a great deal of the best psychic literature and it is therefore difficult to judge how much her subconscious mind may be influenced in producing the results expected by her conscious mind. It is particularly important to note that she had read the Lethe Incident above, when the Daphne Incident occurred. But for a new telepathic element in the Daphne Incident, absent in the S. P. R. allusion tests, the occurrence would be valueless.

Mrs. Ebling was most conscientious about regular sittings with me at the Society. She undertook a long trip every week at great inconvenience to her household. After more than six months of pleasant but unimpressive messages, we both decided that unless some evidential material appeared almost immediately, it would be as well to discontinue, at least until Mrs. Ebling was further developed.

Before giving up our weekly sittings however, I promised Mrs. Ebling and our "friends of the Emperor Group" that I would take her to a good clairvoyant, in the hope that if they were really in communication with us that they would make themselves known through her faculty. On the 19th of November, 1936, I made an appointment with Miss Lillian Barit for an early hour in the afternoon. Mrs. Ebling did not know of this appointment until she arrived for her morning sitting and was not told to whom she would

be taken until the moment of arrival. In my conversation with the "group" during the morning sitting, I told of my plan and asked them to be there and if possible give us a sign of their presence. "The Myers Control", with whom I had all the conversation on the subject of evidence, was agreeable to the plan. Dr. Hyslop was also said to be in on the experiment. I suggested that I should choose a symbol which might be returned to me at the clairvoyant sitting and which would constitute a secret code between "Myers" and myself alone. Again the suggestion was received with a vehement "yes". I therefore left the table in the séance room, where Mrs. Ebling and I did our morning's writing and went into my office three rooms away. From my position behind my desk I could see Mrs. Ebling's back and knew that she did not move from her place. The piece of paper upon which I wrote my symbol is before me now. It says: "Dr. Hyslop. My sign is *TREE TREE TREE*". The words were written on the typewriter. Below in ink I wrote *tree* again six times and in another place twice more on the typewriter. I drew a strange picture of a tree with branches, and another merely a triangle with a stem, representing a fir tree. Below it I wrote SYMBOL OF LIFE.

I filed the paper carefully and returned to Mrs. Ebling. I sat down once more and asked "Myers" if he had received my symbol. The reply came:

"Wait a few minutes in silence and in darkness first and we will try to bring it through."

This was rather a surprise as I had intended the symbol as a secret sign to be received through the clairvoyance of Miss Barit. However, I did not take it very seriously as it never occurred to me that Mrs. Ebling was capable of receiving the signal.

I made some passing remark about how much I enjoyed my talks with "Myers" and how fond of him I was. The hand wrote:

"Your affection helps." then:

"My message. *Think of Daphne.*"

For some time there seemed no meaning in this message. Mrs. Ebling asked me if I knew anyone called Daphne. I said no. Then suddenly it dawned on me that Daphne was a goddess who had something to do with the trees or the woods. A picture arose in my mind of a well-known statue in the Borghese palace in Rome, representing Daphne being turned into a tree. She is a beautiful young nymph being chased by a young god and her feet and legs have already taken the shape of a tree trunk and her fingers are sprouting leaves. It is many years since I have seen the statue and I was not at all sure that I was right. I asked:

"I think Daphne refers to my message to you?"

Mrs. Ebling's hand wrote: "You will know. Dorothy (Mrs. Ebling) should not know."

This message appeared to be a warning to me not to spoil the test by telling Mrs. Ebling the symbol I had chosen.

I said: "Shall I go and look it up in the encyclopaedia?"

The reply came very heavily: "Yes now."

I returned to my office and turned to *Daphne* in the encyclopaedia. It read: *DAPHNE* (Gr. for a laurel tree), in Greek mythology, the daughter of the Arcadian river-god Ladon or the Thessalian Peneus, or the Laconian Amyclas. She was beloved by Apollo, and when pursued by him was changed by her mother, Gaea, into a laurel tree sacred to the god (Ovid *Metamorphoses* i 452-567).

I returned again to the séance room and Mrs. Ebling could see that I was pleased. However, I did not tell her then, in fact I did not tell her until six months later, the symbol I had chosen. I asked her what she thought Daphne was and she replied that she thought it was something in Greek mythology but had no idea what legend it concerned. It seemed to be associated with a city in her mind, she said. I asked her if she had read Bulfinche's *Mythology* and she said that she had read it as a child. Therefore, if

she had known what my symbol was, it might have been possible for her subconscious mind to dig up the allusion appropriate to the style accredited to our illustrious communicator. But she quite definitely did not know.

When I sat down once more at the table Mrs. Ebling's hand wrote: "Now do you believe that you are in touch with Myers?"

I expressed my amazement and delight.

"Satisfied?"

I replied that I was and asked if "he" was.

"Thrilled" came the reply.

We then closed the sitting and after a hasty lunch proceeded to the apartment of Miss Barit. I introduced Mrs. Ebling and explained that she was a young friend of mine who thought she had some psychic ability and we had come to her for advice about development.

The reading which followed was entirely about Mrs. Ebling's personal affairs and was above the average in accuracy. The following extract has a bearing on the case however:

"When you both came into the room there were present many of your friends and relatives. In a few minutes they were gone and there remained only a number of teaching forces which are manifesting themselves. They say that they come to you in writing. I see your hand holding a pencil and moving very rapidly. I see shafts of light, a star in a circle and other symbols. They say you are never to tell anyone of the symbols they give you."

These symbols had been mentioned in the morning sitting before I had chosen my secret symbol but as they are common ones their presence in the vision of the clairvoyant is not very evidential. The signals given us in Mrs. Ebling's automatic writing were actually: Letter, star and spiral. Miss Barit then asked me: "Are you connected with the Psychic Research Society?"

I admitted that I was. I had not been doing much field work or work with mediums before this and it is quite

possible that Miss Barit did not know of my connection. Miss Barit added: "I knew you were. I got it when you were here before and it was confirmed when I learned (through clairvoyance) that you worked with Dr. Hyslop and Theron Pierce."

After much more of a purely personal nature Miss Barit continued: "Two teaching forces have made themselves known. They are members of a spirit group which has been in touch with groups of persons on both sides of the Atlantic. They are part of the Emperor Group who have as their object the healing and uplifting of mankind. Lately they seem to be choosing younger people with whom to communicate and train." Professor William James and Fred-eric Myers were mentioned as being present.

This clairvoyant reading must be considered as it in a sense confirms Mrs. Ebling's communicators. However, it has been my experience that clairvoyants seem to get a great deal out of the subconscious of the sitter and as every-thing she told us was known to both of us, it is not first grade evidence for spirit identity. It is evidence for super-normal cognition however, for it was impossible for Miss Barit to know from the enormous number of possible communicators with which ones Mrs. Ebling thought she was in touch.

As we were taking our leave Miss Barit said that there was a special message for me. It had something to do with three. She repeated *three three three*. She took it for granted that it was the number three. Perhaps three mes-sages. Whether it was an attempt to get the word *Tree* over, I do not know. However, if so, it failed.

#### *Conclusion*

The Daphne Incident is interesting for the following reasons. It is a splendid example of the "Myers" style of classical allusion and is therefore appropriate to the pur-ported communicator. Unlike the Lethe Case the key word was not spoken in the presence of the medium, but was writ-

ten on a piece of paper, concentrated upon, and filed in a room a good distance away from the psychic. The whole incident, from the time the symbol was spontaneously chosen to the time the message concerning it was received, took no more than five minutes. The legend, although known to me, was not contained in my recent or vivid memory, a fact which is proved because I had to verify my sudden impression that *Daphne* concerned *Tree*, by looking up the word in the encyclopaedia. I was certainly not consciously expecting a literary allusion test because I had temporarily forgotten the similar tests made by the S. P. R.

That the word received in reply to my telepathic broadcast of my symbol was obtained by supernormal cognition by the psychic is beyond question. The possibility of a coincidence which involves so complicated a connection as that of a simple symbol and its appropriate Greek mythological allusion, is very small indeed. There is, however, an alternative to the hypothesis of transmission by a discarnate mind. It is that of pure telepathy plus subconscious ingenuity. In order to explain this occurrence by such means, my subconscious must have had to translate *Tree* into *Daphne*, drawing on my subconscious memory for the appropriate allusion and then transmitting it to the subconscious of the psychic. Or else, which is even less likely, the medium's subconscious might have received the symbol telepathically from me, drawn on knowledge possibly but not certainly gained in early childhood and no longer contained in the conscious memory, and translated the result into the appropriate allusion.

Personally, in spite of a tremendous respect for the superior intelligence of the subconscious, I find this hypothesis very far fetched. The logical explanation of the *Daphne* Incident appears to be the transmission of the idea by a third mind; a mind, which if not Myer's own, was familiar with his accredited style.

## A Letter from England

BY DR. NANDOR FODOR

(Research Officer, International Institute for Psychical Research)

August, 1937.

### FAKING SPIRIT PHOTOS

An interesting article is published under this title in the August issue of *Armchair Science*. It mainly deals with Mr. P. MacCarthy's famous spirit extras which, while Secretary of the Sheffield Society for Psychical Research, he produced handcuffed under his committee's own conditions. His *pièce de résistance*, as will be remembered, was as follows: From a Bible handed to him and opened by him apparently at random he chose and reproduced a passage translated into Chinese on the photographic plate in the committee's hands. Mr. MacCarthy himself told the story at a later date of how the seemingly impossible feat was done. In engineering it, he showed himself a keen student of human nature as well as a man of science. For details, the reader must consult *Psychic Science* for October, 1935. What I am concerned with now is that in this interview, in *Armchair Science*, Mr. MacCarthy reveals, for the first time, the technical secret by a diagram and description of the apparatus used. I quote:

"The 'Psychic Imprinter', as Mr. MacCarthy names his device, is constructed from a small piece of metal tube about two inches long and less than half an inch in diameter. Inside this tube there are three tight fitting sections. One contains filter and lens, another in the centre the film slide and pea-bulb, and a third the battery. The battery on the right lights an overloaded pea-bulb through a spring-contact at the end of the tube. The two-celled battery is of carbon and zinc in dilute sulphuric acid containing some potassium bichromate to act as a depolarizer. As the E.M.F. of each cell is just below two volts there are nearly four volts for the pea-bulb which lights very brightly and is practically a point-light.

"The film carrying the micro-photographs slides in front of the bulb and is kept steady by elastic and held in place by a small hook and stops at the other end. Through the miniature positive shines the bright light which is focused by a short focus lens on to the plate to be imprinted, but in front of the lens a filter is fixed, which stops the visible light and only lets through the violet and ultra-violet rays.

"The whole ingenious device was painted flesh colour and held in place by two metal rings, also painted underneath the index finger,

so that it was only necessary to point the finger over the exposed plate for a second to imprint an 'extra'. Although the battery held sufficient electricity to light the lamp for several minutes actually only two and a half seconds of light were required for the five imprints."

Needless to say that Mr. MacCarthy, when he was searched by the committee prior to being handcuffed, did not have the apparatus on himself. But he recovered it after the search from a place where reasonably he could not be denied admission. His only condition was that he should be present in the dark room when the pictures were being developed. He only had to point at the plate. The violet light emitted from his apparatus could not be seen in dim red light. As he promised his extras in the order as they followed on the moving film in his apparatus, he succeeded in completely dumbfounding his committee. The choice of extras which the sitters apparently exercised was always "forced" and in the matter of forcing it Mr. MacCarthy proved himself a brilliant psychologist.

#### PROFESSOR BROAD'S VIEWS

*The Hindu*, published in Madras, began on June 20th the publication of a series of articles by Professor C. D. Broad on "The Supernormal Phenomena. What Research Has Revealed." This series from the pen of the Professor of Moral Philosophy at Cambridge and President of the Society for Psychical Research is bound to arouse considerable attention, though Professor Broad explicitly states that "the reader must not assume that any opinions which I express are those of the Society". As he adds that "The Society for Psychical Research as such has no opinion except that there is a mass of ostensibly supernormal phenomena which ought to be investigated by scientific methods" the qualification does not detract from the value of his pronouncement but rather enhances it.

Speaking of Poltergeists, Professor Broad's conclusion is:

"It seems doubtful whether there is anything supernormal in any of these cases; but there is something abnormal, which demands the attention of the psycho-analyst rather than the psychical researcher."

This view is too severe. The facts do not support it. But as there are almost no modern Poltergeist cases in which a proper scientific investigation would be possible, it will be very difficult to prove Professor Broad in the wrong.

Regarding physical phenomena produced by a medium in the séance room "the experience of the Society has been that as the conditions are tightened up, the phenomena fade away." This is the conclusion for which the S.P.R. has been most criticized in the past. Infra-red photography has largely done away with the need of tightening up conditions. The producers of phenomena have a chance

to prove their claims anywhere by inexpensive, simple and shock-proof photographic means. If such photographs are not forthcoming, the Society for Psychical Research can no more be made the butt of criticism for their past conditions.

The most important part of Professor Broad's article is this statement:

"There is no doubt whatever that good trance-mediums display knowledge of incidents in the lives of dead and living persons which cannot have been acquired normally and is too detailed to be explained by chance coincidence. If telepathy be accepted, much of this knowledge might be derived telepathically from the sitter. But some of it would require telepathy from persons who are not and never have been present at sittings with the medium. In fact, to account for the knowledge displayed in trance mediumship, telepathy is the minimum that is required, and it has to be stretched to a bursting point.

"The situation, in my opinion, may be summed up as follows: If we look only at the best features of the best cases of trance-communication, it is difficult to resist the conviction that the spirit of a dead man has survived and is communicating. If, on the other hand, we consider the mass of irrelevance, error, ignorance and twaddle in which these gems are embedded, it is equally difficult to believe anything of the kind. Plainly, this is exactly the kind of situation which challenges the experimentalist to further detailed investigation and demands new theoretical concepts from the philosopher."

One may say that there is nothing new in Prof. Broad's findings. I do not quote them for their news value. I quote them as an important corroboration of the main conclusion of other scientists who devoted themselves to a study of mediumship in the past. As long as "it is difficult to resist the conviction that the spirit of a dead man has survived and is communicating" Psychical Research has an excellent case which justifies all labor and sacrifice, and is a perpetual challenge to orthodox science.

#### *SORCERY ON THE INCREASE*

I have before me a strange newspaper cutting from the *South African Outlook*, published in Lovedale. I read in it that the Missionary Conference of the Diocese of St. John's in the Transkei at its meeting in 1935 asked the Bishop to appoint a committee to inquire into the question of witchcraft. The committee's report was recently published. It is based on a questionnaire which was circulated both within the diocese and beyond. The following questions were asked: "Is the belief in sorcery on the increase?" "Are the witch-doctors (amagqira) on the increase?" "Is there an increase

in the number of those being trained as witch-doctors?" The answers of Europeans were negative to all the three questions, but the African correspondents were almost unanimous in affirming the contrary opinion. The committee finds the state of things serious. It is thankful "that so many Africans, both clergy and lay persons, have been bold enough to speak out frankly and openly of the prevalence of beliefs in sorcery amongst our Christian people. Some do not hesitate to say that 100% of the Christians believe in sorcery and fear it. Others speak of 90%. It is clear that the great majority of our people are in greater or less degree in bondage to these beliefs. What is even more serious is that many Christians are said to have secret recourse to witch-doctors. We are also told that there is considerable traffic amongst Christians in charms (*amakubalo*) . . . It is said that there are lapsed Christians who are practising as witch-doctors and that they use prayers and other religious exercises in conjunction with the old customary methods. Most of our informants tell us that the African clergy and preachers are silent about these matters either because they fear to provoke the hostility of sorcerers or because they themselves retain these beliefs."

The report discusses the reason why the European correspondents' views diverge from the Africans. The conclusion seems to be that the European correspondents were thinking chiefly of the higher placed witch-doctors of the older days who occupied a position of great authority in the tribal life, while the African correspondents accepted as sorcerers all those who claimed to be witch-doctors.

#### PROBLEM OF FIRE RESISTANCE

Recently, in a lecture before the International Institute for Psychical Research, I discussed the problem of fire resistance as known from mediumistic records. It was inevitable that I should deal with the fire-walk also. I pointed out that there is always *walking* or *dancing* over embers or red hot stones, never *standing* on them, and drew the obvious conclusion that the fire-walkers are aware that the immunity is of short duration only. Then I suggested that an increased activity of the sweat-glands in the feet of the fire-walker might be the means whereby such immunity is bestowed. That increase would be due to subconscious activity. Faith and prayers might set the mechanism in motion.

I am glad to say that the doctors who were present found the suggestion a sensible one. The fact that the temperature of the soles of the feet of Mr. Harry Price's fire walkers was found less after the fire walk than before, does not militate against it but rather supports it. The sweat would evaporate under the effect of the heat. It is the cushion of vapor between the feet and the embers which actually conveys immunity. Evaporation itself has a cooling

effect. But for it the temperature of the skin in contact with the fire should be found considerably raised even if no burn took place.

### *HARRY PRICE'S HAUNTED HOUSE*

Mr. Harry Price has again discovered Britain's "most haunted house". But this time, it seems, as if the adjective would be more appropriate than before. The house is an old country mansion some miles west of London. It has 23 rooms and it was built in 1860. This is what in an interview to the *Daily Sketch* (August 10, 1937) Mr. Price said:

"The house is empty, but we have found that objects are continually being moved in practically every room. One large cardboard box was thrown seven feet into the middle of the floor, while loud rappings have been heard in the small hours of the morning. Messages have appeared on the walls. One message to a woman, who is still living, read: 'Help! Look in the well in the cellar!'

"It was news to us that there was a well in the cellar, and while trying to find it one of my observers, a colonel, almost fell through the floorboards which covered the opening.

"We have sealed rooms and put chalk marks round the articles there, but a few hours later certain of them were found out of position. Previous owners have sworn that they have seen a nun dressed in black walking in the garden, and a coach with horses pass over the lawn. This has been corroborated by servants who would only stay in the house a few weeks. The wife of one owner saw a man in a dressing gown walk through her bedroom. I learned afterwards that a man had died in that room and he had a dressing gown as described by the woman. It was impossible for her to have known the circumstances of the man's death.

"One of my observers who took his dog with him said that the animal howled the whole time it was in the place.

"So far we have not found anything to explain these unusual happenings, but we are carrying on in the hope of something definite happening."

More power to Harry Price's elbow! It would be a great thing for psychical research if haunted house phenomena would at last be in evidence in conditions of systematic observation. No doubt, Harry Price will not waste his opportunities. We may look forward to a very interesting report!

### *THE GHOST IN THE WARDROBE*

In the personal column of the *Morning Post*, Aug. 19th, the following advertisement appeared:

"For Sale. Haunted wardrobe. Advertiser will be glad to deliver same to anybody interested, complete with ghost, which

would also no doubt feel more at home if welcomed. Write, Mrs. Barclay, Carterton Manor, Oxon."

To a reporter of the *Morning Post* Mrs. Barclay stated that the drawers of the wardrobe keep on opening and shutting and that the figure of an elderly man walks downstairs and out of the front doors in her house every evening. She saw him by electric light and tried to touch him. He vanished in her fingers. The old gentleman makes too much clattering and shuffling noise, friends decline week-end invitations, servants give notice.

I sent a telegram to Mrs. Barclay, offering to buy the wardrobe on approval. But she received better offers, with cash down and the wardrobe passed into the possession of an unknown purchaser who took it for granted that the ghost would keep faith with him.

## Book Review

A POPULAR HISTORY OF WITCHCRAFT by MONTAGUE SUMMERS. E. P. Dutton \$2.75

This book as its name implies is meant to meet a popular demand. It undoubtedly will have a morbid fascination for those who enjoy horror stories and the abominal practices of the criminally insane and the filthy minded. Mr. Summers passes over the worst of the filth of witch practices with a certain amount of tact and recrimination against the practitioners. However, the topic as approached from Mr. Summers' angle, a sincere belief in the most loathsome and evil of creatures and their supernormal abilities, can only be described in Mr. Summers' most active adjective "horrid".

