THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

VOLUME XLV JANUARY • 1951 NUMBER 1

CONTENTS

THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH, Inc.
880 FIFTH AVENUE • • • NEW YORK 21, N. Y.
Single Copy, $1.50 Published Quarterly $5.00 a year

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE SOCIETY

1. The investigation of claims of telepathy, clairvoyance, veridical hallucinations and dreams, psychometry, precognition, dowsing, and other forms of supernormal cognition; of claims of supernormal physical phenomena, such as raps, telekinesis, materialization, levitation, fire-immunity, poltergeists; the study of automatic writing, trance speech, hypnotism, alterations of personality, and other subconscious processes: in short, all types of the phenomena called psychic, mediumistic, supernormal, parapsychological and metapsychic, together with the bordering subjects.

2. The collection, classification, study and publication of reports dealing with the above phenomena. Readers are asked to report incidents and cases. Names must be given, but on request will be treated as confidential.

3. The maintenance of a library on psychical research and related subjects. Contributions of books and periodical files will be welcomed.

4. Cooperating in the above tasks with qualified individuals and groups who will report their work to the Society.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOCIETY

Members, who receive the Proceedings and the Journal, pay an annual fee of $10. (One may become a Life Member or endow a Memorial Membership on payment of $200.) *Associates*, who receive the Journal only, pay an annual fee of $5. (Life Associate membership, $100.) *Fellows*, who receive all publications of the Society, pay an annual fee of $25. (Life Fellowship, $500.) *Patrons and Founders*: For those who wish to make a still larger contribution to the Society's work, these classes are open at $1000 and $5000, respectively.

It is to be remembered that membership in a scientific society means more than merely a subscription to its publications. The work must be carried on largely through the income from membership fees. Therefore members, old and new, are urged to make their membership class as high as they feel they can. *If a comparatively small proportion of the present members went one class higher, the money available for research would be more than doubled.*

THE JOURNAL of the American Society for Psychical Research is published quarterly by the American Society for Psychical Research, Inc., 880 Fifth Avenue, New York 21, N. Y. "Entered as second-class matter July 15, 1941, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879."

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Notice of Annual Meeting of the Voting Members of the American Society for Psychical Research, Inc.

The Annual Meeting of the Voting Members of the American Society for Psychical Research, Inc., will be held at the office of the Society, 880 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1A, Borough of Manhattan, City of New York, on Tuesday, January 30, 1951, at 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon, for the election of five Trustees and for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

Lydia W. Allison, *Secretary*

Medical Section

During the year 1950 the Medical Section of the Society held seven lecture meetings for members. Each lecture was followed by a general discussion. Speakers and their topics were:

January 25th, "Paranormal Experiences in Clinical Practice," Geraldine Pederson-Krag, M.D.

February 22nd, "An Instance of Apparent Precognition Psychoanalytically Unmasked," Jule Eisenbud, M.D.

March 29th, "A Traumatic Event and its Telepathic Sequelae," Montague Ullman, M.D.

April 20th, "The Use of Brain Potential Patterns for the Demonstration of Psi in Interpersonal Communication," Wayne Barker, M.D.

May 24th, "A Putative Example of Mixed Clairvoyant and Telepathic Precognition Involving Analysand and Analyst, as well as a Newspaper Correspondent Personally Unknown to Both," Martin Schreiber, M.D.

October 25th, "Two Telepathic Dreams and their Analysis," Jan Ehrenwald, M.D.

November 28th, "A Series of Spontaneous Cases in the Tradition of *Phantasms of the Living*," Mrs. L. A. Dale.

Notice to Members

The *Journal of Parapsychology*, owing to increased costs of production, has regretfully found it necessary to terminate its financial arrangement with this Society on January 1, 1951, whereby our members, above the class of associates, received its *Quarterly Journal*. Members who wish to subscribe to the *Journal of Parapsychology* are advised to address that publication at College Station, Durham, North Carolina. The annual subscription rate is six dollars.

In place of the *Journal of Parapsychology* members of this Society, above the class of associates, will, from time to time, receive other literature on psychical research, in addition to this JOURNAL. Scheduled for distribution early in 1951 is a pamphlet of 44 pages on "Trance Mediumship," by Mr. W. H. Salter of the S.P.R., concerned with two eminent mediums, one or the other of whom has for more than sixty years been under the close observation of experienced investigators. Three appendices complete the pamphlet: (1) "Personal Control in Trance Sittings," by the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas; (2) "Telepathy from the Sitter," by Mrs. Kenneth Richmond; and (3) a selected "Reading List" of trance-mediumship.