The cases are taken from old court records in England, the Continent and New England for the most part, and as they are undoubtedly authentic records, however misguided the recorders may have been, the book has historical value. However, for those who are anxious to study witchcraft, Mr. Summers' earlier books, *The History of Witchcraft* and *The Geography of Witchcraft*, published in 1926 and 1927 respectively, are of infinitely more value as they contain copious and scholarly notes, whereas this new book is designed to entertain the public of the penny thriller rather than instruct the serious student. Scientifically the book is of no value for the same reason, and because the author's attitude is biased. It is aptly expressed in a passage from his earlier book, *The History of Witchcraft*. In speaking of the case of Guynneth Morley, a servant girl, who was cured of what appeared to be an evil possession by the medium, Mrs. Barkel, under the able guidance of Mr. and Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, the author says:

"The clairvoyance is merely playing with fire—I might say with hell fire—by those who cannot understand what they are about, what forces they are thus blindly evoking. 'Professor J' and the 'band of Indians' (Spirit guides who assisted Mrs. Barkel in the cure) indeed all these 'workers on the other side' are nothing else than evil, or at the least gravely suspect intelligences masquerading as spirits of light and goodness. If, indeed, the girl is relieved from obsession one cannot but suppose some ulterior motive lurks in the background."

*A Popular History of Witchcraft* is written in the same vein. Mr. Summers does not doubt for an instant the existence or influence of such evil ones, but on the contrary sees them as the cause of everything which goes wrong in the world. Human weakness and insanity are not considered. And not only do these demons and

witches intend evil but their ability to create it, for the most part supernaturally in gigantic proportions, is an *idée fixe* with the author. He suggests that the famous incubi of the witch and the warlock are ectoplasmic materializations of the witch medium's familiar. Such a point of view is absurd. It is not sensible and contrary to our experience to believe all men are evil. Therefore, it is equally foolish to suggest that hypothetical spirits are entirely evil. Whether evil spirits exist or not is a question. If spirits exist at all it is probable some of them are bad. However, the reviewer would like to take the opportunity of saying in answer to the numerous queries of frightened people, on this subject, that if no thought is devoted to such spirits they are extremely unlikely to manifest themselves. It is highly possible that they are really fears in the subconscious which appear to personify themselves in the mind of the victim of such persecutions. Whatever the reader's theory concerning them, to dismiss them is the greatest safeguard from possible annoyance.

We feel mention of this book is necessary because Mr. Summers' previous scholarly work in collecting information on witchcraft has placed him in a position of authority, and because the subject of witchcraft is a certain small part of the psychic researcher's task. We recommend it only, however, for those who have already made a study of witches and wish to keep their collection of cases up to date.

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## The Case of Elizabeth B.

BY E. B. GIBBES

### Part I

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Two articles have been published recently in the JOURNAL by Miss Gibbes on the automatic scripts received through the mediumship of Geraldine Cummins (Nov. 1936 and March 1937). Miss Cummins receives these communications while in light trance and has done some excellent evidential work. The following record of communications purporting to come from a young and unsophisticated personality is a curious document and important by contrast with the other Cummins scripts which include the erudite religious teachings of the "Messenger of Cleophas", the philosophical scripts of "Myers" and the totally different point of view expressed in the writings of the earliest "Control", the Ancient Greek, "Astor". "Elizabeth's" messages contain some evidential matter but are chiefly interesting because of their naive mode of expression and arresting ideas, and also because they complete the picture of Miss Cummins's automatic communications.

Unlike the Boyce Case, described in a previous article in the JOURNAL, the Case of Elizabeth B. cannot claim to exclude telepathy from every source. The child communicator was known to me though I had not seen her since she was about five years of age. Her mother and I have known each other for over thirty years. However, the theory that telepathy or a dramatization of the subconscious mind could account for the phenomena about to be recounted, would seem to be a remote speculation.

It is a record of a child who died at the age of fifteen

and of whose survival the mother is now convinced. Both mother and daughter were entirely unknown to Miss Cummins at the time when "Elizabeth" first communicated. The mother had one sitting later, but this took place after I had sent her many of the "child's" writings.

It may be suggested that the mere idea of a young communicator might prompt the subconscious mind of the automatist to adopt childish phraseology and to change the handwriting to the round, childlike style which subsequently developed. However, other alleged entities who were communicating at that time, and who stated that they had died at various ages, produced different chirography. Moreover, each communicator when reappearing—sometimes after a lapse of many weeks or even years—produced his or her own particular caligraphy. In the case of Elizabeth B., her mother claimed to recognize the signature, which was entirely unknown to Miss Cummins and myself.

During May 1924, I spent a week-end with Mrs. B., an old friend whom I had not seen for some years. She was interested in my accounts of the experiments in automatism which Miss Cummins and I were then conducting. She grieved very much over the loss of her daughter which had occurred six or seven years previously, and worried a great deal as to whether or not survival was a proved fact. I offered through Miss Cummins, to endeavor to get into touch with Elizabeth. I had nothing belonging to the child of which she had been fond that, through the psychometric powers of Miss Cummins, might have been likely to draw her to me, nor was there any particular affection between us which might have drawn us together, should she have survived death. The only thing to be done was to ask "Astor"—one of Miss Cummins's "Controls"—to try to find someone answering to her name. This I did. The automatist knew nothing of the child or of my intention. The following was the result:

OUIJA BOARD COMMUNICATION MAY 31st, 1924

E.B.G. "Astor, would you see if you can find someone

answering to the name of Elizabeth B. . . .? She will not have spoken here before and it may be difficult to find her."

Miss Cummins's hand wrote:

"Wait, I will look."

After a pause the hand spelt out slowly:

"I wonder what this is?"

I explained that I was trying to find someone named Elizabeth B. . . ., whose mother was anxious to trace her. The writing then continued more quickly:

"I am greatly surprised and puzzled. Of course I would be so grateful if you would tell my mother that I have now reached a state in which I can be at peace. I mean that at first, after I died, I was so upset and distressed at the thought that everything I cared for was going from me, I felt as if I were in a feverish dream. They told me later that it was simply the parting from the body. I learnt that I should have a new life and that I was only at the beginning of things. The promise was made me that when my mother died I should see her and meet her."

There was more of this form of conversation which was not in any manner evidential. "Elizabeth" asked if she were dreaming and said how much she wanted to speak to earth; that she was quite undeveloped when she died. At the end of the sitting I asked "Astor" if he could describe this entity who had just purported to speak. He replied:

"I got the impression of a person not very cultivated in mind, of a gentle disposition, and one who had drifted away from the world. She passed over when she was young."

All that was written at this sitting, I conjectured, might have been impressions obtained from my mind. The communication appeared to be more or less a description of what I imagined Elizabeth to be like, together with descriptions of certain conditions concerning the after-death state in the manner of the spiritistic hypothesis. Two weeks later I made another attempt through the ouija board to

get into touch with Elizabeth. The following is an abbreviated account of the writing:

(June 11th, 1924.)

"... Yes, Elizabeth. I am trying to see. I am clearer now. Please tell me is my mother there?"

"No, she is not here. But I will read you a message which she has sent you," I replied.

I then read extracts from Mrs. B.'s answer to my notes of the first sitting. As I expected she was somewhat disappointed with the results but took the affair on trust sending messages to Elizabeth should she write again. As I read, the hand on the board gave an excited jerk, then rapidly wrote how delighted she was to get the message, and continued giving details of her life since she left the earth. She reiterated how happy she was at being able to speak and sent her love to her mother. The communication was couched in rather extravagant language. Granting survival, it explained to a certain extent the possible conditions and surroundings in which the child found herself. But there was really nothing in it which could not have been accounted for by thought-transference and a dramatization of Miss Cummins's subconscious mind. Moreover, the style of composition seemed largely to resemble that of the automatist's own, or that of her control, "Astor".

Miss Cummins and I separated for the summer and the memory of Elizabeth B. slipped from our minds. I had considered the experiment a failure. Mrs. B. was obviously disappointed in the notes I sent her. Miss Cummins and I did not refer to the matter when we met again in the autumn and I had not heard from Mrs. B. since the previous June when she acknowledged my second letter. I was, therefore, very surprised when Astor announced the presence of "a young woman" at one of our sittings for automatic writing.

(October 31st, 1924.)

"... Elizabeth. I have waited so long. How is Mummy?"

I wondered if it was all right because I have had such a feeling about her lately. If you see her will you talk to her about me and tell her that I am sure now that she and I will meet. I wasn't quite before but now I know the secret of people coming together . . . It is quite simple. I keep my wish for her alive in my mind. I never forget I want her. It is just keeping up wanting that makes it possible for us to meet. The wish, if it is strong enough goes out like a thread. It will draw her to me when her time on earth is over. But she must want me too, quite badly. So will you tell her **NOT TO FORGET.**" (written large) "I might slip out of her mind. There are other people and other things and once the wish is gone it is hard to get it back."

"I thought people always met." I remarked.

"No, not always. A great many don't. Besides, they may go to different worlds if they are differently developed, so I have been told. One may go on to a star and develop a different shape or body. One may have the power to shape one's own shape when one goes to a sphere. I only know a little but I am just telling you what others have told me here. There are so many other different places and conditions you would be bewildered. But we always have the power of wishing—that is the true power of the fairy godmother in the old fairy stories. I have learnt that at any rate, so it all depends on what we wish for. I wondered if Mummy was worrying. Some thoughts can reach us from the living if we care enough. She is disappointed and a little sad and discouraged I think. Perhaps I am quite wrong, but as I got that feeling I wanted her to be cheered up. Just give her my love and tell her I am happy and that she is certain to be when she comes here."

"I will write to her," I said.

"It relieves my mind to know that you will write to her. Do please. Then I shall go. I only wanted this to be done. Thank you awfully. Goodbye."

"Try to sign your name," I said.

"Elizabeth B. . . ."

The writing was a big untidy scrawl, the signature occupying more than half the foolscap paper. I knew nothing of Mrs. B.'s circumstances having had no communication with her since the previous June. I sent her a postcard merely asking how she was as I had not heard for so long. She replied by return saying that she had not written *as she had been very worried and troubled both financially and otherwise*. On receipt of this letter I forwarded the above script, stating that it appeared to give information unknown to both the writer and myself. I added that of course the signature meant nothing as I had had to give her name when asking her to come and speak,—therefore, the name would be known to Miss Cummins's subconscious mind. I received a reply immediately expressing astonishment at the correct description of the conditions which surrounded Mrs. B. at the time. She added that though I had said that the signature would mean nothing, to her it meant a great deal, for it strongly resembled the child's signature especially the dash and scrawl under the last letters. Under normal conditions the automatist could not remember Elizabeth's surname.

Fortunately, Miss Cummins and I were sitting fairly frequently at this time letting anyone write who desired to do so. Elizabeth purported to speak several times after this.

(November 30th, 1924.)

". . . Elizabeth. May I talk?"

"Yes, please do. You were quite right about your Mummy being worried," I remarked.

"Yes, I felt it very strongly for some time but I couldn't get at her till this lady came." (Meaning G. C.) "I feel happier about her now. The thoughts that come have a different color. They were so dark before. I got quite troubled. Mummy and I were very close to each other you know, that's why I felt it quite a lot. You might tell her the next time you see her that I am quite happy about

her now. But she mustn't fret like that again. There isn't anything worth worrying about as much as that. You see, even if things are horrid for you when you are alive, it's all made up afterwards. *I wanted to tell you that the first time I spoke my guide really did most of the talking for me. But now I am getting so good at it I can really manage alone.* Tell her it has helped me to speak. You know I missed her so much at first, but please tell her I don't now, because we will meet soon. Elizabeth B. . . ." (The italics are mine.)

The script was written in a round, neat, childish hand, differing from the scrawl of the previous occasion. This style was reproduced whenever Elizabeth subsequently purported to speak. Afterwards, it occurred to me that the writing of the previous script gave the impression of someone being *taught* to write. The information that her guide had done most of the talking for her had occurred to neither of us, and, as has been shown, was given quite spontaneously.

(December 31st, 1924.)

". . . Elizabeth. May I send a message to Mummy? I know she is starting on a New Year. I saw her at Christmas."

"How did you do this? Can you explain?" I asked.

"Yes, I saw her mind. I saw the part that you can't see. It was lovely getting it that way. I know she would like something from me so do please tell her that the New Year will be a better one for her than the old year and something quite lucky will happen that will please her very much. I was with her mind or soul, I think you would call it, at Christmas and I could see what was going to happen soon in a faint way. It is known beforehand by a part of you always, but that part isn't able to speak. It usually—give Mummy best love and lots of kisses from me."

It seemed that Elizabeth was more anxious to send messages to her mother than to answer my questions so she

broke off her sentence. I asked how her mother was getting on.

"I think she is still a bit worried but I feel it is not as bad as it was. I do think things will improve in the New Year."

"Did you sense or feel anything in particular that she was doing?" I asked.

"She was thinking of me I know, because I felt her thoughts. She did go over in her mind, Christmas long ago. What fun we had. What lovely presents were given me. I felt I was just looking in at a window on the old Christmas when I was near Mummy—that was what told me it was Christmas. . . . Goodbye Elizabeth B. . . ."

This communication was quite unexpected. The writing changed to the slow, childish hand as in the last instance when this entity purported to write. Neither Miss Cummins nor I had been speaking or thinking of Elizabeth nor were we aware of the movements of her mother. The following is an extract from the letter I received from Mrs. B. in reply to the above script which I sent her.

"It is simply wonderful and word for word true. I was thinking about her more than I have for years as we were spending Christmas in the very house with the same person . . . same servants, same everything. And the remembrance was so strong. . . . I have always shut it away each year but this year I felt I could let it come and it brought such peace. What she says about the New Year is so odd, as I said to J. on New Year's Eve, 'I don't dread this year as I have dreaded others. I am going to drift and things will shape themselves somehow.' I am so awfully happy with this message. . . ."

Now what is the explanation of the above episodes? Miss Cummins apparently gave information which was subsequently verified concerning a person unknown to her and of whose whereabouts we were both ignorant. Either it all happened as Elizabeth has described in which case it would seem that she has proved her survival of bodily death, or Miss Cummins unconsciously picked up these

details from the mother and recorded them some days later. However, telepathic impressions, I understand, are usually conveyed instantaneously. How, then, can telepathy supply the answer to the mystery? Does the mind of an entranced individual retain its information and impart it only at the psychological moment? And how does the mind know when that moment arrives?

(February 1st, 1925.)

“... May I talk? I wanted to send a message to Mummy . . . I wanted her to know that I am with her in a way, but one that you or she can't understand. It isn't like being together as one used to be. It is more by feeling than by seeing. I expect you will see Mummy later on but there is something in the way of her coming to where you are now. I just got that feeling. I think she will come though after a time. I know she will because that part of her which you or no other living person has met, has told me she will. It is what is outside you. We see it in a cloud. It's being explained to me. You don't see the roots of a tree, they are under ground. There is a part of you that can't be seen or known that feeds the other part. It is more in our world than in yours. It can think. It can know. But the body is so deaf it can only hear a little of what that part says. I mean the brain hears it, not the ears . . . Of course I am a bit different but not in the things that matter. Mummy will know me when she comes here.”

I told Elizabeth of the joy her last communication had given her mother. “Darling Mummy” she wrote. The pencil was then moved back a little and the letter O was placed over the Y, making the word into Mummo. She continued:

“I like speaking awfully but there are other people here sometimes so I don't try to speak then. I am able to when the way is clear as it is tonight. *I have been helped by someone here to speak. The first time he called me he did the speaking for me because I didn't know how to write. So I expect you were a bit puzzled by what was said. He*

*tried to say for me what I wanted to say, but of course he talked in his own way. Now I know what to do."* (My italics.)

"Do you mean Astor, the guide?" I asked.

"Yes. He called me. I have wanted to tell you a funny thing I met, but you won't believe me . . . A horse! One I was fond of when I was alive. Of course there is no body as you know it. But at one time I was lonely and I saw it. It didn't stay with me. It had some other kind of life. . . . It seemed like a shape that one can see into. I mean into the part that thinks. You know horses can, in a way, but I think they go back to earth. They don't stay here . . . He was brown, not chestnut, but not dark brown. He was a dear and had a white spot and his mane used to be cut."

The last words were written faintly. Miss Cummins was tired so I suggested that this communicator should come again. She wrote that "it was getting dim," and, signing herself "Elizabeth", said goodbye.

Here then, given quite spontaneously and without any conjecture or speculation on the part of either of us, was the explanation of the two unsatisfactory communications through the ouija board which were given eight months previously. Readers will perceive that the child merely made this interesting statement regarding the help she had from Astor, in the course of conversation. She wrote as though she had just thought of it. In fact, immediately after disclosing this information, she prattled on just as any child might, about a horse. If Astor were interpreting for her no wonder her personality went astray!

Investigators who, through some mediums, may make unsatisfactory contact with unseen friends, may realize from this that there are many unlooked for solutions to account for a poor sitting. It should also be noted that evidential matter frequently comes through when not directly asked for.

In the foregoing script there are many points of interest which go towards proving Elizabeth's identity. The correc-

tion of the word "Mummy" into "Mummo" elicited the information from Mrs. B. that her daughter was in the habit of addressing her as "Mumbo". I had noted a slight hesitation on the part of the automatist when writing the word "Mummy". The fact that Mrs. B. contemplated a visit to London was known to me and also that the visit had been postponed. The automatist was entirely unaware of this. That Elizabeth had been in any way connected with horses was also unknown to her. Though the description given failed to recall any particular horse to Mrs. B.'s mind, the remark that "his mane used to be cut" was apt for all their horses had hogged manes. This seems an unlikely point for a subconscious mind to invent as a chance shot. I see no reason to suppose that, because these details were known to me, I should have been able to influence Miss Cummins into putting them on paper. The Boyce case, recorded in the March issue of the *JOURNAL*, illustrates the failure of the sitter's mind to affect the medium's mind in any way whatsoever. Moreover, in this instance, the Mummy-Mummo incident could not have originated in my mind for I was unaware of its importance.

(February 16th, 1925.)

This was the only occasion on which Mrs. B. was present at a sitting. The meeting had been arranged but postponed as described by Elizabeth. Miss Cummins had no idea as to whom the visitor was. In the short conversation which preceded the opening of the sitting she was entirely misled as to the identity of the sitter. Later she told me that she recognized the gentle, soothing influence of Elizabeth when she took control of the pencil—an influence which did not tire her as did some of the other communicators.

Astor announced that there was a youngish person present who wished to talk. I told him to let her do so. The writing then changed to a round hand which seemed rather unsteady at first.

"It is different this evening—shining and bright. I feel so excited too. What is it? I feel so much the thoughts

here. It is making me remember such nice times, but the thoughts make a cloud about you, perhaps I shall see in a minute." Mrs. B. who had been following the writing now asked who was there. "I am Elizabeth," came the announcement, and the writing fairly danced across the paper. "My Mummy, darling Mummy. This is lovely. The cloud is going now. I was longing to talk to you. I don't know how to begin . . . How is Daddy? I want to hear everything . . . I have lots to tell you but first Daddy please."

After some details had been supplied concerning her father, Elizabeth continued:

"Oh Mummo, I just remember you were the kindest, dearest Mummy anyone ever had."

"I know I was a bit slow at lessons and things but I was awfully happy and now I think how lucky I was. You see I have grown a bit and I have met other children who had a bad time and could only think of that—it kept them back here. I wasn't so lonely as you think after I died because helpers came to me and explained things and they were awfully nice and good and they brought me to other children in a place you would think very funny. It was all light and color and there they showed us what we were exactly. I saw someone who told me she was my great granny. I never knew her but she came to me first. She wasn't a bit old but she said I was like her in my mind and so she had been able to come. I want you awfully Mummy, sometimes. There's such lots of things here you would love . . . I am looking forward to teaching you things—my turn you see, to be teacher. I shall be awfully cross if you don't give me all your attention . . . I am not cut away now like I was. I asked God especially hard to let me find you again . . . They say you and I will start together. You see I was a little backward when I came here and I had a long rest but you won't need it like me. You will have learnt the things on earth I have learnt here—that's what they say . . . I'm just waiting in another country for you. You have a light on your forehead like this lady . . . Well

Mummy, I send you heaps of love and kisses. Elizabeth B. . . . Goodbye."

The signature had the same flourish which the mother told me was characteristic of the child. So, also, was the frequent use of the word "lovely". After "goodbye" had been written, there were frantic signs in the shape of crosses. Presumably, these were meant to be kisses. Though Miss Cummins and I had been experimenting in automatism over a long period, and had received communications from what purported to be various entities, no one, so far, had ever left us any kisses! However, Mrs. B. stated that the child had always made these signs at the termination of her letters to her when on earth. Subsequently Mrs. B. wrote that she had never felt anything so real as the child's presence at that time and that she could never think of her as lost again.

(March 7th, 1925.)

". . . I've been wanting to thank you for letting Mummo speak to me. I didn't say half of what I wanted to say . . . Isn't God awfully good to help us like that? . . . I missed her frightfully at the beginning. Now I know why it has all been. If I had lived, I think something bad would have happened, so they took me away to save me from being unhappy. They thought I could learn better here without being hurt. If I had lived a long time on earth, I should have met with some unhappiness that couldn't have been kept from me. That was in front of me they tell me, so I escaped it by coming here when I was only a girl. If Mummy thinks of that she will see why I was taken away from her . . . There is a place here for children and anyone who dies young. Now I am learning how to make myself change and grow and how to make, with the others, the place we live in. We don't have to learn out of books here, we learn out of ourselves. I just put on the dress I wore when I was alive when I come to talk to you. I mean, not a dress you would wear, but just the dress that was all I was when Mummy knew me. I expect I have explained

badly, but we have to be ourselves when we talk to you. I was rather stupid when I was alive. I couldn't learn things quickly but I've been quite bright since I came here. You see, I've found the rest of myself here—everyone does. There's only a small bit of you alive now, there's a lot of you over here. Often the nice part is over here, that is why you can never know a person who is alive. They sometimes seem to change so awfully. It's simply because another bit of them has come to live in the body, and the first bit has left to join the bigger part over here. It's like a first cousin or an uncle coming to be you instead of yourself. I don't mean a first cousin or an uncle ever does, I simply mean that there is a great deal more of you than you think, and it's divided and joined at the roots only. So sometimes several people come and go in one body in a life, but they are all like each other as cousins are alike, so you don't notice it as much as you might. You just fancy this person has changed a lot, that's all. I wanted to tell you this to show you I do know something and I have learnt things that even an old person like you doesn't know."

I agreed that Elizabeth now knew more than I and inquired if, when she spoke to us, she appeared as she was on earth, did she return to a part of her that was grown up? She replied:

"Yes, when I go back I go to a much older part of myself. You know when you're born, there's an old, quite grown up part outside you, that often stays outside, living your life till you die and then joining it. That sounds like fairy stories, p'raps you would say, but it's quite true. Mummy mustn't be frightened and think she will meet an old grown up person, someone as old as an aunt. She will find me and I want her just as I used . . . Some people lose their mothers and fathers. It's just because they don't want them much. It's all if you want or don't want, and what you expect you will get. So you mustn't expect horrid things when you come here. Amn't I awfully wise? I wanted you to see I'm not a dunce now. Will you give Mummy . . ." etc.

The above script terminated with the usual ecstatic messages to her mother and the now customary crosses. It is curious to note the introduction of the words "p'raps" and "amn't". Miss Cummins has a positive dislike, even in a casual letter, for bad English. The use of these expressions must, therefore, have been made against her will and instinct. In fact, the general style of these writings is entirely unlike anything one would imagine would emanate from her. It would, however, be characteristic of a backward child such as Elizabeth was at the time of her death. Moreover, the allusions to "an old person like you" and "someone as old as an aunt", are, I think, more applicable to the mind of a child than to the dramatization of Miss Cummins's subconscious mind—especially when the reference was to myself!

In acknowledging the receipt of the above communication. Mrs. B. remarked that it was curious that Elizabeth should state that she seemed to have been taken in order that she should escape some great misfortune. She herself had often thought of this. It is possible, therefore, that this impression was received telepathically by Miss Cummins. It is equally possible that Elizabeth read her mother's thoughts as on other occasions and expressed them in writing as before.

(March 19th, 1925.)

". . . Elizabeth. It is nice to see you again. I talked such a lot the last time. I meant it for Mummy. I wanted her to see how clever I had grown. Perhaps I know more than she does now. Did you ever play with dolls?"

I laughed and explained that I was rather a tomboy and hated dolls. Elizabeth continued:

"It's like playing with dolls to come back and put on my old self again. That's what I do. It's such fun. I am really just a bit of myself when I talk to you in this way. I feel it is quite a nice silly bit of me. You know there is only a bit of Mummy alive too. There's a lot of her waiting for her to come out of her body."

"Tell us something about the place you were taken to at first." I suggested.

"I will try and tell you. You are a very curious person aren't you? You make me think of a governess asking questions about lessons one hadn't learnt and couldn't understand." (laughter). "The children who die young sleep for a long time. They sometimes, if they are very young, slip back again into bodies and grow up and become men and women. A great many don't. After they have slept they are taken by the people here to what looks like houses and country. They are told these aren't the same as in the world, they aren't really there, but are real all the same. We have thought them so you see them. We see each other as children because we think the figures of children and so you appear to each other to look just like children. Your bodies aren't made of anything the earth people would call solid, they are simply made out of something lighter and finer than air. This something can take the (picture) of anything we like to print on it. We have wished to print the picture around your mind of your bodies, and we have done so because we know how to think. You will, when you have got the wish for it, learn how to do the same. You will learn how to make a picture in your mind of a house, and a house will spring up about you. The fairy stories are the only really true stories. The wand that turns an old woman into a young girl and the magic carpet that carries you where you want to go, are all just wishes in the mind that haven't anybody to stop them from practising their magic. I know you will think I am talking silly rubbish, but it is really and truly what happens. The children are too young, when they come to the other side of death to know how to use their wishing caps, their minds. They just see again pretty country and nice people and houses, that are all picture books—not really in any way the same as what we were used to on earth. But they'd be so lonely, they couldn't bear it, if they didn't find people and things they were used to. Of course, after a while they begin to feel their own minds' strength. They

want to give up playing. Then the first thing they are taught is how to think the place you want to have about you. You'd be awfully amused at the funny things they do start building. At first they come just in little bits. It was lovely when I was able for the first time to think a horse, and then to see it there in front of me. Daddy even couldn't do that. Some children are so silly, they think such stupid pictures. One boy wanted a jungle and a prairie; he was clever and he got them. But he didn't like them a bit when they were there about him. They frightened him so, being all alone and all that. I can tell you he worked hard to get rid of that silly dark jungle and its snakes and he made a cosy den out of his mind as soon as he could. We live, you see, for a time, in a way that is quite like living at home. Only there is really a big difference. It is, that home is made for us and we can't change it. Here home is made for us when we come here first, by older minds, but we are soon taught how to change it, how to make it; not with hands and muscles, but by seeing the picture of what one wants in one's mind and then believing it is really there. It's the believing that's so hard. I had to make believe lots, before anything came at all. The bad people, when they come here, believe in just what is nasty and so they get it about them. But usually, children have an awfully good time because they know what they want to believe in and when they are sure of finding a home, they find it of course. There's one thing we can't make with our minds and that's people. I can't make Mummy or Daddy. They say it's because no one can make what is called spirit. There are people here who are good and kind to us. They make their own shapes with their minds and come in them, so that we shouldn't be frightened. . . ."

"And do these pictures remain?" I inquired. Elizabeth replied:

"They stay if we keep working to make them stay. They are made for us at first by these older people. When we know how to do them we must for a while at least, do this

picture-thinking. I have done more than make my home in this way and pretty country. I and a girl called Ruth have just learnt how to travel on the thing out of which we make our world. It is, in a way, like air. It has, we have found, lots of colors and we float off on these colors, going as quickly as a train, as quickly as wind, it is simply splendid."

Here I said that I thought all she was saying was very interesting and asked if she had any news to tell me of her mother. She replied:

"I feel she is not upset in the way she was. I mean, I don't get that queer knowing that she was fretting, I haven't felt that just lately. I do get a sort of idea that things are difficult and something she hopes for hasn't come. But she is able to stand it better I think, now. I love Mummy best of all . . . These are Mummy's."

The writing ended with a series of vigorous crosses. The following is quoted from a letter received from the mother of Elizabeth B.:

"I think this last script the most wonderful of all. Really, it seems to me to be the most definite and logical explanation of the state we call Heaven. Surely no medium could possibly write all that much less think it. It explains so many things that seem impossible in the next existence. Our 'spiritual body' for instance, as mentioned in the Bible. And Christ's 'many mansions' and Hell being the evil imaginations of the wicked ones. No theory I have ever read seems so simple and probable as the way she expresses it. It seems to me the explanation of the survival of identity without the earthly clay."

*(To be continued in next issue)*

# An Answer to the Arguments of Hume Against Miracles

BY ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE, D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following historic document by the co-origimator with Darwin of the Theory of Evolution was read before the Dialectical Society in 1871. It is reprinted from Mr. Wallace's book, *Miracles and Modern Spiritualism*, published in 1874. In the preface of this book, Wallace defends his position against the arguments of his contemporaries who find spiritualism and natural selection incompatible.

He says: "Having, as above indicated, been led, by a strict induction from facts, to a belief—firstly, In the existence of a number of preterhuman intelligences of various grades and, secondly, That some of these intelligences, although usually invisible and intangible to us, can and do act on matter, and do influence our minds,—I am surely following a strictly logical and scientific course in seeing how far this doctrine will enable us to account for some of those residual phenomena which Natural Selection alone will not explain. In the 10th chapter of my *Contributions to the Theory of Natural Selection* I have pointed out what I consider to be some of those residual phenomena; and I have suggested that they may be due to the action of some of the various intelligences above referred to. This view was, however, put forward with hesitation, and I myself suggested difficulties in the way of its acceptance; but I maintained, and still maintain, that it is one which is logically tenable, and is in no way inconsistent with a thorough acceptance of the grand doctrine of Evolution, through Natural Selection, although implying (as indeed many of the chief supporters of that doctrine admit) that it is not the all-powerful, all-sufficient, and only cause of the development of organic forms.

One of the most remarkable works of the great Scotch philosopher, David Hume, is *An Inquiry concerning Human Understanding*, and the tenth chapter of this work is *On Miracles*, in which occur the arguments which are so often quoted to show that no evidence can prove a miracle. Hume himself had a very high opinion of this part of his work, for he says at the beginning of the chapter, "I flatter myself that I have discovered an argument which, if just, will with the wise and learned be an everlasting check to all kinds of superstitious delusion, and consequently will be useful as long as the world endures; for so long, I presume, will the accounts of miracles and prodigies be found in all history, sacred and profane."

## *Definition of the Term "Miracle"*

After a few general observations on the nature of evidence and the value of human testimony in different cases, he proceeds to define what he means by a miracle. And

here at the very beginning of the subject we find that we have to take objection to Hume's definition of a miracle, which exhibits unfounded assumptions and false premises. He gives two definitions in different parts of his essay. The first is, "A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature." The second is, "A miracle is a transgression of a law of nature by a particular volition of the Deity, or by the interposition of some invisible agent." Now both these definitions are bad or imperfect. The first assumes that we know all the laws of nature; that the particular effect could not be produced by some unknown law of nature overcoming the law we do know; it assumes also, that if an invisible intelligent being held an apple suspended in the air, that act would violate the law of gravity. The second is not precise; it should be "some invisible *intelligent* agent," otherwise the action of galvanism or electricity, when these agents were first discovered, and before they were ascertained to form part of the order of nature, would answer accurately to this definition of a miracle. The words "violation" and "transgression" are both improperly used, and really beg the question by the definition. How does Hume know that any particular miracle is a violation of a law of nature? He assumes this without a shadow of proof, and on these words, as we shall see, rests his whole argument.

Before proceeding further, it is necessary for us to consider what is the true definition of a miracle, or what is commonly meant by that word. A miracle, as distinguished from a new and unheard-of natural phenomenon, supposes an intelligent superhuman agent, either visible or invisible. It is not necessary that what is done should be beyond the power of man to do. The simplest action, if performed independently of human or visible agency, such as a teacup lifted in the air at request as by an invisible hand and without assignable cause, would be universally admitted to be a miracle, as much so as the lifting of a house into the air, the instantaneous healing of a wound, or the instantaneous production of an elaborate drawing. It is true that miracles have been generally

held to be, either directly or indirectly, due to the action of the Deity; and some persons will not, perhaps, admit that any event not so caused deserves the name of miracle. But this is to advance an unprovable hypothesis, not to give a definition. It is not possible to prove that any supposed miraculous event is either the direct act of God or indirectly produced by Him to prove the divine mission of some individual, but it may be possible to prove that it is produced by the action of *some* invisible preterhuman intelligent being. The definition of a miracle I would propose is therefore as follows:—"Any act or event necessarily implying the existence and agency of superhuman intelligences," considering the human soul or spirit, if manifested out of the body, as one of these superhuman intelligences. This definition is more complete than that of Hume, and defines more accurately the essence of that which is commonly termed a miracle.

### *The Evidence of the Reality of Miracles*

We now have to consider Hume's arguments. The first is as follows:—

"A miracle is a *violation of the laws of nature*; and as a firm and *unalterable experience* has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined. Why is it more than probable that all men must die; that lead cannot *of itself remain suspended in the air*; that fire consumes wood, and is extinguished by water; unless it be, that these events are found agreeable to the laws of nature, and there is required a *violation of these laws*, or, in other words, a *miracle*, to prevent them? Nothing is esteemed a miracle if it ever happened in the *common* course of nature. It is no miracle that a man seemingly in good health should die on a sudden; because such a kind of death, though more unusual than any other, has yet been frequently observed to happen. But it is a miracle that a dead man should come to life; because *that has never been observed in any age or country*. There must, therefore, be an uniform experience against every miraculous event, otherwise the event would not merit that appellation. And as an *uniform* experience amounts to a *proof*, there is here a direct and full proof, from the nature of the fact, against the existence of any miracle; nor

can such a proof be destroyed, or the miracle rendered credible, but by an opposite proof which is superior."

This argument is radically fallacious, because if it were sound, no perfectly new fact could ever be proved, since the first and each succeeding witness would be assumed to have universal experience against him. Such a simple fact as the existence of flying fish could never be proved, if Hume's argument is a good one; for the first man who saw and described one would have the universal experience against him that fish do not fly, or make any approach to flying; and his evidence being rejected, the same argument would apply to the second, and to every subsequent witness; and thus no man at the present day who has not seen a flying fish alive, and actually flying, ought to believe that such things exist.

Again, painless operations in a state produced by mere passes of the hand, were, in the first half of the present century, maintained to be contrary to the laws of nature, contrary to all human experience, and therefore incredible. On Hume's principles they were miracles, and no amount of testimony could ever prove them to be real. Yet these are now admitted to be genuine facts by most physiologists, who even attempt, not very successfully, to explain them. But miracles do not, as assumed, stand alone—single facts opposed to uniform experience. Reputed miracles abound in all periods of history; every one has a host of others leading up to it; and every one has strictly analogous facts testified to at the present day. The uniform opposing experience, therefore, on which Hume lays so much stress, does not exist. What, for instance, can be a more striking miracle than the levitation or raising of the human body into the air without visible cause, yet this fact has been testified to during a long series of centuries.

A few well-known examples are those of St. Francis d'Assisi, who was often seen by many persons to rise in the air, and the fact is testified by his secretary, who could only reach his feet. St. Theresa, a nun in a convent in Spain, was often raised into the air in the sight of all the sisterhood. Lord Orrery and Mr. Valentine Greatrak both

informed Dr. Henry More and Mr. Glanvil that at Lord Conway's house at Ragley, in Ireland, a gentleman's butler, in their presence and in broad daylight, rose into the air and floated about the room above their heads. This is related by Glanvil in his *Sadducismus Triumphatus*. A similar fact is related by eye-witnesses of Ignatius de Loyola; and Mr. Madden, in his life of Savonarola, after narrating a similar circumstance of that saint, remarks, that similar phenomena are related in numerous instances, and that the evidence upon which some of the narratives rest is as reliable as any human testimony can be. Butler, in his *Lives of the Saints*, says that many such facts are related by persons of undoubted veracity, who testify that they themselves were eye-witnesses of them. So we all know that at least fifty persons of high character may be found in London who will testify that they have seen the same thing happen to Mr. Home.\* I do not here adduce this testimony as proving that the circumstances related really took place; I merely bring it forward now to show how utterly unfounded is Hume's argument, which rests upon the assumption of universal testimony on the one side, and no testimony on the other.

#### *The Contradictory Nature of Hume's Statements*

I now have to show that in Hume's efforts to prove his point, he contradicts himself in a manner so gross and complete, as is, perhaps, not to be found in the works of any other eminent author. The first passage I will quote is as follows:—

"For, first, there is *not to be found*, in *all history*, any miracle attested by a *sufficient number* of men, of such unquestioned *good sense, education, and learning*, as to secure us against all delusion in themselves; of such undoubted *integrity*, as to place them beyond all suspicion of any design to deceive others; of such credit and reputation in the eyes of mankind, as to have a great deal to lose in case of their being detected in any falsehood; and at the same time attesting facts performed in such a *public manner*, and in so *celebrated a part of the world*, as to render the detection unavoidable; all which

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\*The medium, D. D. Home.

circumstances are requisite to give us a full assurance in the testimony of men."

A few pages farther on we find this passage:—

"There surely never was a greater number of miracles ascribed to one person than those which were lately said to have been wrought in France upon the tomb of Abbé Paris, the famous Jansenist, with whose sanctity the people were so long deluded. The curing of the sick, giving hearing to the deaf, and sight to the blind, were everywhere talked of as the usual effects of that holy sepulchre. But what is more extraordinary, many of the miracles were *immediately proved upon the spot*, before *judges of unquestioned integrity*, attested by *witnesses of credit and distinction*, in a *learned age*, and on the most *eminent theatre* that is *now in the world*. Nor is this all. A relation of them was published and dispersed everywhere; nor were the Jesuits, though a learned body, supported by the civil magistrate, and determined enemies to those opinions in whose favour the miracles were said to have been wrought, ever able *distinctly to refute or detect them*. Where shall we find such a number of circumstances agreeing to the corroboration of one fact? And what have we to oppose to such a cloud of witnesses, but the absolute *impossibility*, or *miraculous nature* of the events which they relate? And this, surely, in the eyes of all reasonable people, will alone be regarded as a sufficient refutation."

In the second passage he affirms the existence of every single fact and quality which in the first passage he declared never existed (as shown by the italicised passages), and he entirely changes his ground of argument by appealing to the inherent impossibility of the fact, and not at all to the insufficiency of the evidence. He even makes this contradiction still more remarkable by a note which he has himself given to this passage, a portion of which is as follows:—

"This book was writ by Mons. Montgeron, councillor or judge of the Parliament of Paris, a man of figure and character, who was also a martyr to the cause, and is now said to be somewhere in a dungeon on account of his book. . . .

"Many of the miracles of Abbé Paris were proved immediately by witnesses before the officiality or bishop's court at Paris, under the eye of Cardinal Noailles, whose character for integrity and capacity was never contested, even by his enemies.

"His successor in the archbishopric was an enemy to the Jansenists, and for that reason promoted to the see by the court. Yet, twenty-two rectors or curés of Paris, with infinite earnestness, press him to examine those miracles, which they assert to be known to the whole world, and indisputably certain; but he wisely forebore. . . .

"All who have been in France about that time have heard of the reputation of Mons. Herault, the lieutenant of police, whose vigilance, penetration, activity, and extensive intelligence have been much talked of. The magistrate, who, by the nature of his office, is almost absolute, was invested with full powers on purpose to suppress or discredit these miracles; and he frequently seized immediately, and examined the witnesses and subjects to them; *but never could reach anything satisfactory against them.*

"In the case of Mademoiselle Thibaut he sent the famous De Sylva to examine her, whose evidence is very curious. The physician declares that it was impossible that she could have been so ill as was proved by witnesses, because it was impossible she could in so short a time have recovered so perfectly as he found her. He reasoned like a man of sense, from natural causes; but the opposite party told him that the whole was a miracle, and that his evidence was the very best proof of it. . . .

"No less a man than the Duc de Chatillon, a duke and peer of France, of the highest rank and family, gives evidence of a miraculous cure performed upon a servant of his, who had lived several years in his house with a visible and palpable infirmity.

"I shall conclude with observing, that no clergy are more celebrated for strictness of life and manners than the regular clergy of France, particularly the rectors or curés of Paris, who bear testimony to these impostures.