Erratum

JOURNAL for October 1950, page 135, line 5: *for* "*Proceedings* for 1912" *read* "*Proceedings* for 1913, No. 1," Attached is a gummed label which may be affixed to the page in question.

To be inserted in the A.S.P.R. JOURNAL,
October 1950, page 135.
Line 5: *for* "*Proceedings* for 1912"
read "*Proceedings* for 1913, No. 1.

Dowsing: A Field Experiment in Water Divining

L. A. DALE, R. M. GREENE, W. MILES, G. MURPHY,
J. M. TREFETHEN, AND M. ULLMAN, M.D.

Introduction

As our readers are well aware, the alleged ability of certain individuals to discover underground water (and other useful things) has been the subject of investigation for many decades, with results which are very intriguing, very complicated, and very difficult to interpret.

Two papers on the history of water divining in the United States were recently published in this JOURNAL (1, 2) and this American work is but a fraction of the historical material obtainable for the world. The standard study of the problem by Barrett and Besterman (3) gives extensive documentation and there are likewise many studies in the languages of the European continent.

It is not our purpose in this report to present an evaluation of the evidence for and against the general claims of water diviners or of the conclusions reached by other investigators. Our small study is based on a very limited objective and we should not wish to be interpreted as believing that we have contributed any findings which radically change the over-all research situation.

As a result of our studies of the research literature and some slight contact with water diviners in the Northeastern United States, we came to the conclusion that one type of urgently needed investigation had not as yet been undertaken and that we should devote all our energies to filling in this gap. This was the problem: Can water diviners find water under conditions in which the professional geologist is unable to do so? We needed, of course, to define this problem in such a way that both the diviners and the geologists could work in a straightforward and objective way, so that the accuracy of their indications regarding the presence of water could be checked without material error. It would only be necessary to choose a terrain without surface water, wells, etc., which would betray the presence of underground water and in which digging or drilling could, without great expense, categorically prove the correctness or incorrectness of the indications. As will be noted below, however, even this simple experiment could not be conducted in ideal form through scarcity of funds. We ought really therefore to reformulate our question in this fashion: Is it feasible, in the

course of a few days, and without large expense for drilling, to demonstrate the success of water diviners under conditions in which success is not achieved by qualified geologists?

The Problem

The first thought of conducting the present study occurred to us when, in the summer of 1948, Mr. Kenneth Roberts invited some of us to observe a group of dowsers at work on his farm in Kennebunkport, Maine. On that occasion (which, for various reasons, did not permit us to reach any conclusions about the reality of the water-divining ability), we began to wonder whether somewhere nearby in Maine there might not be a terrain permitting the direct comparison of diviners with geologists. Two of us (JMT[1] and GM) discussed the question whether a rather level and sandy region could be found in southern or eastern Maine where the situation was completely "blind" as far as surface indications of water were concerned. A tentative decision was made to recruit a group of diviners and to check their accuracy.

During the winter of 1948-1949 a correspondence between JMT and GM led to the decision to utilize a tract of land near Liberty, Maine, containing no wells or surface water, sufficiently level to be walked on easily even when blindfolded, and quite sure to contain water at a depth which could feasibly be ascertained by driving down a pipe. It must be explained at once that it would have been much more dramatic to have chosen a very complex terrain involving great irregularities and huge rock formations; under these conditions, however, it would have been impossible to have tested the dowsers' indications. We would have spent our entire research appropriation, perhaps drilling at one point, and would never know whether the water struck at a great depth had been responded to in some paranormal fashion or merely reached as the result of a lucky shot. We had to have a region in which a number of diviners could work and where the claims of each could be objectively tested without great expense. It must be remembered that if one allows oneself to go down to depths such as 150 or 200 feet, one is almost sure to strike water at any point in Maine, or indeed at any point in the Northeastern United States—a fact which calls in question the usual divining procedure in which one follows the diviner's indication and finds good water at distances of 50 or 100 or 150 feet without having specified in advance the depth at which water will be found.

Having chosen the general location of our site and having ordered

[1] Professor of Geology, University of Maine.

standard equipment adequate to locate and pump water up to a distance of 25 feet beneath the surface, we chose the time—the first week in August—in which relative drought insures the absence of surface water and in which the water table changes but little from week to week. We then sent invitations to a few water diviners in the area about whom we already knew and advertised in four Maine newspapers (the *Kennebec Journal*, the *Waterville Morning Sentinel*, the *Bangor Daily News*, and the *Belfast Republican Journal*), using the following form:

> WATER DIVINERS—Dowsers, those who can find water with forked stick, are invited to take part in search for water in open country near Liberty, Maine, on August 4th, 5th, or 6th, for the benefit of scientists interested in this power. Travel expenses and $12 for the working day available; also prize for outstanding success. Those interested write to: Gardner Murphy, Ashland, N. H.

The responses began immediately to flow in to GM and he replied day by day, indicating a specific appointment at the Adams House in Liberty. Those who are interested in the sociology and folklore of the phenomenon may be impressed by the fact that replies from 130 diviners were received.

Using the principle "first come first served," we made appointments for the three-day period with as many individuals as we felt we could accommodate, and simply sent word to the others that we regretted our inability to make use of their services at the time. (Those interested in further research on divining may at any time borrow our list of names and addresses.)

As it happened, a few contenders failed to appear for their appointments. The actual number who went through the procedure was 27 (twenty-two men, four women, and one adolescent girl).

A week before the tests were run, JMT and GM visited Liberty, selected the exact site to be used, and arranged with a local resident who owned a truck to employ helpers for the driving of the pipe and the pumping of the water after the tests had been made. Since there was a well a few hundred yards from the site (completely hidden by trees) it was obvious that the depth of the water could not be more than ten or fifteen feet. It would therefore be possible accurately to check each diviner's indication as to depth of water (the surface being fairly level and the ground so soft that the water below the surface would be level rather than standing in pockets or flowing) and rate of flow by driving pipe down, ascertaining at just what point water was struck and pumping it out to find the actual number of gallons flowing per minute.

Procedure

LAD, RMG, and WM joined JMT and his helpers as field team while MU and GM cooperated in the task of meeting and interviewing the diviners who arrived—mostly by car—at Adams House for their appointments. MU and GM took turns in questioning the diviners according to the following form:

INTERVIEW FORM

Name: Date:
Address:

Sketch of Dowsing History

1. Does water-divining ability run in the family?
2. How and when did you first hear that such an ability exists?
3. When and by whom did you first actually see it practiced?
4. When and under what circumstances did you yourself first try it?
5. Were you successful from the start?
6. Has your ability improved, remained the same, or lessened over the years?
7. Do you feel that your physical and/or mental states influence your ability?
8. What is your theory as to how water divining works?

Sketch of Life History

1. Place of birth (specify whether urban or rural)? Date?
2. Number of brothers and sisters (how many older, how many younger)?
3. Parents still living (if not, give cause of death)?
4. How many brothers and sisters still living?
5. As a child did you get along well with parents? With brothers and sisters?
6. What is one outstanding thing you remember about your father? Your mother?
7. As a child, did you have many close friends outside the family?
8. How much schooling have you had?
9. Did you enjoy school?
10. What was your favorite subject in school?
11. What was your favorite pastime or hobby as a child?
12. Were your parents church-goers?
13. Do you go to church regularly now? If not, did you do so at any time in your life?
14. What is your present occupation?
15. Have you ever had any other trade or occupation?

16. What are your hobbies or special interests at the present time?
17. Do you belong to any clubs, lodges, etc.?
18. What do you most like to listen to on the radio?
19. What is your favorite reading matter?
20. Are you married? If so, for how long?
21. Do you have children? If so, number, age, and sex.
22. Do you have many close friends?
23. Have you ever had any serious illnesses or accidents?
24. Do you dream often? Vividly?
25. Do you think that sometimes dreams may foretell the future?
26. Do you think there is such a thing as thought transference or mind reading or "mental telepathy"?
27. Do you think there is anything unusual about yourself that accounts for, or might be related to, your gift for water divining?

In spite of the formal questionnaire, the interviewing was actually quite casual. In the case of MU, there was reasonably systematic conversation relating to the backgrounds and interests of the diviners, and as a psychiatrist MU was able to acquire some impression of their personalities. In the case of GM, however, who was restricted by problems of meeting people who often came in batches and had to be put at their ease, the interviewing was much more sketchy.