"The learning, genius, and probity of the gentlemen, and the austerity of the nuns of Port-Royal, have been much celebrated all over Europe. Yet they all give evidence for a miracle wrought on the niece of the famous Pascal, whose sanctity of life, as well as extraordinary capacity, is well known. The famous Racine gives an account of this miracle in his famous history of Port-Royal, and fortifies it with all the proofs which a multitude of nuns, priests, physicians, and men of the world, all of them of undoubted credit, could bestow upon it. Several men of letters, particularly the Bishop of Tournay, thought this miracle so certain, as to employ it in the refutation of Atheists and Freethinkers. The Queen-regent of France, who was *extremely prejudiced against the Port-Royal*, sent *her own physician to examine the miracle*, who returned an *absolute*

*convert.* In short, the supernatural cure was so incontestable, that it saved for a time that famous monastery from the ruin with which it was threatened by the Jesuits. *Had it been a cheat, it had certainly been detected by such sagacious and powerful antagonists, and must have hastened the ruin of the contrivers."*

It seems almost incredible that this can have been written by the great sceptic David Hume, and written in the same work in which he has already affirmed that in all history no such evidence is to be found. In order to show how very remarkable is the evidence to which he alludes, I think it well to give one of the cases in greater detail, as recorded in the original work of Montgeron, and quoted in William Howitt's *History of the Supernatural*:—

"Mademoiselle Coirin was afflicted, amongst other ailments, with a cancer in the left breast, for twelve years. The breast was destroyed by it and came away in a mass; the effluvia from the cancer was horrible, and the whole blood of the system was pronounced infected by it. Every physician pronounced the case utterly incurable, yet, by a visit to the tomb, she was perfectly cured; and, what was more astonishing, the breast and nipple were wholly restored, with the skin pure and fresh, and free from any trace of scar. This case was known to the highest people in the realm. When the miracle was denied, Mademoiselle Coirin went to Paris, was examined by the royal physician, and made a formal deposition of her cure before a public notary. Mademoiselle Coirin was daughter of an officer of the royal household, and had two brothers in attendance on the person of the king. The testimonies of the doctors are of the most decisive kind. M. Gaulard, physician to the king, deposed officially, that, 'to restore a nipple actually destroyed, and separated from the breast, was an actual *creation*, because a nipple is not merely a continuity of the vessels of the breast, but a particular body, which is of a distinct and peculiar organization.' M. Souchay, surgeon to the Prince of Conti, not only *pronounced the cancer incurable, but, having examined the breast after the cure*, went of himself to the public notary, and made a formal deposition 'that the cure was perfect; that each breast had its nipple in its natural form and condition, with the colours and attributes proper to those parts.' Such also are the testimonies of Seguier, the surgeon of the hospital at Nanterre; of M. Deshières, surgeon to the Duchess of Berry; of M. Hequet, one of the most celebrated surgeons in France; and numbers of others, as well as of public officers and parties of the

greatest reputation, universally known; all of whose depositions are officially and fully given by Montgeron."

This is only one out of a great number of cases equally marvellous, and equally well attested, and we therefore cannot be surprised at Hume's being obliged to give up the argument of the insufficiency of the evidence for miracles and of the uniform experience against them, the wonder being that he ever put forth an argument which he was himself able to refute so completely.

We have now another argument which Hume brings forward, but which is, if possible, still weaker than the last. He says:—

"I may add, as a fourth reason, which diminishes the authority of prodigies, that there is no testimony for any, even those which have not been expressly detected, that is not opposed by an infinite number of witnesses; so that not only the miracle destroys the credit of testimony, but the testimony destroys itself. To make this the better understood, let us consider that, in matters of religion, whatever is different is contrary; and that it is impossible the religions of ancient Rome, of Turkey, and Siam, and of China, should, all of them, be established on any solid foundation. Every miracle, therefore, pretended to have been wrought in any of these religions (and all of them abound in miracles), as its direct scope is to establish the particular system to which it is attributed; so has it the same force, though more indirectly, to overthrow every other system. In destroying a rival system, it likewise destroys the credit of those miracles on which that system was established; so that all the prodigies of different religions are to be regarded as contrary facts; and the evidences of these prodigies, whether weak or strong, as opposite to each other. According to this method of reasoning, when we believe any miracle of Mahomet or his successors, we have for our warrant the testimony of a few barbarous Arabians. And, on the other hand, we are to regard the authority of Titus Livius, Plutarch, Tacitus, and, in short, of all the authors and witnesses, Grecian, Chinese, and Roman Catholic, who have related any miracle in their particular religion: I say, we are to regard their testimony in the same light as if they had mentioned that Mahometan miracle, and had in express terms contradicted it, with the same certainty as they have for the miracle they relate."

Now this argument, if argument it can be called, rests upon the extraordinary assumption that a miracle, if real,

can only come from God, and must therefore support only a true religion. It assumes also that religions cannot be true unless given by God. Mr. Hume assumes, therefore, to know that nothing which we term a miracle can possibly be performed by any of the probably infinite number of intelligent beings who may exist in the universe between ourselves and the Deity. He confounds the evidence for the fact with the theories to account for the fact, and most illogically and unphilosophically argues, that if the theories lead to contradictions, the facts themselves do not exist.

I think, therefore, that I have now shown that—1. Hume gives a false definition of miracles, which begs the question of their possibility. 2. He states the fallacy that miracles are isolated facts, to which the entire course of human testimony is opposed. 3. He deliberately and absolutely contradicts himself as to the amount and quality of the testimony in favour of miracles. 4. He propounds the palpable fallacy as to miracles connected with opposing religions destroying each other.

## Sixth Triennial International Congress in Glasgow

No first hand report of the results of the Sixth Triennial Congress of Spiritualists Federation which opened in Glasgow on September 3rd has reached us as yet from abroad. However, we hope to hear of the activities of the Congress in detail from Dr. Fodor next month. Our readers may be interested in an advance notice published in *The Scotsman* recently outlining the proposed program.

Over 100 delegates from America are to attend the sixth triennial Congress of the International Spiritualists' Federation. The results of the latest researches will be detailed by notable investigators. The addresses and discussions are divided into two departments—science and philosophy—while there will be a series of joint evening sessions.

Professor E. Bozzano, the well-known Italian investigator, whose name appears on a number of important works on experimental psychic research, is to address the conference on "Animism v. Spiritualism." Professor Bozzano was one of the contributors to a volume on the "Milesimo Castle Experiments," the record of a series of remarkable sittings, in which a well-known Italian Count was the medium. At one of the sittings the Count was bodily removed from the locked room, and after half an hour's search, was discovered asleep, and unconscious of what had taken place, in a shed some distance from the castle, the door of the shed being locked on the outside.

Mr. J. B. M'Indoe, Glasgow, the president of the Spiritualists' National Union, deals with the "Philosophy of Seven Principles". Dr. Carl Wickland, who has been carrying out important pioneer work in the treatment of cases of obsession at the National Psychological Institute, Los Angeles, will deal with his observations in this connection.

An item of exceptional interest will be the descriptions by four of the best-known mediums in this country of their "reactions to control." These mediums are Mrs. Osborne Leonard, Mrs. Annie Brittain, Mrs. Helen Hughes (who

has frequently given public demonstrations in Edinburgh), and Mrs. Edith Thomson.

Other papers to be contributed at the conference include: "Telepathy," by Miss H. Ramsden; "Cross Correspondence," by M. Brossy (France); "Mediumship," by Mr. E. W. Oaten (England); "Psychic Photography," by M. Surges (France) and Mr. Mitchell (England); "Indian Difficulties," by Mr. V. D. Rishi, LL.B. (India); "Organization," by Mr. E. C. Sajnani, B.A., LL.B. (India), and Mr. Camilo Flammarion (Argentine); "Development of Truth," by Mr. Stanley de Brath (England); "Spiritualism and Materialism," by M. Andre Dumas (France); and "The 'Rosemary' Xenoglossy," by Dr. F. H. Wood, Mus. Bac. (England).

## Voodoo

Joseph Mitchell, a staff writer of the *New York World Telegram*, wrote a series of articles some months ago on Voodoo in Harlem. His study of this subject revealed a great many curious facts about rituals and materials used in Voodoo rites. Most curious of these was the Ectoplasm box which is made by a small factory in Chicago and sold to lazy fraudulent spirit mediums, with a super-credulous clientele. Voodoo doctors have found them excellent for impressing the simple-minded and they are now sold extensively in Harlem. They are expensive, costing about \$15 apiece. The retail business is carried on by "conjure men" in New Orleans and Manhattan. "When the box is lit up, a smoky shape, roughly resembling a hooded man, floats upward." Mr. Mitchell says that "Even the little wax images resembling naked humans into which 'conjure men' stick pins, inflicting long distance torture, are made in candle molds in a Manhattan loft."

Another shop in the West Seventies that sells ordinary church supplies, candles, etc., has a side line of snakes and baby bats for the custom of voodoo doctors. The bats come from Texas. All the best known textbooks for students of black magic are to be obtained here as well, chief of which is "The Sixth and Seventh Book of Moses." There is a very convenient special bargain combination box which contains enough power to make a first class conjure bag. (A conjure bag is worn around the neck and does just about everything, according to the voodoo doctors, from curing ailments to securing success in business deals.) This bag contains a "lodestone, some lodestone powder, a pair of Adam and Eve roots, a high John the Conqueror, a low John the Conqueror, a waahoo bark, a devil's shoestring, some consecration oil, an apostolic prayer for consecrating same, and a piece of chamois with which the customer can make himself a bag to wear these things in after he has consecrated them."

All these ridiculous talismans are expressions of a number of curious cults which are to be found in full swing

among the poorer people, particularly negroes all over the country. The following is quoted from Mr. Mitchell's survey:

"There is a voodoo doctor in Harlem who uses a Hindu name, anoints his head with oils purchased from a store which also sells incense and candles to Catholic Churches, 'consecrates' the stick he uses in incantations with a prayer written by a minister of the Spiritual Psychic Science Church, and then goes into a mumble-jumble which ends with the sacrifice of a snake he bought in a pet store.

"An anthropologist would scream if such a melange were called voodoo, but what else could you call it except high and mighty nonsense?

"This neo-voodooism is typified by a cult in Detroit which got into the news when a negro named Verlen (Ali) McQueen was arrested on the complaint of his wife who said he was preparing to boil her and their daughter alive in a 20 gallon pot as a sacrifice to Allah."

\* \* \*

#### NOTICE

Dr. Fodor's *Letter from England* unfortunately has not arrived in time to be included in this issue but will appear in the November issue as usual.

# THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

Responsibility for the contents of any article appearing in the JOURNAL rests entirely with the contributor and not with the A.S.P.R.

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## Automatic Writing

(*Editorial Note*)

The gift of automatic writing is far more general than is frequently supposed. The messages thus received almost always claim to originate from the mind of a discarnate spirit though there are cases in which the writing claims to be produced by the automatist's subconscious mind. The writing differs considerably in size and clarity as the purported communicators change, but as a rule, the script is graphologically the same as that of the automatist's normal writing. There have been a few important exceptions. The famous medium, Stainton Moses, received a great number of differing scripts, specimens of which are reproduced in A. W. Trethewy's book, *The "Controls" of Stainton Moses*.

Last year, a member of the Society, who has been producing automatic writing since 1932, sent a number of exhibits of automatic script to us. We were greatly impressed by the apparent similarity between the automatic script purporting to come from a close relation of the automatist, and specimens of his writing produced by his own hand during his lifetime, which were also sent to us

for comparison. We took the specimens to Miss Louise Rice, a well-known hand-writing expert and psychologist, and the article which follows is her report.

Miss Rice is particularly well fitted to carry out this study. She is an expert on forgeries and has worked for the Police throughout the United States for many years. She was an advisor in the famous Hall-Mills murder case, the Star Faithful case, and many others. She has had a good deal of experience with automatic writing as well, some of which she recounted in an article in the JOURNAL for June, 1937. She worked with the late Dr. Hyslop on the Piper Mediumship and was the first to suggest placing a pad and pencil in reach of that medium while in trance. The resulting automatic script contained much of the best evidential material so far obtained by psychic investigators. She assisted the late Dr. Morton Prince in his study of "Sally Beauchamp", which is reported in his book *The Dissociation of a Personality*.

Miss Rice is so much interested in automatic writing that she has made the members of the Society a generous offer. She will be delighted to examine without charge automatic script sent her by members in care of the Society and to correspond with the automatists, providing that she may be allowed to keep samples of the script for comparison and future study. The members of the Society will be protected as always from the publication of their names, unless their permission has been obtained.

Miss Rice is also interested in mirror writing. In a letter to the Editor she writes the following:

"Another matter much allied to this of automatic writing is that of mirror writing, another phase which would, one would think, intrigue psychologists but which has received no attention at all. The tendency of the people whom I have personally studied who can do mirror writing is to run off into what would be called communications after they have been writing for awhile.

"One quite uncultured girl in the hills of Virginia could write mirrorwise as easily as she could in the usual way. She would begin exhibiting for me by addressing a casual

note to me, a thoroughly commonplace thing. Asked to write it again, she would falter in the midst of it and write something not only different, but quite different from her own phrasing. Once she wrote:

' . . . take this opportunity to tell you that you should return at once to New York, as there is trouble in your office.' She disclaimed knowing that she had written this and was frightened. I took the advice, cut short the motor trip I was so enjoying and found my prized assistant very ill but bravely struggling to work, unwilling to call me back from a much needed rest."

We hope that readers of the JOURNAL will take advantage of the opportunity so generously offered by Miss Rice, and send us samples of automatic writing, especially those which seem graphologically unusual or markedly different from the automatist's normal hand.

## A Report on the Automatic Scripts of Mrs. Gillin

BY LOUISE RICE

Nothing positive can be stated about automatic writing graphologically because it has not hitherto received the careful attention of a sufficient number of people fully qualified to investigate it. In fact, I know of no instance of a psychologist who is also a graphologist, familiar with styles of writing of different periods of history and parts of the world, who has used all such information for the comparative survey of known automatic script, save myself in my researches.

So, as I stated in an article in the *JOURNAL* (June 1937 issue) such a study by a handwriting expert is pioneering work, and is likely to prove disappointing to those who want conclusive evidence. However, to those who have patience, such researches may at least prove to be indicative of interesting unknown facts.

Of one thing I am convinced, and that is almost all those who can produce automatic writing are thoroughly honest. If there is any trickstering going on it is done by the sly and subtle subconscious, that strange twin of the practical matter-of-fact conscious mind. In examining the evidence, it is useless to speculate too long on the limits of the subconscious mind because there can be no proof in the matter. The best brains in the world from Plato to Emerson have struggled inconclusively with the problem of the interplay of these two selves.

One of the oddities connected with the power of automatic writing is the fact that few men possess it. I have seen only two men who could do it and one, a professional medium, faked it most of the time.

Men, on the other hand, are far better forgers than women. Reversing the statement in the last paragraph, there are practically no women forgers, and among the underworld gentry, their attempts at it are scorned. Yet in the automatic writing of women, there sometimes appears

a most extraordinary facility to reproduce scripts other than their own, which if done intentionally, is superb forgery. Many men take a real delight in being able to write more than one script and at least two thirds of the educated men in the world have two distinct ones; one for their business letters and another for their friendship and love letters. Women on the contrary, are often unable to change their natural script in any save the most prosaic ways, as by making it larger or smaller or less or more careless.

In considering women as automatic writers, then, we have a psychological problem to which, incredible as it seems, the psychological world has not given the slightest attention.

It is now conceded that women as a sex are not pre-eminent in spiritual qualities, therefore, we cannot attribute this power to that fact. What is more, we occasionally find a woman automatic writer who is not of an especially admirable character in the spiritual sense.

Generally speaking, the script used by alleged communicators is more or less on the mental level of the writer. I have stated in a previous article that I have known a rather ignorant woman who produced not only script but statements which it seemed were entirely beyond her power to produce of herself, but all who have investigated the matter, will agree with me that the majority of automatic writers are cultured women of especially fine minds and characters, and that their automatic scripts appear to be written by men or women that they would be proud to number among their friends.

The higher type of automatic writer can and usually does preserve a tolerant, scientific mind toward what her hand so strangely produces. One of these, whose letters to the Society I have been privileged to read, is Mrs. Gillin. Her study of herself is accurate and impersonal. In one letter she writes: "I sincerely believe that there is a light form of trance during the receipt of messages, because I do not know the substance of them, and in the event of any conversation being carried on during the writing, can and do take part in it while the messages come through my hand.

Another thing which has puzzled me is that anyone leaning over me . . . or brushing against me or even standing too close, will make me feel quite faint and very cold. It is all very odd, to me, at least."

Mrs. Gillin, through Miss Pierson of the Society's staff, has given me a number of specimens of her automatic writing for study, and it is my purpose to approach them just as I would were they exhibits A, B, C, and so on, in a forgery case. I will compare them, not only with a sample of Mrs. Gillin's natural script, *but with the writing of the alleged periods or persons concerned.*

A specimen (see Fig. A.) of the natural script of the woman automatic writer shows her to be the Constructive type, class B. This means that she has a strong feeling for form, but her writing being more rounded than the Constructive usually is, she is less aggressive than is general with this type. Class B. means that she has less self-assurance than the Constructive type, Class A. has—A., having large, angular capitals and severely heavy definite letter formations, and Class B., having these rounded loose formations and this light pressure and relatively small capitals. Handwriting experts all know that this particular style of writing shows the person *least able to forge.*

Those who forge well have what is called "a running hand", leaning forward, with easy, not very individual letter formations, and with undistinguished capitals, known as Vital-Material, Class B. I have never found this Vital-Material-Class B. type, an automatic writer. This, with many other elements pertaining to the matter, needs at least fifty trained investigators all over the civilized world, checking and rechecking on evidence, in the usual tedious but necessary methods of scientific research, in order to have proper results.

Mrs. Gillin has a few automatic scripts wherein the shadow of her own writing appears and it is worth noting that these are the least interesting and seemingly least authentic of the many which she produces. Those specimens which are *least* like her own writing produce a phe-

my dear Miss Benson,

I do hope when I shall reappear  
with very pleasant experience soon again,

FIG. A

I was glad to live

gayly, and die as gayly as I  
lived. No you recognize me

FIG. B

You had a fine seat and have regained  
it again since you are not looking

FIG. C

nomenon, which only a person of my profession can appreciate, *because* as Mrs. Gillin does not understand graphology, it is clear that she could not have done deliberately an astounding thing, which is—to produce script which expresses the *character* of the supposed communicator. That is to say, these various scripts show me, a student of handwriting from the historical, geographical and psychological points of view, not only the general picture of the writing, but many minute evidences that the personal background of the alleged writer and the historical background have been reproduced. Let us take Exhibit B., signed William (see Fig. B.).

Mrs. Gillin did some automatic writing for a group of friends, getting personal messages for each of them. The writing received for a Mrs. A. was not recognized by her at first. However, on showing it later to her mother, they both agreed that everything about it suggested the character of a young man of their family, killed in the Battle of the Wilderness, in the Civil War, and having a reputation for a gay and gallant temperament. In the communication there occurs the line: "I was glad to live gayly and die as gayly as I lived." Now, in these lines and in nearly all of the communication there is exactly the style used by many strongly marked individuals during the Civil War Period. My mother, then seventeen, had a box full of letters from her admirers in that war, many sent from the battle fields, and they became as well known to me as her own script, which was also of the period. I have, of course, studied the Civil War period of writing with others in public exhibitions, but the point is that, because of my mother's association with it, that particular writing is as familiar to me as though I had lived at that time. Here, then, is some startling evidence, for Mrs. Gillin has no such specialized knowledge. What is more, much of the letter is in the half-boastful vein then supposed to be properly masculine. It states that the family could out-ride, out-shoot, and out-dance everybody, implying that the communicator is something of a fellow! This is extremely characteristic in tone of the period, especially of young men of

Edward G. Smith

FIG. D-1

My Dear Family of Lane  
Long Inn

FIG. D-2

I thought as an answer to its name

FIG. E

What I mean is that you  
have a mental

FIG. F

good family. I submit that—whatever this bit of automatic writing really is, the same being unproven—it is an extraordinary exhibit.

Exhibit C. (Fig. C.)\* is signed Noel Prendergast. He is a constant Communicator, whose interest in Mrs. Gillin is that of a close but impersonal friend. The letter is devoted to comments on the proper form of riding about which he seems to be an authority, and he has an odd flourished sign of identification. Again we have a script which is characteristic, for he is Vital, Class A. and Mental, Class B. His large loops, inflated capital I and flowing, assertive, and easy script mark him down as Vital, while the shortness of his letter connections and his fine g's and f's and other letters indicate the Mental. He is a man of many interests, firm and a bit "bossy". He has wide outlooks and a keen mind. The evidence of similarity between this script and that of Mrs. Gillin is practically nil.