After completion of the interview, either MU or GM drove the diviner to the experimental terrain, which was about a mile and a half away. Here he was met by LAD at a point some 200 yards from the actual testing ground. There was a heavy screen of evergreens between so that no diviner on leaving the car was able to see the testing ground. Before reaching a point from which it could be seen, the diviner was blindfolded by LAD and then led to the testing ground. Work was done first with blindfold, then without, the following "Field Record" being filled out in each case:

FIELD RECORD

Name:
Date:
Time expt. started: Time expt. terminated:
Details about rod (with close-up photo):

I. Work With Blindfold
   (a) Method:
   (b) Number, intensity, form of rod-movements:
   (c) For each dip of rod, get specific reading on
      1. Depth in feet:
      2. Amount of flow (gallons per min.):
   (d) At end, ask subject to choose his best shot:

II. Work Without Blindfold

(a) Method:
(b) Number, intensity, form of rod-movements:
(c) For each dip of rod, get specific reading on
    1. Depth in feet:
    2. Amount of flow (gallons per min.):
(d) At end, ask subject to choose his best shot:

Most of the diviners brought their own sticks or rods with them; indeed, some of them brought several sticks. Others made use of sticks which they cut on the way or sticks provided by the experimenters. Tufts of grass, blueberry bushes, scrub growth and, at the lower edge of the terrain, small but thickly growing evergreens and other trees interfered somewhat with movement (see sketch of the terrain, Fig. 1). In a few cases, this caused stumbling. One individual was not asked to work blindfolded because of his arthritic condition, and one of the ladies became panicky and removed her blindfold prematurely. Two other diviners, because of advanced age or infirmity, were also excused from working blindfolded. It will be seen below that these circumstances could not have altered the findings.

There was, of course, no limit on the amount of time the diviner might spend since he could, in any event, walk back and forth until the rod turned. In point of fact, it did turn in every instance within a few moments and in most cases after just a few steps had been taken. As a rule, there were several points with blindfold and several points without blindfold at which the rod moved. The diviner was asked to select the "best" spot of those chosen with blindfold and the "best" spot of those chosen without it. Here again, we were governed by considerations of expense. We could not have driven the pipe and pumped out the water for every individual point for each of the 27 persons.

Each individual was asked in relation to his two "best" points how deep he thought the water was and how fast the rate of flow would be. The first question was answered in terms of feet and was apparently gauged in most cases by the vigor of the turning movement of the rod. Most of the diviners, however, were very reluctant indeed to say anything specific about the rate of flow at each point. They used expressions such as "good flow" or "strong flow" or "not much water" or "not enough for a well," and it required considerable persuading to get them to use the concept of number of gallons per minute. It was thought necessary, however, to try to obtain something specific about rate of flow which could be checked upon and which would serve to differentiate them from one another

○ 1A Dowsers' location and number
○ 1B Dowsers, blindfold
□ 1 Observation hole number
– – – Boundary of test area

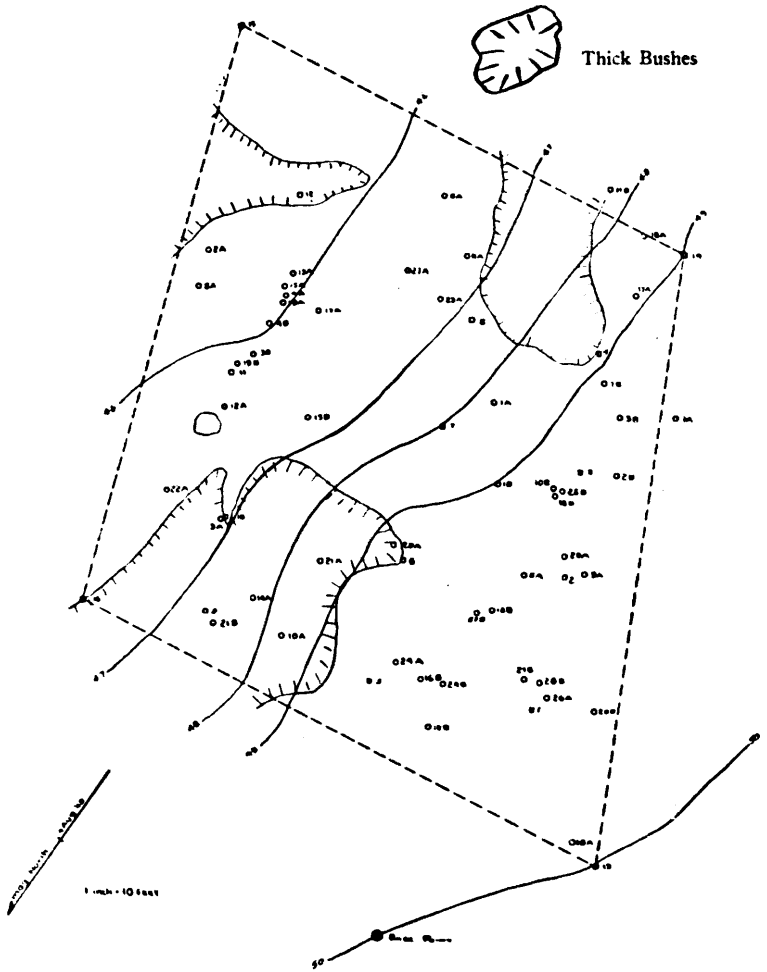

FIG. 1.

Site of dowsing experiment near Liberty, Maine.

in terms of accuracy. In two instances, it was impossible to get a specific estimate.

The attitude of the diviners to the testing seemed to be in all cases essentially positive. They did indeed quite properly object to the artificiality of the situation as they saw it, for it was hard to believe that anyone was actually planning a house and well in that field. The blindfold was frequently unpleasant, especially when the ground was bumpy or one ran into thickets. In spite of such minor difficulties, however, it was apparently the belief of all that the rod responded in its normal way to underground water.

Further light on the matter of the diviners' attitude is offered by the following considerations: When MU and GM asked the diviners about their own explanation of the movement of the rod, every person (with one doubtful exception) replied in terms of a physical force, usually conceived in terms of electricity, or some form of energy allied to electricity. Despite the fact that a few remarks about "psychic matters" were made in the course of the interviews, not a single diviner said anything about the kinds of interpretations which are current among parapsychologists, such as Barrett's belief that clairvoyant perception of water is followed by a motor automatism of hands or arms activating the rod. There did not appear to be a single individual who thought that divining was due to clairvoyant perception of water, or, on the other hand, to psychical action upon the rod in the form of psychokinesis. The universal interpretation was the physical interpretation rejected by Barrett. This interpretation was held apparently in the same way in which one holds one's beliefs regarding other chemical and physical forces. The diviners thought that divining was a physical phenomenon which was not as yet fully understood, but which was in the same general category with all the other phenomena of physics. Without exception, they recognized the prevalence of skepticism about the reality of divining ability, but they gave incidents in their own history which for them established its reality.

Incidentally, this belief on the part of the dowsers that they were dealing with physical forces, and their constant comparison of these forces with those which are known in radio and other modern expressions of electrical engineering, seemed to the research team to count strongly against the view that the dowsers were special kinds of people. Neither the interviewers nor the field staff saw anything to suggest that they were different from the general farm and small town population of the region from which they were drawn. It might be argued that they were at least people of very limited education. Against this point, however, it must be urged that one of the dowsers, a successful retail merchant, had gone through the University of Maine and had, as a matter of fact, been a classmate

of JMT's. Another in the group was also a college graduate and a highly successful business man. The fact that these people drove in good cars considerable distances tends on the whole to suggest relatively comfortable standards of living and the kind of leisure to "knock off from work" which is not found among workers or farmers at the lowest educational level.

The "Field Record Sheet" shown above was filled out by LAD for each diviner as he moved over the terrain, while WM took notes on his method of working, etc. Motion picture shots were taken by RMG of each diviner in action. After the dowser had chosen the best spots *with* and the best spots *without* blindfold, JMT's team, which included Mr. Stackpole, district water engineer of the U. S. Geological Survey, located the points by stadia measurement and plotted them on a large-scale map.

When the diviners returned to the hotel, GM asked them how they liked the test and paid them at the rate of $12 for the experiment plus 5¢ a mile for the distance traversed from and to their homes. (In most instances, the diviner had to take the whole day off and it was arbitrarily decided that eight hours at $1.50 per hour was fair compensation.)

Having completed the tests on Saturday, JMT and GM stayed over and made sure that the pumping crew understood the correct procedure and watched while pipes were driven, measuring in inches the depth to which a bob had to be dropped within the pipe to touch water. Likewise the pump removed the water at a rate timed with a stop watch so as to enable us to see just how fast the water flowed in. We aimed to measure the depth and rate of flow for one blindfold point and one non-blindfold point of each of the 27 diviners. Actually, however, various exceptions have to be noted: (1) Places where a boulder was struck. (2) Places where the point was so very close to another point already selected that there could not be a difference of more than an inch or two in the depth of the water. (3) Instances, as noted above, where the diviner did not wish to accept the blindfold. (4) Instances, also noted above, where we could not obtain from the diviner an estimate of rate of flow. (5) All blindfold holes not sunk because of exhaustion of funds.