Exhibit D. (Fig. D-2) if compared with the known writing of the alleged communicator (Fig. D-1) is perfect. A confrère of mine, shown them, and knowing nothing of the conditions, agreed that they were written by the same hand, although there are quite marked variations between the writing on the checks from which Fig. D-1 was reproduced and the letter in automatic writing from the alleged communicator. This exhibit, however, presents a difficulty because the alleged communicator is a beloved member of Mrs. Gillin's family, and the possibility of having seen the script hundreds of times and of having seen it written often, would suggest an unconscious forgery. On that point, we have one thing to bring forward, previously mentioned. Women and especially women using Mrs. Gillin's script are *poor forgers*. Nevertheless, and despite the exactness of the automatic reproduction, I throw out this evidence

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\*The editor regrets that owing to the death of the expert in process work, who usually deals with exhibits of this kind, Figures C, D, and E are made from tracings and therefore are less exact than is desirable. Should any other expert in this field be sufficiently interested to make a comparison of the exhibits we should be delighted to show him the originals kept on file at the Society's headquarters.

because of the opportunity for too great familiarity with the script.

Exhibit E. (Fig. E.). Anyone who is near a large reference library can usually find the replica of the signature of Rupert Brooke, the young English poet, in one of his books. I happen to have seen several of his letters and assert that this exhibit is extremely like the originals. The interesting thing here is that the variation on the Brooke script is exactly what it would be if his hand wrote; that natural variation which causes us to sign our checks in a slightly different manner each time, and yet leaves the bank cashier perfectly certain that our signatures are genuine. This is the one thing that the forger cannot do, not even that eminent one so dangerous to our mint that the United States Government long ago pensioned him off. As long as he is a good boy and lives on his farm, he gets quite a large sum of money a year,—well, even that man who can reproduce free hand any script he has studied, cannot provide his forgeries with the easy variations natural to all fluent writers. This is a point to be carefully considered in regard to this exhibit. It is better evidence than an exact copy.

The next exhibits, which are not illustrated, consist of one signed Surgreave and two unsigned poems. These are obviously exactly the same and all three bear a pretty close resemblance to Mrs. Gillin's natural script, except that they are more beautiful and express more assurance. In a word, they are fine developments of Mrs. Gillin's own script and from the standpoint of the handwriting expert present no evidence save of that strange fact that in states of half trance, abstraction, or inspiration, the sub-conscious rises to the surface and does many things impossible to the conscious.

Another unsigned poem in an entirely different and characteristic script is connected with an interesting experience. Mrs. Gillin started to write a poem of her own. She was not satisfied with it, toiled hard and long over the first type-written draft. Suddenly an unknown "entity" wrote: "You

have never worked so hard. I wanted to help", and thereupon wrote the poem for her. It is in a style other than Mrs. Gillin's own, this rewritten poem, and indicates a mind severely trained in the classic traditions of writing. The script, which is Mental Class A\*B and Constructive Class A\*B (very high rating) is exactly that of a person who has long been a professional writer and who, characteristically, is fairly illegible. Mrs. Gillin's own poems, in my opinion, are more inspirational than this and do not indicate such a sure hand as is shown in both the matter and the script of this exhibit. This script is also fundamentally different from the Brooke script and gives graphological evidence of coming from a producer of much more mature mind and nature than Brooke.

And now for something which is very provocative of thought. This is Exhibit F. (see Fig. F.)

This communicator fretted Mrs. Gillin. Placid and gentle herself, she felt that it was "An irritable entity". The letter is a scolding one, complaining of her failure to live up to her possibilities and stating that "I am not in the habit of indulging in kindly criticism". The whole tone is that of a well educated, rather unfeeling and quite self-satisfied person, and this is *exactly what the handwriting shows*. It has what any graphologist will list as "irritation complex". The action of the hand is jerky, the letter formations are angular, the T bars are long and pressure is heavy. Even to the untrained eye there is evidence of haste, and a pen driven at breakneck speed.

Here is a case in which the contents of the communication, and the script are exactly in harmony, the style of communication and the style of script both being entirely alien to the hand which produced the exhibit.

In a way, this is the most interesting of the exhibits,—that and Exhibit B. constituting evidence which could be presented in any court, in the accustomed formal style and dry nomenclature, with far more proof than, for instance, Mr.

Osborne brought forward in his labored indictment of Richard Bruno Hauptmann.

To return to the question concerning the specimen (Fig. D-2) of automatic script allegedly written by a close member of Mrs. Gillin's family. Although it might be thrown out of court as evidence in a usual forgery case, it is very odd, indeed, for a writer of Mrs. Gillin's type and class to be able to write pages of this flowing, spread script, using many of the involved forms peculiar to the original. That is to say, this is a very exceptional ability *if* it is a sheer imitation.

Generally considered, automatic writing is new ground for the scientific investigator, and very important ground too. It should attract the attention of many who have the critical mind and scientific training for such work.

# The Case of Elizabeth B.

BY E. B. GIBBES

## PART II

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Last month we pointed out that the communications recorded in this article, which have been written by the hand of the well-known automatist, Miss Geraldine Cummins, and which claim to be messages from a child who died at the age of fifteen, are important by contrast to the automatist's other scripts. Whether the "messages" be studied as subconscious originations or as genuine communications proving survival, they will make food for thought.

There is another link in the chain connected with the survival or non-survival of Elizabeth B. It concerns some rather remarkable cross-references which occurred between Miss Cummins and Miss Helen MacGregor. At the period of which I write, Miss MacGregor was only known very slightly to me and she and Miss Cummins were unacquainted with each other. The following are some notes of a sitting obtained with Miss MacGregor. I had sat with her a few times experimentally, some eighteen months previously, before "Elizabeth" had begun to communicate. Miss MacGregor was unaware of her existence. I went to her on this occasion hoping to get further evidence of survival connected with a totally different entity, i.e. F. W. H. Myers. He had frequently purported to communicate through Geraldine Cummins during the past year. Elizabeth was entirely out of my mind. Later, Miss MacGregor wrote that she had thought the sitting a bad one as she "sensed so clearly that she had not touched the spirit friend I had come for."

(April 13th, 1925)

After some conversation Miss MacGregor's "control" spoke as follows:

"There is a girl here with straight hair hanging down, and a ribbon on it. She is slender, wearing a white cotton frock, standing on one leg, then on the other. She looks

delicate though not through illness. She had a good brain, not active, and is affectionate in nature. She has come through you to her mother and would like to communicate again. She has come to the ouija board or in writing for her mother. The girl has been over a few years and has evolved and learnt a lot. She has a good power of expression now. She was young when she passed over. She looked about fourteen then, now she looks about nineteen or twenty. She will be able to give some more through writing - - - messages to her mother. The girl did not know you, she knows of you. You know her mother anyway. She sends her love to her mother who is beginning to feel her presence and realize she is still alive. The girl says her mother is not so unhappy about her now, knowing that life is not ended; she feels in touch with her mother. She feels she is opening out towards her. She has a younger sister, but she does not mean so much to her mother—she doesn't mean she doesn't care so much, but she is different in nature. The mother suffered dreadfully when she lost the girl, but she is better now. She wants to thank you for helping her mother. It was a great surprise. You were the last person she would have thought could help her in this way. You were interested in our side and she has been able to help you. She is a very good communicator and has brought through good tests. The mother is not in London—you write to her, you don't see her. She doesn't live far away but it is in England. The mother is not able to go to mediums because she is out of London. The mother is receptive and has a certain amount of psychic power, she gets it in feeling in some way. She is not good for tests but is impressed. The mother is kindhearted,—she gives out sympathy, having felt so much herself. The girl is very happy. At first it was an awful wrench from her mother as she had a great love for her. But she was quickly consoled on passing over. She has progressed and is progressing in intelligence. She has come out psychically a lot because you helped her mother. Don't think you are dragging her back. This girl touches your hand. . . ." (possibly indicating that she has written elsewhere).

The above appears to be a remarkable corroboration of what Elizabeth had written through Miss Cummins. It may be conjectured that Miss MacGregor's "control" merely read my mind. But there is much in the above which I did not know.

On receipt of the notes of Miss MacGregor's sitting, Elizabeth's mother wrote:

"I love this last communication and I think the description wonderful because Miss MacGregor could know nothing of either Elizabeth or me. It is lovely to think she can come through more than one source. I should think standing on first one leg and then the other, means she was excited and nervous. I always used to tell her not to fidget. She nearly always wore white. I have her frocks now. And she always looked frail even when not ill. It is indeed true the difference it has made to me—like a door being opened. People say I look better. It is a new life really. Quite true, no one can be to me what she was. . . ."

I did not know that Elizabeth "fidgeted" or that she invariably wore white, or in fact anything of her personal appearance. It will be noted that Mrs. B. does not dispute any of the description which was given by Miss MacGregor.

It was about this time that Geraldine Cummins began to develop the writing of the Cleophas scripts. For the time being, therefore, we had no further conversations with our other alleged communicators. Two months later, however, we had time for a script from "Elizabeth". Here I would draw attention to the fact that Miss Cummins was absolutely unaware that I had even seen Miss MacGregor in the interval, much less had a sitting with her. She knew that I had sat with Mrs. Osborne Leonard early in June for the purpose of obtaining cross correspondence between herself and Mrs. Leonard. I had secured a sitting with Miss Cummins soon afterwards and had told her later my reason for so doing.

(June 22nd, 1925)

" . . . Betty—a new name for you. My whole name is

Elizabeth. How are you? . . . I know lots of things you don't know now. I have learnt how to think twice at the same time."

"That must take a bit of doing," I remarked.

"It does! I would like to explain if I could. I want to be making something I remember and I want to be playing too. If I want hard enough I find I can work and play at the same time. And when I have finished, both myself and the other me meet and tell each other what we have been doing and I am behind both and I laugh. It is such fun to do two things at the same time."

As I was anxious to see if Elizabeth would make any reference to her unexpected appearance at the MacGregor sitting, I asked if she had tried to speak to me elsewhere. The answer came without a second's hesitation. When I asked Miss Cummins afterwards if she were conscious of this question, she replied that she vaguely recollected hearing the remark and that her mind instinctively recalled the fact that I had told her of my recent sitting with Mrs. Leonard. In consequence of the information which I knew was in the mind of the automatist at the time, I confess I expected some allusion to Elizabeth's having spoken to me at Mrs. Leonard's. In reality, Elizabeth B. was not mentioned at the Leonard sitting. What "Elizabeth" wrote however, referred directly to Miss MacGregor.

"Oh, yes, I tried to make you listen but it was quite different from this. What a funny place it was. The light was different, so bright and jumpy. It made me see a room again quite clearly. I felt crowds of other people were trying to speak so I had to be quick. I wanted to send love to Mumbo, I thought it might be heard by you. But you looked different too, and you seemed surprised as if you hadn't expected me. I thought perhaps I had made a mistake, and I tried to say I had talked to you through someone different—through this person." (meaning G.C.) "I think you knew then it was really me. Your face changed. You smiled quite nicely. I saw your face very clearly. I tried to explain to the lady who I was. I showed the spirit" (The

MacGregor Control presumably) "my robe. That meant I was young when I died. I wanted to explain that. I think it was clear. I said I was happy and I explained myself when I was alive. It's hard to explain what you are, isn't it? I showed what I used to like but I don't know if the spirit saw. I made a picture of an animal and I made one of the country, by thinking. Then, when that seemed puzzling a bit, I thought of Mumbo and Daddy and that seemed to be given attention. You looked pleased. You nodded your head so funnily. I laughed. Isn't it funny you can't hear me laughing? You see I like you awfully and you hadn't been talking to me so I wanted to show you I was there and give you a message. I hope you were pleased. It was all so queer—all that buzzing about and all that brightness. It is quieter here."

"Do you remember anything more?" I asked. Elizabeth continued:

"I tried to explain how it all happened, I mean my coming here, and about being ill. But that was hard to say. It was easier to talk of the way I had spoken to you. I talked a lot and I wanted to say something about where I was and what I was doing. Then I thought of Granny and Jane. I thought it would be lovely to say Jane so that you could hear. You didn't look as if you did. You didn't smile, you see. I could tell a bit by watching."

"Do you know that all you are saving is very important as proving that you are still alive?" I remarked.

"I told you I was awfully wise. I wanted to show you what I could say in a new way. It was so jumpy—such a funny little spirit. Why does she dance so?"

"I didn't know she did," I replied.

"Yes, all the time dancing and that's why I wasn't sure if I was being attended to properly."

The writing ended with the customary display of crosses. The dancing to which "Elizabeth" referred would indicate Miss MacGregor's "control", who is, I understand, of a youthful kind.

The two most popular theories brought forward to ex-

plain cases of spirit communication; telepathy, or inventions of the subconscious mind, do not seem to dispose adequately of the evidence offered by this cross-correspondence. I have no idea how I looked upon the occasion of my sitting with Miss MacGregor. It is, therefore, impossible that I conveyed impressions of myself at that sitting to the subconscious mind of the trance-writer of "Elizabeth's" words: Miss Cummins. If the survival of "Elizabeth" is not accepted, then the only plausible explanation seems to be that Miss Cummins is gifted with the power of "retro-vision",—in other words, that she is able to eject her mind into the past and from it select a certain pictorial episode. And it must be remembered that she had no conscious knowledge that this episode had taken place.

A comparison of my notes of the MacGregor sitting with the script received through Miss Cummins is worthy of attention. "Elizabeth" in the script writes she doubted her success in getting "properly attended to". Elizabeth states that she would have loved to say Jane so that I could hear. But "I didn't look as though I did". I should certainly have noted this name, the reference to her father, and other details, had Miss MacGregor's "control" heard them and passed them on to me. She remarks that I seemed surprised as if I hadn't expected her. This was true. "Elizabeth" alludes to the fact that she "showed the spirit her robe" apparently illustrating her approximate age at death. She does not qualify this by saying that she was not sure if she got it through. On the contrary, she says she "thought it was clear." Miss MacGregor spoke of a cotton frock and described Elizabeth's age at death accurately. These, and other details, were given very distinctly and corroborated in the automatic script. And there is one more point. Elizabeth states that she found it hard to explain about her actual death—about being ill. Miss MacGregor wrote me that she "never encouraged her communicators to recall their last illness as she considered it harmful to them." Therefore, she "always shut out all passing out conditions." This fact was entirely unknown both to Miss Cummins and

myself. Miss Cummins has no feelings of this kind. Yet spontaneously, through Miss Cummins, "Elizabeth" says, she was unable to give this information through Miss MacGregor.

I will quote Mrs. B's comment on this last script, and her reply to my query as to whether Elizabeth was ever called Betty.

"Yes, of course, we called her Betty. All J's family do still. I took to Elizabeth as my father liked it so and there were so many 'Bettys' about them. This seems evidential to me."

On September 29th, 1925, I had a sitting with Mrs. Barkel, a trance medium, at the British College of Psychic Science. After some conversation in connection with other matters her "control" suddenly said "Lisbeth,—a little lady is here." "He" described her as coming with great spiritual light and said she had passed over some time ago. "He" continued "She says you have a picture of her but not as she looks now,—when she was much younger. When she was in earth-life she must have been very good to get so much light now. She is showing writing . . . where you have made writing. It is not here,—a lot of it,—and she also says you wrote down concerning her through another medium. She is a nice little lady. I hear the name Betty or Betsy."

It is a fact that I had a photograph of her at about four years of age. Oddly enough, only a few days before the sitting, I had found it among others and had taken it out and looked at it.

Mrs. B. wrote of this sitting:

"Everyone who knew her" (Elizabeth) "would tell you how perfectly good she was from a baby to the end. Never a trouble, always patient and obedient. 'Too good to live' was what her nurse and the poor people always said. So curious getting the name Betty again."

On October 19, 1925, I had another sitting with Miss MacGregor and received a message about pressed flowers which Mrs. B. wrote me was most evidential. It was not

until 1927, however, that another opportunity occurred to talk with "Elizabeth" through the hand of Miss Cummins. In this interval, Geraldine Cummins had completed *The Scripts of Cleophas, Paul in Athens* and the first few chapters of *The Great Days of Ephesus*. In addition to this she wrote automatically, another so far unpublished volume and much other matter, which owing to exigencies of space, had to be omitted from the published volumes. Just before "Elizabeth" communicated for the last time in 1927 "Myers" wrote an essay on The Group-soul, through Miss Cummins's hand. All these writings were of greatly varying character, style and amount of erudition. Yet when "Elizabeth" took up her writing again, it was in her own particular style and mode of thought as though there had been no lapse of time between her communications.

(June 7th, 1927)

"Elizabeth B. . . . My dear godmother, how are you? I have been so happy since you let me talk. The letters I wrote to Mumbo made me feel quite close to her again, darling Mumbo! You were a kind of fairy godmother, pulling down the silly wall between us. Will you send her my love. . . .

"I have been living in a lovely place where there is a spring garden and it changes just as the year does on earth. The people here taught me to set that garden by the time of the earth. Everything in it is meant to remind me of Mumbo, Jane, Daddy and everybody. The garden is made by us out of what we can remember. It isn't solid like the earth, and yet, it seems the same because we think so as to make it; and we want it to seem like something we know. But if we didn't—with the help of all the nice people here—make this out of our thinking, there would be nothing but light around us. We build it all up just as children build houses of bricks, only we are taught to make the bricks too; but if you came along to my lovely garden you wouldn't see anything. It would just seem air to you. Isn't that funny?"

"Have you been able to get near your mother lately?" I asked.

"Yes, a little time ago I was quite close. I saw she was thinking of me and I spoke to her. I don't suppose she caught my message. She worries rather still you know. Tell her she mustn't; tell her everything will be made up to her when she comes here. . . ."

"Do you know what she has been doing lately?"

"Oh lots of little things, she has been trying to manage for Jane. And that's a bit hard. You see Jane must have a good time, the best Mummy can give her. And it's awfully hard when you haven't much. But it will be easier in a year or two. Things will be better then. I have a secret. Somebody will die and leave Mumbo a little money. At least I saw that. I can't tell you when. But it will be a great help. . . ." (Lack of space necessitates omission of script which followed.)

On receipt of the foregoing communication Mrs. B. wrote:

"It is extraordinarily true about Jane and my being worried and trying to do things for her. I did not tell you that Jane had had the tonsil-adenoid operation for one thing. That's when I was worried, both about her and the expense. Then I have been trying to give her riding lessons and so on, extra. So it is odd that she should say 'trying to manage little things for Jane'. As regards money, I think it is more likely that she knew that one of my brothers has started to help me with education etc., only now, lately, and it may have seemed like money left me. I am awfully struck, as I have been before, by all she says and describes of life over there. It seems to me it explains everything and is the solution of all our problems. . . ."

There is little to add to the case of Elizabeth B. I can only impress on the reader that during these two years neither Miss Cummins nor I had had any intercourse with Mrs. B. I knew nothing of her plans concerning Jane or of her worries. Now there would seem to be two theories to consider. Either the mind of the writer of these communications has amazing faculties by which she is able to penetrate into the past, present and future of whole fami-

lies completely unknown to her, or the surviving personality of Elizabeth B. has made itself known to her mother beyond doubt through the psychic powers of individuals with whom she was unacquainted during life. It can hardly be claimed that my presence influenced the phenomena unless, of course, my consciousness in some manner unknown reaches out to some of my friends and obtains snatches of information concerning them which I am able, also unconsciously, to transmit to various mediums I visit. If this is the case, the same theory should be applied to the production of all Geraldine Cummins's psychic works with which I have been associated. The various Cleophas scripts alone amount to over a million words. The theory that I impart the scholarly knowledge which I do not consciously know, exhibited in the Cleophas scripts, is hardly tenable. Numerous witnesses have been present at the production of these writings from whom such knowledge might more possibly have been acquired, yet the story continued evenly as if written by the same mind, not deviating one iota from its course.

In conclusion I would like the reader to recollect that the details concerning the After-Life as given by "Elizabeth", are expressed in an obviously simple, childlike manner. Whereas Miss Cummins's hand has produced writings purporting to come from F. W. H. Myers, which have expounded similar views. They may be found in *The Road to Immortality* and *Beyond Human Personality*. But these are expressed in elaborate, and, in some cases, labored and complicated language. Both these books were written some years after the automatic scripts recorded in this article.

## A Letter from England

BY DR. NANDOR FODOR

*(Research Officer, International Institute for Psychical Research)*

### THE ROSEMARY CASE

October, 1937.