Results

The results revealed by the driving of the pipe and the pumping as compared with the guesses made by the diviners are shown in Figs. 2 and 3. In these scatter diagrams it can immediately be seen that there is no general correspondence between the estimates and the actual facts. Neither in the case of the depth estimates nor in the case of the estimates of rate of flow is there any relation between

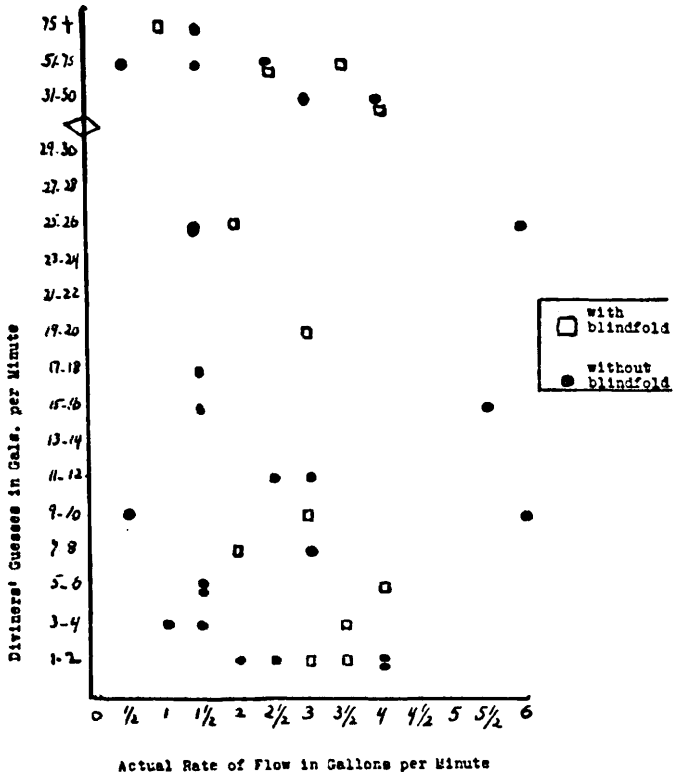

FIG. 2.
Actual rate of flow in gallons per minute compared with diviners' guesses as to actual rate of flow.

the dowsers' indications and the facts, except such as might easily have occurred by chance. Attention is drawn especially to the tendency very greatly to overestimate both depth and rate of flow.

For control purposes, as indicated, we wished to find out how good an estimate could be made by relying upon normal utilization of facts about underground water. Prior to the driving of the pipe JMT and the water engineer, Mr. Stackpole, independently made estimates as to depth and rate of flow at each of 16 different points which had been staked out in straight lines across the terrain from the four

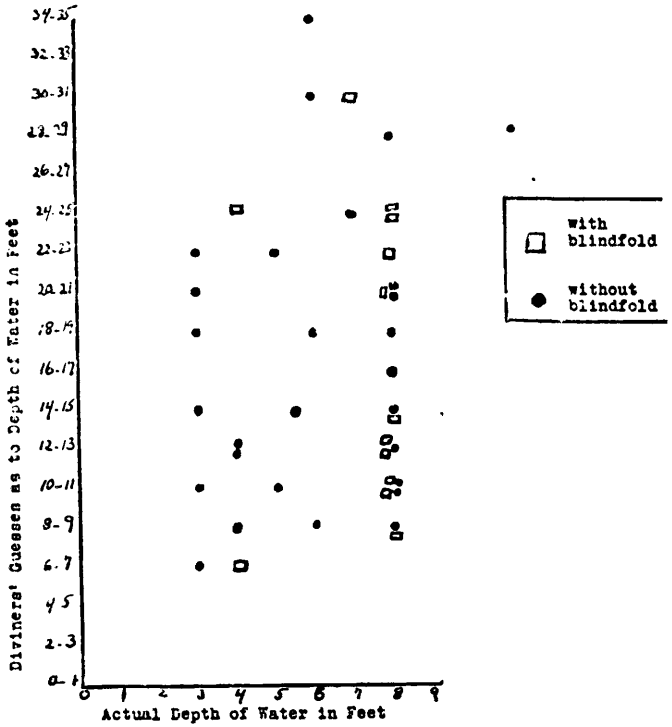

FIG. 3.
Actual depth of water in feet compared with diviners' guesses as to depth.

corners. The geologist and the water engineer were at a slight disadvantage here as compared with the diviners since the diviners could choose any points they liked and the "experts" had to follow a prearranged plan. On the other hand, the experts had the advantage of knowing of the presence of a nearby well; and knowing that the water in soft soil must be nearly level, they could properly apply their information. The dowsers, thinking and working in terms of "veins" of water (which did not of course exist) could hardly make use of the fact of the well even had they known about it.