"Ancient Egypt Speaks", Dr. Wood's recent book is the most fascinating volume on mediumship that has been published for years. It is not for me to speak on the strength of the case. It is for Egyptologists to concur or disagree with the findings of Mr. A. J. Howard Hulme regarding Rosemary's, or rather "Lady Nona's" revelation as to how Egyptian was spoken 3,300 years ago. I have had direct experience of the case however, because of the gramophone record of "Lady Nona's" speech which, on May 4, 1936, I was fortunate in obtaining at the International Institute. This record will no doubt be important in any serious investigation as no matter how accurately Dr. Wood's musical training permits him to record sound values, Egyptologists will always want to hear the actual speech. It may be occasionally possible for sympathetic investigators to attend a sitting with Rosemary herself but certainly not as often as they may desire it. Rosemary is not an automaton to be switched on and off at anybody's pleasure. She is highly strung and very sensitive. It is difficult to put her at ease. Dr. Wood, in his book, pays me and my staff the compliment of his appreciation for our efforts to provide a friendly psychic atmosphere during the recording experiments. Although Rosemary and I are old friends and have worked together before, she was upset during trance by the traffic noise. During the second half of the record, she broke down and only recovered by an effort of will. She felt better when she came round but tears welled up in her eyes again when she said goodbye.

Rosemary is a very diffident medium and Dr. Wood must have often needed the skill of a psychologist to sail over her self-tortures and self-questionings. I do not think that I shall be considered guilty of a breach of confidence if I quote from a letter which I received from Rosemary in June 1933, shortly after I visited her and Dr. Wood in Blackpool. We appreciate so much more Dr. Wood's efforts and Rosemary's trance achievement if we know what her personal attitude is towards her mediumship.

"I am afraid", Rosemary writes, "the Doctor is rather distressed at my present attitude generally, but really I cannot help it. I am

beginning to wonder whether I am not really some unconscious fraud. I know well enough that many things have been received at our circle for which I cannot account—strange and true things of which I have no possible knowledge—I admit all these, and am glad of them. But after all, there is also a lot of matter which might be a 're-hash' of my own thoughts and experiences. It worries me dreadfully that I am not 'fool-proof'. A year or two ago I did not bother at all, but the wonderful interest which has been aroused in what the Doctor has published, has made me feel responsible. Of course, I know he is a careful investigator but I do not think I am really much of a medium at all and am rather worried. Sometimes I feel I shall never sit again. I want more proof, personal proof I mean, something akin to Saul's blinding light, which is very unlikely to be granted. I do not think I have any real faith—not as the Doctor has; he is the finest man I have met and has faith which nothing could shake.

"I myself just love beauty, everything beautiful, both here and in the heavenly pictures which I sometimes see so clearly. Even these have been spoiled just lately. I begin to wonder whether it isn't all some vivid imaginary picture after all.

"I would give anything to be able to be sure of myself but I do not suppose you can help me. I think it must come to oneself."

It is always important to know what goes on in the medium's mind. The letter which I quoted above is a touching revelation and an important document in dealing with the whole problem. Rosemary may be angry with me for publishing it but I believe that she will be greatly esteemed for her attitude.

### *THE GLASGOW SPIRITUALIST CONGRESS*

The International Spiritualist Congress which concluded in Glasgow on September 10th was a great success. I did not attend it myself as the preparations for the visit of Fru Lara Agustsdottir, the Icelandic materialization medium, kept me very busy at the International Institute, but I followed the reports of the Press which well exploited the news value of the Glasgow proceedings and presented it fairly, without sneers or hostile comments. In this respect, England probably is more advanced than any other country. I am not paying a compliment to the British Press. It is not a spirit of generosity or understanding which is behind this attitude, but the discovery that editors get into trouble with a section of their public both if they denounce psychic claims and if they acknowledge them. If possible they steer clear of this dangerous subject and restrict themselves to news reporting.

The resolution passed on the last day of the Congress is well worth quoting in full:

"It is agreed that there should be a study of mediumship from the medium's point-of-view. We suggest that mediums could enhance psychic knowledge by studying themselves with regard to their personal preparation before a séance, their reactions to the influence of the spirit guides before, during and after exercising their gifts."

Researchers all over the world will heartily subscribe to this resolution and hope that the data submitted to the Congress in a symposium by Mrs. Osborne Leonard, Mrs. Annie Brittain, Mrs. Helen Hughes and Mrs. Edith Thompson will be supplemented by copious other self-observations.

### CRIME AND SPIRITUALISM

There were some interesting revelations at the Glasgow Congress. Mr. Ernest Oaten, the editor of the *Two Worlds* submitted an illuminating paper on Mediumship in which he made some startling statements:

"Some of our famous London mediums", he said, "are occupied all day giving consultations to Scotland Yard detectives. That is how they get half their living. If the police get a chance they prosecute mediums and put them in prison, yet when they want help they come to them for assistance.

"Of course, the visits of detectives are done secretly and are not known to their chiefs. Not so long ago a detective asked me to help him to solve a murder. I told him I would need time. He was in a hurry, and said he must get information at once. I secured a medium, and when a garment of the murdered party was put into his hands the medium immediately cried out, 'Strangulation'. Then he described the scene and what had happened, but greatly disappointed the detective by telling him that the police could not possibly catch the culprit, as he was working with four other men and all of them had framed a perfect alibi."

The *Glasgow Bulletin*, from which I quote these statements, sent a reporter to Mr. Oaten for further information. Mr. Oaten spoke with great assurance, saying:

"When psychic matters are understood, and when the world is prepared to take Spiritualism seriously, it will not be difficult to gather together a number of expert mediums for the solving of certain crimes. I guarantee they would be 100 per cent successful in their work."

Another disclosure regarding the solution of a child murder case was made by Mrs. McKenzie in a discussion on psychometry. She had information that in the case of Mona Tinsley, evidence had been gained through one or two London mediums. The fact that their service was used was never made known to the public, but she understood that the police were definitely helped by them.

### *QUEEN VICTORIA AND JOHN BROWN*

Mr. Oaten's second revelation which proved of considerable interest concerned John Brown, Queen Victoria's Highland attendant and the Queen's inseparable companion. He was a medium through whom Queen Victoria had constant communication with Albert, the Prince Consort after he died. John Brown was a servant on the Queen's Balmoral estate. He was recommended to the Queen as a medium by Robert J. Lees, (author of *Through the Mists*, etc.) who himself gave seven sittings to Queen Victoria.

"One of the five volumes written by Queen Victoria", Mr. Oaten stated, "was never published. We Spiritualists believe—are certain—that it had to do with her after-life relationship with her husband. We are just as sure it was suppressed by the Archbishop of Canterbury for that very reason."

### *MORE ABOUT THE TALKING DOG OF WEIMAR*

That Kurwenal, the talking dog of Weimar, is imbued with strong Nazi sentiment is the amusing disclosure made by Mr. Arthur Findlay, Chairman of the International Institute for Psychical Research, who has just returned from a long Continental tour in the course of which he paid a visit in Weimar to Baroness von Freytag-Loringhoven, the owner of Kurwenal. Kurwenal is a Dachshund about whose startling intellectual attainment and power of communication by barking out a special alphabet I have reported in previous issues of the JOURNAL. Mr. Findlay asked Kurwenal two questions (in German) which are very much in the mind of everybody in Germany:

"Do you like Jews?"

"Do you think that Deutschland will get back her colonies?"

To the first question Kurwenal barked out a straightforward answer:

"Jews are awful people."

To the second question his answer was more diplomatic:

"Hitler will settle everything the best."

"There was no doubt in my mind", Mr. Findlay tells me, "that the Baroness made no attempt to suggest Kurwenal's answer. There appears to be, however, something like a telepathic link between the dog and her mistress. If I had put the same questions to the Baroness I would probably have received the same answer.

"As soon as my questions were put Kurwenal began to bark. I am not very familiar with Kurwenal's alphabet, therefore the barks were counted by the Baroness. This, of course, is not very satisfactory. If Kurwenal had given me a private interview I would have been much more impressed. My wife who was with me and who knows a lot about dogs thought that Kurwenal was no more marvelous than many circus dogs she has seen. But, in fairness, I must add that we only spent an hour at the Baroness' flat, and that Kurwenal was not in the least interested in us. There was a fly zooming about the room and it so fascinated Kurwenal that he hardly took any notice of us. The Baroness had to use considerable persuasion to make him answer at all."

#### THE CAT ON THE DOOR KNOB

After the talking dog the tale of a swearing cat hardly strains our imagination. The *Sunday Despatch* has "An Almost Human Page" in which readers tell strange experiences of their pet animals. On September 12th the first prize of Ten Guineas was awarded to Mr. M. Holmes, of Hill Crest, Henwick, Worcester for a cat story. His cat used to ask to go out or be admitted by jumping up to the knob of the door and making a faint mewling. If no notice was taken of this he would get cross and angry, and would spit and swear and bang against the door in a temper. If he were told: "Naughty puss; ask properly and say 'Please'", the cat would pause a second and then in a very plaintive tone mew "Please".

I don't think that the story was worth ten guineas. The cat no more talked than the canary which learned to imitate "Pretty little sweetie, pretty little sweetie". Any animal will learn sounds which are easy for their vocal organs without necessarily knowing what they mean. Moreover, letters to the editor for which, on publication, a fee is paid hardly furnish testimony above doubt. I quote it because it reminds me of a somewhat similar cat story within my own experience in Dean Manor House from which, in March 1936,

Mr. Harry Price's famous ghost broadcast took place. The ghost, at the time, failed to oblige but rumors of mysterious happenings in the house persisted. Two men servants, when alone, heard a woman's scream; there were mysterious knocks all over the house, a snoring noise in broad daylight and the door between the dining room and the kitchen kept on opening in a mysterious manner.

I spent a night in Dean Manor House. I heard the knocks and traced them to the poker like tail of a bull terrier which kept on hitting the radiator pipes and furniture. Next, my suspicion fell on the cat. I heard her yawn. The sound, in the silence of the evening, might have been taken for a half-smothered scream. The exposure came in the morning: the mysterious opening of the door between the dining room and the kitchen was definitely due to pussy. I photographed her as, tempted by the delicious smells from the kitchen, she jumped up on the top of a sideboard and from there, with one out stretched paw, depressed the old-fashioned wooden latch of the door. By the time the opening of the door was noticed, as a rule, she was under the table in the kitchen where her presence was naturally accepted. My camera caught her in the act. The photograph made me inclined to doubt the ghostly origin of the other disturbances. It was suggested to me that the snore might have been due to the presence of a barn owl in the attic. Coming from there the sound would be all over the house as described by the servants who, if unacquainted with the habits of the barn owl, would never suspect a bird as the cause of the sound. I cannot be certain that my explanation is the correct one, but I believe that a lot of the phenomena in allegedly haunted houses which is ascribed to ghosts can be explained by a much more simple agency.

#### *MIRACLE OF THE BANYAN TREE*

I have a friend, a mining prospector who has just returned from Burma. He had a strange experience in the Southern Shan states in a district where no other white man lived. I quote his statement as I took it down:

"I stayed for some time in the village of Pyin Nijaung, which means Village of the Banyan Tree. There was a huge banyan tree outside the village. Banyan trees are sacred in the East. This one was venerated. No native would ever venture under it with shoes on. I heard that once upon a time a holy man lived under its protective boughs. Now his spirit was said to dwell in the tree.

"I am not impressed by native superstitions. I did not care what my servants believed as long as they did their job faithfully.

"I saw hundreds of green pigeons and paraqueets on the tree. They were drawn by the ripening figs of the Nyaung Sin, the wild fig tree which lives as a parasite on the banyan. I wanted to shoot a bird for lunch. But the natives, as soon as they heard of my intention, shook their heads:

"'You can't shoot a bird on that tree!'

"'Why', — I asked in surprise.

"'You can't. The tree is sacred', stubbornly they replied.

"'Can't I?' — I thought to myself.

"I am a very good shot. In that part of the world one ought to be. You must show the natives that you never miss; or else they might not miss your throat.

"I took my 12 bore gun and strolled under the tree. No natives would keep me company. Owlsh, they stared at me from a distance.

"Taking careful aim, I fired. The shot scared up hundreds of birds. Amongst them, unhurt, was the bird which I was certain to hit.

"The birds described wide circles over the tree and then came back. As they settled, I fired again.

"There was the same wild flutter and flight. My bird again escaped unhurt.

"I was surprised after the first shot, annoyed after the second, and angry after the third; for once more I failed to bring down my bird.

"I was determined to get it. I fired fifty rounds of ammunition into that tree from a distance that made shooting child's play. I missed every time. Not even a feather was plucked off any of the pigeons I shot at.

"Ruefully, I gave up the bad job. I don't believe that there was anything wrong with my aim. I still think that I am a good shot. I have had proof of it since. I can't explain why all my shots from under that tree went astray."

I was rather impressed with my friend's story. I know he made a truthful and accurate statement. I regret that I cannot reveal his name as, for reasons of business, he does not wish to figure in mystery stories. In telling me of his experience he hoped that I might give him an explanation. But all that Western psychic experience enabled me to suggest was that the tree might have been subject to a kind of benevolent haunting the potency of which, perhaps, depended on continuous worship.

What worship may have to do with potency of haunting is a delicate question. We know that claims which are not very dissimilar are favorably looked upon by the Church in the West. The miracu-

lous virtue in relics, the bleeding and weeping statues suggest phenomena of the same order.

If we could accept the suggestion that the influence of the saint who once lived under the banyan tree still persists, it would be possible to understand why my friend could not shoot a bird. The influence could have no direct power over the gun or the bullet, but it could affect his subconscious mind. It is conceivable that it could make him take the wrong aim without his conscious mind being aware of it. The shot would be fired with an unfailing accuracy *to miss* and not to hit.

### THE FLYING DUTCHMAN

I am always suspicious of psychic experiences if they come *en masse*. I wanted to know if my friend had other mysterious things happening to him. He could only recall one, thirty years ago, which however, remained vivid in his memory. He saw the Flying Dutchman, or at least a phantom boat which was taken for that legendary sailer.

"From Cape Horn we were sailing for Tristan de Cunha. It was a dark night. There were neither moon nor stars. Suddenly the lookout shouted. There were three of us on the deck beside him; myself, the sailmaker and the second mate. We all saw a big mass of canvasses about a hundred yards from our boat. It looked like a sailing ship. But the strange thing was that it travelled against the wind. It vanished in a few minutes. My companions were white and shaken. They said it was the Flying Dutchman and that it was a sure sign that our boat was threatened with disaster.

"I don't know what it was. There was no disaster, though three weeks later our windjammer almost went down in a storm."

### A FICTITIOUS GHOST STORY

At the time of the B.B.C. ghost broadcast I quoted another ghost story in the *Journal* which was broadcast from Grahamstown, South Africa. It was told by Mr. Wilfred Alexander about a man who picked up a passenger between Port Elizabeth and Grahamstown, accepted from him a cigarette and visiting card only to find out the following day that the man was killed some years previously on the spot where he had hailed him.

This ghost story has now proved fictitious. Major Alan Howgrave-Graham, of Pretoria wrote a letter to *Light* to which he attached

Mr. Wilfred Alexander's reply to his inquiry as to the genuine nature of the occurrence. Mr. Alexander states that his broadcast was just a creepy story the idea of which was suggested to him in a conversation with an employee of the *Eastern Province Herald*. From him he learned that a driver on the Grahamstown road daily service was troubled every night — or rather early morning — on his route by the appearance of headlamps approaching from a distance. Although these were seen nightly for a long period, the car responsible for them never actually passed the *Herald* van. The driver's nerves were overwrought to such an extent by this phenomenon, which was also witnessed independently, that first he was given a boy to accompany him, and subsequently, since company failed to ease the situation, he was transferred to another route.

I thought at the time that Mr. Alexander's story sounded too good to be true.

# THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

Responsibility for the contents of any article appearing in the JOURNAL rests entirely with the contributor and not with the A.S.P.R.

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### The Society's New Headquarters

In the July issue of the JOURNAL, an announcement was made of the intention of the New York City Authorities to condemn the Society's property at 15 Lexington Avenue in order to build a court house on the premises.

The City Authorities have now taken title to Hyslop House and the Society will move to its new quarters at 40 East 34th Street on or about December 1st.

Hyslop House has been the scene of much activity and valuable experimentation during the past twelve years carried on both by the Society and its former subsidiary, the New York Section which is now continuing its activities as a separate incorporation at 71 West 23rd Street.

It is with regret that we see one of New York's finest old houses razed to the ground to give place to a public building. However, the new headquarters will be far more suitable to the Society's needs in many respects. There will be adequate space for the Society's libraries of philosophical and psychic literature. There will be a Trustees' room, an editorial room, an archives room, general offices and a séance room which we hope will eventually be the best equipped and most scientific laboratory for psychic research

in the world. The new location in the center of New York will also be a great advantage and, we hope, a great convenience to the members and friends of the Society.

Members are urgently requested to come often to the new headquarters and to assist in the Society's work by bringing all cases of psychic phenomena with which they come in contact to the attention of Miss Pierson of the Society's staff. She will be glad to interview anyone with psychic material.

Members are also earnestly asked to send contributions of veridical phenomena, records of sittings, and results of psychic investigation to the Editor of the JOURNAL. Such material cannot always be used for publication because of the JOURNAL'S very limited space, but it is of the utmost importance that a record of experiments and spontaneous experiences should be kept on file at the Society.

# The Metagnomy of Margaret Foley

BY HAROLD H. U. CROSS, E.E. PH.D.

*(Electro-Radiology Certificate, Faculty of Medicine, Univ. of Paris)*

NOTE: Dr. Cross has been associated with Dr. Georges Bourguignon, director of the Laboratory of Electrophysiology of L'École Pratique des Hautes Études and Electro-Radiologist at the Salpêtrière. He is the author of several text-books in the field of medical electricity, ultra violet and infra-red radiations, high frequency and diathermy.

The painstaking work of Eugène Osty at the Paris International Metapsychic Institute, and the more recent investigations of Prof. J. B. Rhine and his associates on their hundred thousand psychic guinea pigs at Duke University with their radio sequel, incline the student of psychic research towards a decidedly anti-spiritist explanation of metagnomy. To many this is all to the good. The classical experimentation of Osty has long proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that a former presumption is not now justified. That is, that the revelation of facts, unknown to the medium and the sitters but known to the communicating intelligence, is positive evidence of a spirit entity. To many more this is mere evasion by science of an unpleasant situation which, in the words of Richet, "is positively painful for a man of science to contemplate."

Parapsychology has indeed unearthed many new facts in regard to the activities of the subconscious mind and its power to simulate what to the lesser informed would at once appear to be the work of discarnate spirit intelligence. Further, the volume of facts furnished by Rhine still increase our astonishment at the possibilities of the human mind. Nevertheless, one who goes the whole way with Osty and Rhine would hardly balk at the proposition that we may be as much "spirits" now as ever we shall be in a future state of existence when we doubtless—to employ the dictum of Osty—shall have the freer exercise of our faculties unfettered by cerebral function and on that tran-

scendental plane of thought that even Osty admits "is perhaps not extinguished at the death of the body."\*

It is not the purpose of the writer to add more to the purely theoretic accumulations of psychological hypotheses, but rather to offer the reader the results of some of his more recent work with a California sensitive, Mrs. Margaret Foley, in whom the pre-cognitive faculty is apparently highly developed. The experiments described took place over a period of two years of regular weekly sittings. One hundred *selected* prophesies of this medium were fulfilled to the extent of 87 per cent by the end of October, 1937.

\* \* \*

A few words as to the development of this psychic may prove of interest. She was educated in a Roman Catholic Convent in her early years in New Zealand, and since has been self-educated. Married at an early age to a sea captain, life for her became a succession of hazardous voyages in a sailing ship that trafficked in whales and arctic explorers. It was during her many years of this strenuous sea life that, to use her own words, she "unfolded" her "spiritual" powers—in the icy Antarctic.

With the death of her husband, her metagnomy increased very considerably, and as time passed she acquired some reputation locally as an extra-lucid clairvoyante, her special phase being the accurate prediction of the future of her patrons.

Using Osty's researches as a guide, the author commenced the sittings referred to in San Francisco.

In order to render the successes as conspicuous as possible, no predictions of personal marriages or other questions involving intensely emotional states were included in the hundred examples. Predictions that were only slightly inaccurate as to time were counted as successful since the element of time in most previsions is doubtful. (Incidentally, Mrs. Foley states that she is "*not allowed*" to give time—and then usually proceeds to give it!). Errors in color

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\* See *Supernormal Faculties in Man*, by Eugène Osty.

were equally overlooked in those cases in which the color element was only incidental to the prevision. (In one case, the color of a new dress was given as red, and it turned out to be a shot material in which the red was only a minor note, unless the material was transversely illuminated.) Similarly, slight confusion as to names of towns was excused. (In one case, a certain business associate was to hail from Birmingham, *Alabama*; when he turned up, the author recognized his accent as coming from Birmingham. *England!* The medium had seen the word Birmingham written over the man's head (sic) and had jumped to the conclusion that it was the American city.)

The analysis shows a pleasing diversity of subjects involved, so that practically all phases of life and human experience were covered.

With regard to the unfulfilled predictions, the psychic declared, when in the metagnomic state,\* that it was the time factor that was off center; that the prophecy would eventually be fulfilled as given. In the normal state, the medium stresses the fact that she does *not* claim to be infallible.

There is nothing in the nature of the failures that differentiates them from the successes, either in kind or magnitude. The checking of results was accomplished by personal enquiry or by letter, and, as many of the subjects were acquaintances of the writer, the matters were open to close scrutiny. Some of the sitters voluntarily reported.

In choosing the cases, preference was always given to scoffers and doubters, as it was shown that when the metagnomic function was operative in association with such persons, the accuracy was greater and the results were usually quicker; but above all, there was little or no tendency to "help" the prophesy,—indeed even in those cases in which success was achieved, complete in every detail, it was admitted grudgingly and was, almost invariably, attributed to "coincidence".

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\* This usually, though not always, resembles a condition found in the lighter states of somnambulism provoked by hypnosis.

The two examples that follow were given to a scoffer and a skeptical believer in spiritualism, respectively. *All notes taken at the time of sittings.*

**CASE 25—THE FRENCH MOTORCYCLIST:**

*Sitter:* "I have a letter that I should like you to put the 'fluence' on."

(The medium was shown and allowed to hold a letter [in French] which had been recently received from the sitter's Paris agent. Mrs. Foley cannot read French, and therefore could form no idea of the contents, even had she been able to decipher the illegible handwriting, and furthermore the séance room was only dimly lighted.)

*Medium:* "I get an unsettled condition with this. I see the smoke of war, I hear the rumbling of guns—large guns. I see a soldier—an officer. He is dressed in a dirty, blue uniform. I get a brother's vibration. I see a big A. He is trying to identify himself. He is riding for dear life on a very muddy motorcycle. Oh! he comes to a bridge. Oh! Oh!—he is blown up. He is killed and his motorcycle is scattered."

*Sitter:* "This has no bearing upon the letter at all."

*Med.:* "But I get this, I am sure that it must be connected with the letter in some way. However, I leave it with you, brother. It will come to you; you will see."

Next followed a very detailed description of the circumstances surrounding the contents of the letter itself, persons being described in detail and what they were doing at the time recounted in the letter. A suspected employee was cleared of a crime committed by the manager and a neutral was alleged, by the medium, to have guilty knowledge of the affair.

Some months later the skeptical enquirer stated that the manager had confessed and the neutral had admitted complicity, as envisioned by the clairvoyante. It transpired that the war episode recorded *was* connected with the writer of the letter. It was a clear description of how his brother

André met his death on the Belgian frontier as he was riding home for seven days' leave.

*CASE 87—THE FERRY POLICEMAN:*

(This little incident occurred during a demonstration given by the medium before the Society's San Francisco Section.)

*Medium:* "Brother, have you a relative, a police officer?"

*Sitter:* (One of a large group—all present) "No, Madam".

*Med.:* "Well, I see a policeman standing at the back of you, and he has a remarkably large and bright star on his chest—quite a large badge."

*Sit.:* (laughingly) "Perhaps it's a spiritual policeman!"

*Med.:* "No, he is in the body. You will place it later, brother."

*Sit.:* "Sorry, I am not able to place him. I have no dealings with police officers."

Five days later the son of the sitter, a student in the writer's class, reported the success of the above. It seems that his father accidentally dropped the wrong amount of money into the pay box at the Ferry Building, and was sought out by the company policeman to rectify the error. The prominent characteristic of the affair was the dazzling brilliancy of this officer's large nickeled badge, which instantly recalled the medium's prophecy.

According to the psychic, it was a relative of the sitter who gave the above demonstration in order to establish survival. Relatives or close friends, in almost every one of the examined cases, were the alleged agents of information. Only in one or two examples was there any reference to the medium's "guides", and this occurs only in a confirmatory capacity.

The author begs to offer now what he considers to be the most important piece of evidence that he has ever received through any sensitive, and he draws special attention to the

fact that this particular example refutes the argument that little of real practical importance ever comes through such channels.

*CASE 43—THE MEDICAL BOOK:*

The author had written, some time ago, an extensive treatise on the electrical side of medicine, which he had hoped to publish with his usual firm of publishers. Due to the depression in the book trade, the house had become involved in such serious financial difficulties that their entire stock and plant (including four of the author's works) had been taken over by another concern who were not interested in medical works. The writer, therefore, sought a publisher in America, in which country he had gone to lecture at a professional college.

The depression in America was far worse than in England, and the book trade was especially hit. However, one of the most important firms stated in their letter of refusal that if a publisher were not found by the end of 1934, they would be glad to give the work further consideration.

Thus the entire question was shelved, and the matter dismissed from mind (at least in any pressing sense).

THE SITTING OF DEC. 7, 1933—4 P. M.  
(San Francisco)

*Medium:* "Brother, are you worried about a book that is not yet published?"

*Sitter:* "No, but I have a medical work that I have decided to send to Messrs. S. at the end of next year."

*Med.:* "Brother, you are making a mistake, that book is urgent; it will be printed *BEFORE* the end of 1934. I see it in *LONG STRIPS*. The type is so clear I can almost read it."

*Sit.:* "That is most unlikely in view of the relatively small number of houses who are interested in such works. Perhaps you could suggest one I have not tried?"

*Med.*: "They\* tell me it is one you *HAVE* tried, brother."

*Sit.*: "Oh, you mean S. They will probably do it in 1935. I am not to send it until the end of 1934."

*Med.*: "I am going across water with your book. I want you to send it *back where it came from*. Those publishers will undertake it right away."

*Sit.*: "My dear lady, that is quite impossible; they have 'gone broke' and all my other works have been transferred elsewhere where there is no opening for a medical book."

*Med.*: "I do not mean them. I want you to send it back to the original house whose name begins with a C.—there are two names, but I am not shown the second one."

*Sit.*: "Can you get the first name?"

*Med.*: "I see a crucifix. I am shown a great big C."

*Sit.*: "I understand; the house of C. were Catholics. But there is absolutely no chance that the firm of C. could establish their machinery in such a short time—barring a miracle."

*Med.*: "I don't care. They\* say lose no time, or you will be sorry. Telegraph the firm in the East, who now has the book, to send it to England. They will do it free!"

The above sitting, as with others with the same medium, was not in any way the result of a demand, or even a wish on my part to ascertain the fate of the book. The sittings were held solely with a view to the investigation, in a scientific manner, of pre-vision—a work upon which the writer has been engaged for many years, dealing with some two hundred sensitives in various parts of the world, recommended by the various agencies of psychic research, etc., as being specially gifted along the lines of foretelling events.

In the present case, much against his better judgment, the author requested (by air mail) that the manuscript be returned to C. in England. Messrs. C. had silently reorganized and were delighted to get it back. They printed it immedi-

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\*Remark the plural, presumably a reinforced communication.

ately, not even waiting for an agreement! Before the end of 1934 (in May) the first of the "long strips" (galley proofs) began to arrive. As stated by Mrs. Foley, the type was unusually clear.

Time marched on and the publishers got into further difficulties. The production of the book was stopped and, in spite of some rather indefinite assurance from extra-sensory sources *vide* the medium, the author concluded that the costly book with its hundreds of illustrations had proved too much for the resurrected house of C., and had accepted defeat.

References to the book became less and less frequent, and direct questions brought nothing but unsatisfying banalities. But during a sitting held in San Francisco, March 5, 1935—4:30 p. m. the following was produced:—

*Medium*: "You will get news of your medical book in a hurry; yes, you will get a radio; there is a new chapter they want you to write, some new discovery; you will do it; best thing."

*Sitter*: "Lady, you don't know my publishers. I doubt if they've sent a cable in their lives. Why a radio?"

*Med.*: "They show me a green form with lots of words, and you will have to reply by radio, too! There have been changes you don't know about."

*Sit.*: "Odd, indeed, as all the publishers turned the book down on account of its length, and now you suggest that they want it even longer! There is something 'screwy' somewhere!"

A few days after this sitting, an R.C.A. Radiogram was received on a green form, containing some 54 words and requesting the author to consider adding a further chapter on recent research in short wave currents, and asking for some additional illustrations.

It was decided *not* to write the proposed new chapter and a radio message was sent to that effect. (The author had intended to reply by Western Union, but the Radio rate was lower!)

Then something happened in Germany with regard to the theory of short-wave currents and their application which compelled a change of venue in regard to the new chapter, so after all the additional chapter had to be written.

After mailing it, further evidence came to light from French sources which cast doubts on the German findings, so the new chapter was in many respects unsatisfactory. The divinities that preside over incompetent authors must have been aware of the portending bill for Author's corrections that would result, since the chapter never reached the publishers, and although an international tracer was sent out by the Post Offices concerned, it was never found. The chapter had, therefore, to be rewritten from the corrected material. This second effort reached its goal.

By this time the writer was almost persuaded that there must be a very considerable extra-physical interest in his work, and more as a joke than as a scientific experiment, he handed the medium, in the hall of her home, the complete galley proofs but minus the extra chapter and all illustrations. These were done up in a misshapen brown paper parcel tied with string. Nothing was said beyond the question: "How many pages will this make?". The psychic identified the parcel as the medical book and said most definitely, "380". Comment was made (by the writer) upon the lowness of the number and he made a rough estimate that the book would run to about 500-550 pages. This statement produced some hesitation on the part of Mrs. Foley, and she said that she was shown "405" and hoped that the author would like this better. This information was given in a spirit of banter and smilingly. Thinking it a joke, the author made no effort to record it. Certainly, it flashed across his mind that these apparently stupid figures would spoil an otherwise amazing exhibition of lucidity, and in any case he salved his scientific conscience with the fact that they were given unofficially before the sitting proper. As the writer was removing his overcoat, the medium asked if he were not going to make a note.

He thereupon replied that just for spite he would, and wrote them on the wood work of the hall stand! During this writing operation the color of the cover was given as "a beautiful shade of blue"—this was disappointing as the favored cover was red.

Early in November, 1936, an advance announcement was received which gave the number of pages as "XXVI-380" making a total of "406". The page proofs had already indicated the large size of page to be used with its consequent reduction in number.

Upon locating the number inscribed on the hall-stand, the correctness of the forecast was established for the body of the book, and *only one out* for the second, which read "405" in place of the correct figure "406". This minute discrepancy was the only flaw in an otherwise perfect case of clairvoyance. However, honesty compelled him to allude to it when the matter was dealt with. And then, one day, as he was idly turning the leaves of the famous book, his attention was attracted to page XXV, and he was about to close the book when he discovered that the next page, the 26th, *was blank!* So, after all, the clairvoyance had been absolutely correct since the visible numbers when added together did make a total of "405".

Presumably, the delay that occurred between the two estimates (which the author attributed to guessing) was due to the intelligence adding the two sets of figures together.

Whatever Drs. Osty and Rhine and their disciples may think of the above, it would seem abundantly evident that some intelligence—incarnate or discarnate—was doing its level best to stimulate activity on THIS side of the veil.

## A Letter from England

BY DR. NANDOR FODOR

(Research Officer, International Institute for Psychical Research)

London, November, 1937.

### INDEPENDENCE OF TRANCE PERSONALITIES

A sad fate has befallen Mr. Whately Carington's monumental investigation into the independence of trance personalities. After years of labor, in the course of which he gradually recanted most of his previous positive findings, he devised an excellent statistical method to test the autonomy of spirit communicators. He published three lengthy papers on the subject in the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research. At the end of his third paper he suggested that the evidence for the autonomy of communicators (in other words for their independence from the medium's mind) had become very strong, although he was not satisfied that it was sufficiently so for complete conviction. This was a very important conclusion. Unfortunately, Professor Fisher discovered serious errors in the evaluation of Mr. Whately Carington's data. Mr. Whately Carington admitted the validity of the criticism and as a result in his impending fourth paper, as already revealed, he will withdraw his conclusion.

That, alone, was bad enough but worse followed. The Society for Psychical Research had asked Professor Robert H. Thouless for a complete review of Mr. Whately Carington's work. The result of this review has just been published in a paper in the *Proceedings* Vol. XLIV. Part 150, October 1937. In this paper Professor Thouless tears literally to fragments the remnant of Mr. Whately Carington's pioneering efforts and concludes that the author's results "are those which would be expected if there were no real communicating spirits." In other words with the excellent method by which Mr. Whately Carington thought to have proved the independence of communicators he had achieved exactly the opposite end.

In a note on Professor Thouless' paper Mr. Whately Carington admits with admirable candor that he had made "very many mistakes of all orders of magnitude" and insofar as he may unwittingly have misled many of his readers he can only express his deep regret and plead with Dr. Johnson "Ignorance, Madam, sheer ignorance".

"Broadly speaking", he continues, "I accept nearly all of Professor Thouless' criticisms at their face value." He drives the last

nail into the coffin of his heartbreaking work by adding: "At present there seems no prospect of reversing Professor Thouless' conclusion which must, I think, be unequivocally accepted so far as the data at present available are concerned."

It should be noted that Professor Thouless draws no final conclusion from his negative findings. He admits the reasonability for those who believe in the autonomy of communicators to try other tests by the same method. "If these are rigidly applied and rigidly evaluated and are found to give positive results, the existence of autonomous communicators will be proved. If these tests, too, give negative results, the conclusion that there are no autonomous communicators in séances will become a very probable one."

To sum it all up, the mathematical method, the only thing to which Professor Thouless pays compliment, has led Mr. Whately Carington back almost to the point from where he started. He seems to have moved in a very vicious circle and only succeeded in proving that he had proved nothing. It is a regrettable state of affairs which may make many people wonder whether the application of too much science to psychic phenomena may not be as undesirable as the application of too little science.

#### ICELANDIC MATERIALIZATIONS

And now I want to report another fiasco which is of personal concern to me. It is the case of Fru Lara Agustsdottir, the Icelandic medium of whose phenomena, on the basis of the testimonials sent on her behalf, I gave a long account in the August issue of the JOURNAL. Fru Lara Agustsdottir had duly arrived in London but departed considerably sooner than was expected. The reason will be apparent from the following communique which the Council of the International Institute for Psychical Research issued for the psychic press:

"After six séances the materialisation experiments with Fru Lara Agustsdottir of Iceland have been discontinued, it being the unanimous opinion of the Council that in these sittings, no genuine phenomena were produced."

It is not the policy of the International Institute for Psychical Research to make capital of negative findings. The Council desires no credit for exposures and while the evidence is open for inspection to all members of the I.I.P.R., I am requested to pass this sad and incredible story without any further comments.

#### BARON PALMSTIERNÄ'S BOOK

The finding of a lost Schumann Concerto through psychic means has turned the limelight of public attention on *Horizons of Im-*

*mortality*, a book written by Baron Erik Kule Palmstierna, the Swedish Minister in London. It must have taken considerable courage for an active diplomat to write on communication between this world and the next and on the teachings which, in the course of this, he received. The story of the Schumann Concerto is only told at the end of the book as a small incident, and the Baron was by no means pleased at the prominence which was given to it at the expense of the other much weightier issues with which he deals.

The messages were received through a ouija board, and two sisters, Mrs. Alexander Fachiri and Miss Jelly d'Aranyi, both of them famous musicians played the principal part in them. They apparently possess strong mediumistic faculties. The story of the lost concerto began by a message from Robert Schumann that Miss Jelly d'Aranyi should try to find and ultimately play a posthumous work of his for the violin. This request was first made in 1933. After a number of inquiries and several deadlocks the Concerto was found in the Preussische Staatsbibliothek but it was marked "Unfinished" and the authorities were unwilling to allow it to be seen or copied as it was deposited by Johannes Joachim (Joseph Joachim's son to whom the MS descended from his father) on the condition that nobody should see or play it before the hundredth anniversary of Schumann's death. Further messages came from Schumann urging the inquirers to continue to fight and stating that the information that the Concerto was unfinished was wrong:

"This is nonsense. The work is finished. It is possible that the Bibliothek has not got the right copy."

Ultimately, the spirit message proved to be accurate. The complete MS, with the piano score written below in Schumann's own hand, was disinterred from the archives and as, in the meantime, Herr Johannes Joachim gave permission that a copy should be made for Miss Jelly d'Aranyi, the efforts of Baron Palmstierna and his group were crowned with complete success.

There was a great deal of controversy in the Press about this story. One journalist wanted to know why the spirits did not at once say where the Concerto was to be found. Elizabeth Joachim, the surviving daughter of Joseph Joachim said that the existence of the Concerto in the Preussische Staatsbibliothek "was perfectly well known to many people, e.g. to many friends, including Robert Schumann's daughter" and that therefore its location could have been "easily ascertained by anyone sufficiently interested to make inquiries."

To this *Light* pertinently answers that "had Baron Palmstierna and his friend known exactly where to apply, they might have found the Concerto very easily; but the facts are that they did not know, and that those to whom they applied did not know, but that the

spirit messages kept them on the search till the Concerto was found. . . . The marvel and the importance of the discovery is in no way lessened by these criticisms."

*Light* also notes that Baron Palmstierna not only brought upon himself a torrent of criticism but also abuse from a London Spiritualist journal. This is the *Psychic News* which attacked the Baron because he supported Mrs. Fachiri and Miss d'Aranyi in their refusal to term themselves as mediums.

The general publicity, while obscuring the real issues, no doubt will help to secure wide-spread sales for the book. This is a matter to be earnestly wished for as the book is well written and its contents are extremely stimulating and helpful. It deals with many grave issues of life and death and it may be found as important and, in effect, as lasting as Stainton Moses' *Spirit Teachings*.

### THE ASTRAL BODY

In a remarkable address on October 18th at the International Institute for Psychological Research Mr. Ronald Cockersell, one of our youngest clairvoyants, told the story of how he discovered his psychic gifts after a severe fall into a 16 foot deep trench in which he landed on his back. Since then he has had many projection dreams in which he has found himself hovering lightly over the back garden of the house in which he used to live. I quote from the most interesting one:

"Glancing down I saw the moonlight reflected on a dog-kennel in the garden, and the dog lying asleep outside. I floated easily towards the spot, intending to look closely at the animal, as I thought I knew his mistress quite well. As I approached, something disturbed him, for he awoke and saw me suspended above him, watching intently from my elevated position.

"When he recovered from his surprise at seeing a human being floating some twelve feet up in the air, in the dead of night, he made a valiant attempt to reach me by jumping as high as possible, and then announced his failure by barking at the top of his voice, until the inevitable bedroom window was lifted and the dog's mistress, attired in her nightgown, told the dog to be quiet and go to sleep.

"I had a bird's eye view of the whole of the proceedings, and embarrassing though the position was, I made a mental note of the description of the nightgown in question.

"The next morning I made a point of seeing the lady, and remarked that her pet had made a commotion during the night. This she confirmed, adding, 'Yes, I saw him jumping up in the air—at the moon I suppose; silly old thing.' Her surprise when I remarked 'Yes, I know' was rather comical.

"'You looked out of the window and told him to be quiet', I went on, adding foolishly, 'You were wearing a flannel nightdress, with a lace-trimmed collar.'

"The short silence which followed this remark was broken by an indignant, 'But you can't see my backgarden from your house'. I admitted this, but persisted, 'You did wear that nightdress, didn't you', which she reluctantly verified.

"To this day she is wondering how I knew about her flannel nightdress with the lace-trimmed collar."

### *PHYSICAL PHENOMENA IN GERMANY*

"I dare say that we have the best German physical medium" writes Major G. Huth, of Breslau in *Light* (October 14, 1937) describing apport phenomena and some novel experiments:

"We have been promised a number of demonstrations to prove how little we know about matter and the laws governing it. The first was made on a number of tin rings (toy rings) which we received as an apport some time ago. We were told to melt these toy rings (about 200), make two lumps of the molten tin and place these two lumps on our table. In about seven minutes, one lump disappeared and a rain of toy rings came down; after another ten minutes, the second lump disappeared and another shower of rings came down. The number of rings was complete again.

"For the second demonstration we had to get two small bottles of liquid gum with screw tops. The doctor and myself were told to hold each bottle in our left hand. We felt at once a sticky vapor coming out of these screwed-down bottles. Within seven minutes the liquid gum was gone and the bottles half-filled with yellow crystals."