Figure 4 shows that the "experts" estimated quite closely the over-all depth of the water table and also depth at the specific points; there is a very substantial positive correlation between the

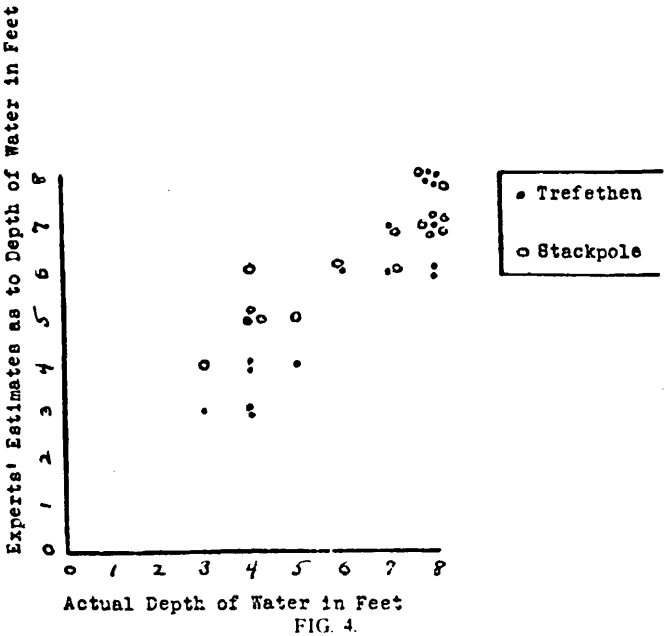

FIG. 4.

Actual depth of water in feet compared with experts' estimates as to depth.

estimates of the two men as to the depth and the actual facts as to depth point by point. The estimates are necessarily based in part upon the slope of the land, which was considerable, but secondary considerations also entered in since neither of the men consistently reduced every estimate in exact proportion as the land fell off.

When it comes to the estimates of rate of flow, as shown in Fig. 5, the over-all or average estimate given by the water engineer for the terrain as a whole is very good. That of the geologist was very much too low. When the actual *rates of flow at different points* are compared with the point-by-point estimates given by the two experts, it becomes clear that these results are such as would be obtained by chance alone.

To summarize, then: Both experts did extremely well with the matter of *depth;* the water engineer did well in over-all estimate of *rate of flow*, but did not appropriately vary his estimates from point to point within the terrain; the geologist's estimates of rate of flow were too low and likewise unrelated to the actual point-by-point variations.

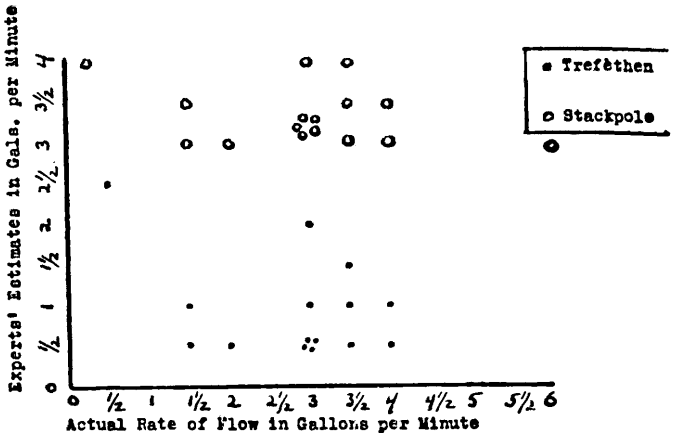

FIG. 5.
Actual rate of flow in gallons per minute compared with experts' estimates as to rate of flow.

While, therefore, the experts did not score successes on every point on which they were consulted, they did dramatically succeed in their estimates of depth. Even the very best estimates of the diviners belong in a completely different category. Not one of our diviners could for a moment be mistaken for an "expert."