I have been in correspondence with Major Huth about these sittings for about a year. As he does not disclose, in his article in *Light*, the name of his medium and of her controls, I must observe the same discretion. I do hope to have an opportunity for personal observation as, in the near future, I intend to make a Continental trip and shall stop at Breslau where the Major promises to introduce me to his medium.

### *EYELESS VISION*

A little more light was thrown on blindfold reading claims by Mr. Harry Brown, a physical medium in a demonstration at the International Institute for Psychical Research on October 4th, 1937. Mr. Harry Brown has made several appearances on the variety stage. With his eyes plastered with dough and bandaged tightly, he can read with ease anything handed to him or written on a blackboard.

The only difference between Mr. Harry Brown's demonstration and that of others is that Mr. Brown, (who no longer practices mediumship and who was never a professional) does not claim the vision as psychic. He admits that he uses his eyes in a normal manner and the demonstration at the International Institute for Psychical Research served the purpose of successfully proving it. As he is on the stage, Mr. Harry Brown is rather reluctant to go deeply into the matter of explanations. In my opinion there is no particular secret to give away. A little grease on the face, a tightening of the muscles of the eye and a judicious pressure on the dough through the bandages during their application will almost invariably open a chink through which vision, in a downward direction, becomes possible. It requires practice to become proficient in the demonstration. Some members of the Institute have acquired the knack almost at the first trial.

## Death of the Abbé Mermet

The death in the early autumn, of the famous French priest, the Abbé Mermet, brings to the fore once more the interesting phenomena of water divining and diagnosing by means of the "pendule explorateur". Charles Richet explained the movements of the little ball by unconscious muscular action; a theory he found satisfactory for the phenomenon of table tipping as well. The Abbé Mermet did much to develop the use of the pendulum and the means by which its actions are read into intelligible prophecies. He became interested in the movements of the pendulum through the discovery of his own remarkable ability as a dowser. In 1883 there was a terrible drought in western Switzerland and the Abbé was able to save his parishioners from great suffering by discovering hidden streams beneath the ground. Instead of the usual hazel switch, the Abbé used a pendulum and his efforts were so successful that he devoted fifty years of his life to the development of a technique and system of radio-aesthetics. His researches may be of great value to science in future years. He most emphatically claimed that his ability to discover water, diagnose illness, and even find missing persons by means of his pendulum, had nothing to do with a special psychic gift, but was based on scientific data. The remarkable thing about his dowsing was his ability to predict accurately the depth at which water would be found and the flow per minute that could be expected.

In later years the Abbé extended his use of the pendulum to the discovery of disease in the human body. The practice is popular today in France and Italy. Character can also be read by placing the pendulum over a photograph. It is probable that Richet's explanation of unconscious muscular action is the correct one for the little pendule. Granting that it is a motor automatism like automatic writing, we are still in the dark as to the origin of the gift. We stumble again into the difficulty of defining the limits of the subconscious.

The Abbé's method has been applied with success to the discovery of petroleum and precious metals and there is one well-verified story of the Abbé's success in finding the body of a child that had been carried off by an eagle in the Valais mountains—all by means of the little pendule.

The Abbé was born a Frenchman but passed most of the seventy-one years of his life in French Switzerland as a simple country priest.

The London *Observer's* correspondent, writing from Geneva on the death of the Abbé, sums up his remarkable career as follows:

"There can be little doubt that the personality of the Abbé himself counted for much in the proper employment of his 'pendulum'. Those who saw him at work said that the instrument seemed to come alive in his hands, and there must remain some doubt whether anyone but the Abbé himself could have divined water merely by using his pendulum over a large-scale map. But the Abbé's own successes remain incontestable. Furthermore, he had disciples who have obtained good results from following his methods. It is to be presumed that the science (or art) of radio-aesthetics will not die with this simple and devout old priest."

## Excursions into the World of Other Consciousness

THE BETTY BOOK, recorded by STEWART EDWARD WHITE.  
E. P. Dutton \$2.50

The title of this book is misleading because it does not suggest a book of deep import. Some of the JOURNAL'S readers may remember an article by Mr. White which appeared in the August 1933 issue, reporting the substance of trance utterances by the mediumistic subject, Betty. This book is a compilation of such material carefully recorded over a long period. It is not just another record of "spirit communications" about the Hereafter. It contains material concerning the construction and the meaning of life which deserves the most careful study. Nothing more important has been received through mental mediumship in many years.

Betty is a psychic who started like so many others by playing with a ouija board. In a short time she was receiving messages of spiritual teaching through automatic writing which are significant in their substance, quite apart from the validity of the alleged source; that is, the source alleged by Betty's hand, for Betty herself and Mr. White, the compiler of the record, are commendably unprejudiced, and ask the reader to study the contents from any point of view that satisfactorily explains it to him; either as subconscious creation, the work of discarnate minds, or even as the tapping of a universal source of wisdom.

The development of the medium differed from the usual manner. After a few months of automatic writing a new form of mediumship began. Betty began to fall into a kind of double consciousness. She lay with bandaged eyes and reported her mental experiences. Mr. White describes it thus:

"Her speech was at first halting and stumbling, her phrases fragmentary as though she were having great difficulty. Apparently this was due to the necessity for running two consciousnesses at once. The normal, from which she spoke, was subordinate, it seemed; her real awareness being centered in a deeper consciousness, from which she reported back . . . The idea seemed to be that Betty was to be brought in touch, through the superconsciousness, with realities which she absorbed direct; and with ideas conveyed sometimes in words heard with the 'inner ear', sometimes by mental impression. These things she transferred down to her habitual consciousness, which then reported them to me."

This mode of transmission may be difficult to comprehend. Nor does it sound at first convincing. The thought immediately arises, that the concepts that appear in the teachings may be merely clever

subconscious originations. However, the discovery of an ingenious plan behind the utterances, gives rise to further speculation. This sudden development of a plan out of apparent chaos is one of the most curious results of "Communications" purporting to come from discarnate beings. It will be remembered that in a similar plan, that of cross correspondence, a connection was found between "communications" received through a number of mediums unknown to each other, thereby ruling out in that instance the possibility of pure subconscious creation.

Betty's trance utterances were delivered in two different ways. Betty in her normal voice would give descriptions and explanations, recounting pictures "shown her" to illustrate some difficult conception. Then in another voice she would make direct statements in the first person plural as if the discarnates were speaking direct. The subject matter was given in fragmentary form; rarely more than two sentences being expressed at a time on any particular subject. The result was interesting but chaotic until a method of coordinating the whole was discovered. Mr. White writes:

"Take the section I called Make-it-so. I have set down its sentences without change, and in exactly the order they were given. But those sentences came to us almost literally one at a time over a period of a year and a half. They were scattered here and there in a mass of material on a dozen other subjects. They had to be dug out and placed one after the other in juxtaposition; and when that was done we had a complete short essay, properly formed and proportioned.

"Mind you, there was no juggling in all this. On each occasion I put down on its appropriate card in a card index the fact that something had been said on the Make-it-so idea, with the page number. Or on automatic action, or the substances of thought or whatever. Then when the time arrived for compilation I simply extracted each reference, in its original order, from the main body, and copied it down. I did this mechanically, without editing or 'interpretation'; and I confess I was amazed that what had heretofore seemed to be brilliant fragments made so considered a whole. This Make-it-so section represents twenty-five entries on the card index, ranging from page 1 to page 390."

The explanation for these scattered sentences, as given by whatever intelligence created them, is extremely plausible. It was stated that "They" (the Invisibles, as they are called by Mr. White) "wanted to state what *they* were driving at. They wanted no contributions or dilutions from Betty. Such contributions—unconscious of course—were inevitable if a subject was defined enough to arouse her interest. Then it would be impossible to determine what

was original matter and what resulted from association of ideas in the station's own subconscious."

There was another curious and apparently supernormal phenomenon observed in the process of recording the material. If Mr. White made a mistake in taking dictation from Betty he would be immediately corrected, although Betty herself lay blindfolded below the level of the writing table and Mr. White wrote in silence. He gives an example:

"'Attitude of Mind' I once wrote down, and was instantly stopped in mid-sentence. 'No no!' interrupted Betty, '*Altitude* of Mind!'"

It is impossible to touch even briefly upon the teachings themselves in a short review. They might, in a word, be said to form a primer for the expansion of consciousness. The purpose of the book is to bring home the importance of such expansion in the life of every individual. The teaching attempts to demonstrate this importance by proving the tangibility of such abstractions as the substance of thought. The chapters are divided under headings such as Proportion (both spiritual and material), Stability, the Substance of Thought, Personal Responsibility and so forth. Over and over again, Mr. White would ask the entranced Betty if she were talking in symbolism and nearly always there would be an emphatic response to the effect that actual *physical* changes were produced by the power of thought, to a very real extent on the earth and to an almost universal extent in the world of the discarnates.

The physical phenomena, a description of which follows, were produced to illustrate the reality of the etheric or spiritual body, the purpose no doubt being to convince the experimenters of the reality of new "laws" they had been taught.

### *Physical Phenomena*

Appendix II is called "Experiments with the Spiritual Body". Mr. White describes in detail the only physical phenomena in any way connected with Betty's mediumship. It is extraordinary phenomena and coming from such a reliable source *should* be of great interest to science. The series of eleven sittings at which the phenomena were produced took place at the house of Margaret Cameron, author of *The Seven Purposes*, early in 1922. The other participants were Mrs. Cameron's husband; the anonymous authors of *Our Unseen Guest* called Darby and Joan, and another non-professional medium and her husband, known in this chapter as Mr. and Mrs. Gaines.

Joan was a deep trance medium, Mrs. Gaines sensitive in a very light trance, and Mrs. Cameron an automatic writer. From the beginning, directions purporting to come from "Invisibles" came through the entranced mediums. The phenomena were divided between the four mediums, most of them, however, falling to the

lot of Joan and Betty. There was no especial equipment and the experiments took place in an ordinary drawing room which was of course a disadvantage because observations of physical phenomena are of far greater value if checked by recording instruments. Fortunately the phenomena were all produced in white or pale violet light so that everything in the room remained visible.

In explanation of their purpose the "Invisibles" gave the following through Betty in the usual manner:

"Both mind and body are the human manifestations of one reality, the human consciousness. The body is the material manifestation of the sort of consciousness that is human. The mind is the link between the body and what we call the spirit, or cosmic germ. The spirit or cosmic germ, the actual *I am* of the individual itself has a definite body, with weight, form, color, substance.

"We have, of course, demonstrated the existence of the mind and the physical body. It remains to demonstrate the actual existence of this other, or Beta, body, as a tangible and definite, not merely a symbolic thing."

Joan and Betty were heavily blindfolded and put into trance. For some time nothing happened. Then Joan said she felt cold around her ankles and Betty felt a tremendously strong current in her arm. Finally Joan cried out:

"Pinch it! Feel the cold stratum."

A cold spot was located by the others of the group extending some inches above the floor. Joan again cried:

"Pinch it again. Me, me, away, me out there where it's cold."

Darby caught the idea of what was wanted, and pinched the air about four feet from Joan but a little to her right.

"Not there, in front of me," Joan insisted, "Not so high; I'm not so high."

Darby again pinched the air; this time in front of her and about on a level with her knee. Instantly her left leg winced back as though it had itself been pinched. He repeated the experiment at the level of her waist; her hand flew to her head\*. Successive trials seemed to show that points of sensitiveness existed at a distance from Joan's physical body corresponding in location to the parts of the physical body; but apparently on a somewhat smaller scale. That is to say when one pinched the air at the floor, the reaction was in her ankles; at the waist level, the reaction was in the head; and at various points between, the shoulder, hand, knee

---

\* It must be remembered that Joan could not see Darby pinching the air above her as she was heavily blindfolded and in deep trance. She had no memory of anything that had transpired after awaking.

or other part jerked back as though in pain. When these points had been sufficiently determined, Joan sighed and said in a relieved voice:

"Now I can go back."

One of the "Invisibles" speaking through Joan said:

"The subconscious is to the Beta what the conscious is to the physical."

Questions were put concerning the nature of the Beta and replies were received through the entranced mediums. The Beta, it was explained, was "actual invisible substance which you have long termed soul or spirit". It has weight and the weight could be recorded by placing the medium on fine scales and noting the difference (a matter of ounces) while the Beta body is out of the physical.

Thus began a series of experiments which link preceding observations of other investigators concerning astral body experiences, ectoplasmic emanations, and apparitions. Scientifically demonstrated proof of the existence and physical reality of an etheric double of the body, would do much to correlate these phenomena. It is to be hoped that such experiments can be repeated again under equally ideal conditions of light plus apparatus for weighing the medium as suggested and thermometers to record the changes of temperature. It may be that the "cold spots" observed are not actual physical changes of temperature but some reaction in the observer to an invisible substance.

At the next séance the trance utterances ordered the group to watch Joan's forearm. The muscles were absolutely flaccid, yet it began to quiver at a rate so rapid it was impossible to simulate the effect consciously. A thin cold streak was detected under the palm. When pinched Joan winced as if hurt.

"We could take her anywhere while that cord is attached" came from the "Invisibles".

Here is mention of the astral cord spoken of without exception by all those who claim to have out-of-the-body experiences, though it is usually described as attached to the forehead of the physical body. Three more cold spots were found on the instruction of the trance mediums. One was near Mrs. Cameron, another close to Mr. White and a third near another member of the group. These, it was stated, were the spiritual bodies of discarnates. The experimenters asked how they could be sure such cold spots did not emanate from themselves, and received the following reply:

". . . When you pinch the Beta of Joan you get a physical reaction from her, and if you pinch the other Betas from now to doomsday you will get no physical jerks from anybody. It would then be reasonable to suppose that those Betas belong to someone discarnate."

At the fifth sitting the group began to see smoke-like emanations from Joan's fingers. The emanations grew stronger until the outline of the arm could be seen in double. The light was that of normal electric light. This smoke-like substance said to be the Beta emanating was seen by all the experimenters about the hands, knees and feet of Joan. It came also from Margaret's hands. Later Joan was instructed to stand up and slowly her right side became indistinct in outline and another outline began to emerge from her side. The effect was that of a double as in the former experiment, which moved out until corresponding parts of the two bodies were about eighteen inches apart.

In the seventh sitting a luminous mask formed over Joan's face which completely concealed it and the bandage that blindfolded her eyes. Several distinctly different faces were formed. This type of transfiguration is less likely to be an optical illusion than the usual elongations or changes of expression witnessed with Mrs. Bullock and other transfiguration mediums, particularly as the mask was so thick it obscured a bandage.

The culminating phenomenon which ended the sittings is worth quoting in full. Joan, Betty and Margaret were placed behind a black cloth screen. The others sat on the opposite side. After the mediums went into trance, the observers saw a luminous material seep through the screen near the carpet:

" . . . Shortly we all noticed that the center panel of the screen appeared to bulge outward a little; and this bulge seemed to palpitate or waver. There were sharp folds in the black stuff that draped the screen (which itself was stretched tight and 'unbulgeable'). These folds over the bulging portion were completely obscured by the luminous fog, which was about in the proportionate dimensions of a standing human figure directly in front of the place where we knew Joan to be seated behind the screen. After a few moments this appearance moved about two feet to our left along the screen. The folds that had been obscured again came sharply into sight, while those to the left that had been clearly defined, now disappeared. At this moment the telephone rang. In answering it. I passed behind the screen. To my surprise I found that Joan was no longer seated, nor even directly in front of her chair; but erect, and exactly behind the point at which the latest obscuration was taking place on the other side of the screen. In other words, the shifts of position and location were following exactly Joan's, to us unknown movements . . ."

We know of no other observations recorded in psychic literature which recount exactly this same phenomenon: the projection of the etheric body by experimentation and witnessed by a number of

reliable people. There is of course the possibility that this group were victims of mass hypnosis or hallucination, but it seems rather remote. If, on the other hand, we accept this demonstration as a bona fide phenomenon, then it must be subject to natural law and therefore demonstrable at any time under equally advantageous conditions. Once the existence of an etheric or Beta body were scientifically established, many other classes of psychic phenomena would fall into line with known laws and leave the hazy realms of the supernatural to which they have been for so long relegated. We, therefore, owe our gratitude to Mr. White and his collaborators in these experiments for the clue that they offer us. And we heartily recommend "The Betty Book" to all those who are interested in supernormal phenomena.



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The First American Society for Psychological Research was formed in 1895, in consequence of a visit by Sir W. F. Barrett to this country, and Dr. Simon Newcomb became its President. In 1897 the Society invited a man of signal ability, Richard Hodgson, A.M., LL.D., sometime Lecturer in the University of Cambridge, to become its Executive Secretary, and he accepted.

This organization later became a branch of the English Society under the valuable guidance of Dr. Hodgson until his death in 1901. The American Society for Psychological Research was then re-established with James H. Hyslop, Ph.D., formerly Professor of Logic and Ethics in Columbia University, as Secretary and Director.

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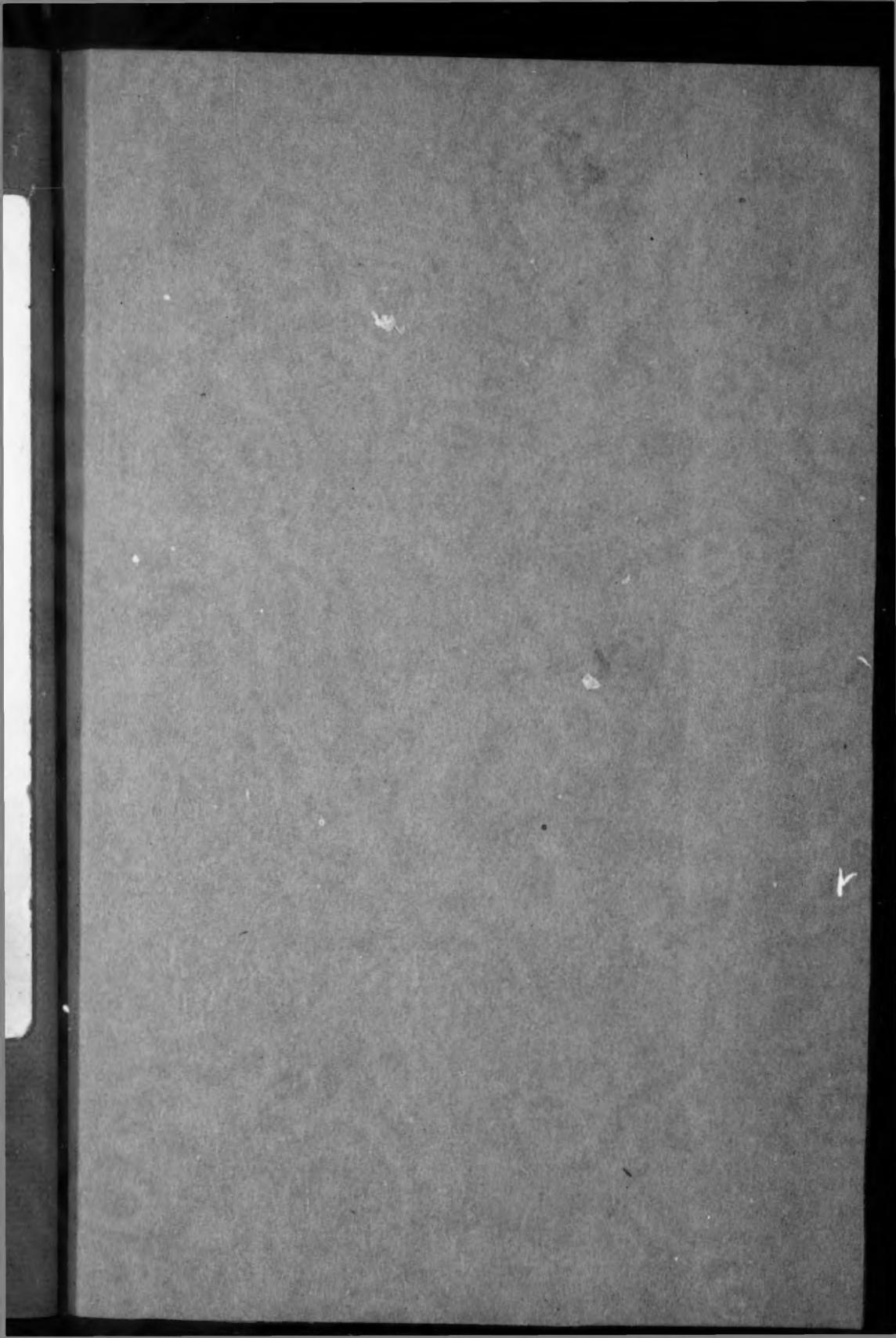
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