We had promised, as will be recollected, to award prizes for the best performances. First, second, and third prizes were won by those diviners whose combined estimates as to depth and rate of flow, blindfolded and non-blindfolded, showed the smallest error. In a note of congratulation later sent out to the participants, it was made clear that the awards were based solely on objective approximation to the facts and that we were not committing ourselves to any theory regarding divining. It is of some interest to note that the diviner who did best of all had used convenient round numbers, saying for both his blindfold and non-blindfold depth test "10 feet" (at most points near the upper edge of the sloping ground where he worked the water was a foot or two short of 10 feet down) and for rate of flow "5 gallons" (this was too high, but still not an unreasonable guess for water flow in that area). The man who came in second was one who had lived in Liberty. He quite frankly announced before the test began that he was well acquainted with the terrain and made no attempt to conceal the fact that he was using his knowledge. (This in JMT's estimation should have disqualified him, but GM did not see how disqualification could fairly

be decided upon after an invitation to him to participate, together with instructions and promise of rewards, had been made. This was one of the various slips and errors made by the research team.)

Discussion

There is not much more to be said. We draw no conclusion about divining in general. We made no direct observations on the problem of "what activates the stick." But in most cases, the observers felt entirely certain that the diviner's muscles were turning the stick down, despite the fact that other muscles were opposing this movement. We saw nothing to challenge the prevailing view that we are dealing with unconscious muscular activity, or what Frederic Myers called "motor automatism." We do not stress this point, however, because our research dealt only with the question of accuracy in water finding. The one point that we wish to bring out is the only point in which this study has any originality or value: There was a direct comparison between experts and diviners, and the particular group of diviners which took part in this project was notably inferior to the experts in the matter of estimates of water depth and rate of flow. This small point may have its value in a larger context. But two major issues remain open: (1) Does water divining ever occur by virtue of a paranormal process? and (2) Is the motion of the stick invariably the result of the diviner's own muscular contractions? The present writers do not wish to commit themselves at this time on these issues, believing that far more research is needed before they can be answered.

A documentary film based upon the motion pictures mentioned above has been prepared by RMG and is available for distribution to universities and other research centers. The use of this film may perhaps help in one of the activities to which the A.S.P.R. is especially committed—the task of enabling scientists and the general public to understand the social context, the level of scientific comprehension, and the folklore of the community which serve as the matrix within which the phenomena of psychical research are embedded. This film, if used without dogmatism in connection with the present report, may have some educational value. It is hoped that further work can be carried out by at least some members of the present group of authors and that improvements in methodology can be achieved.

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The *Modus Operandi* of Trance Communication: A Comparison of Theories

DOROTHY A. BERG

Of the many strange facts known to the field of psychical research, mediumistic trance is one of the most fascinating. Stories gathered from the ages and from the four corners of the earth tell of this strange phenomenon and of the people gifted with it. Such persons have been regarded by their contemporaries with an awe born of a superstitious fear of magic and the "supernatural."

Our own time and our own civilization have also produced such gifted persons. But instead of enjoying the respect and high position accorded to the Oracle of Delphi in the days of ancient Greece, mediums in our time enjoy no prestige and are consulted by a rather small group. Society today has no place for "magic."

With the founding of the Society for Psychical Research in London, in 1882, a few scholars began the systematic investigation which we call psychical research. A large proportion of the published work in psychical research is concerned with those mediums who are in some way able to produce material derived apparently from some source other than their own experience—often a source purporting to be a deceased person.

For all students of psychical phenomena there are two big questions. The first is, "What is the *source* of this supernormally acquired information?" and the second is, "What is the nature of the *process* by which this information is acquired?"

We cannot hope here to give any final answer to either of these questions. We do believe, however, that they cannot be answered separately. That is, when we know the cause, or source of the trance phenomena, we will thereby know something of how they occur; and when we know the process, we will know their probable source. Our primary emphasis is upon the *process*.

This paper was therefore undertaken in the hope that by bringing together the theories about the process, the *modus operandi*, of the trance state, as developed by various students of psychical phenomena, directions for further research and inquiry will emerge.

MRS. WILLETT

G. W. Balfour worked for many years with Mrs. Willett. Mrs. Willett, it will be remembered, figured in the cross-correspondence cases. Her chief communicators were F. W. H. Myers, Edmund Gurney, Henry Sidgwick, S. H. Butcher, and A. W. Verrall. Mrs.

Willett was capable of automatic script when a girl, but gave up the practice until, for personal reasons, she began to correspond with Mrs. Verrall. She then felt the impulse to try again for automatic script and was immediately successful. Myers and Gurney, communicators, appeared in the scripts and stated that they wanted to attempt "something new" in the way of mediumistic trance.

Lord Balfour describes Mrs. Willett's development as being composed of three stages. The first occurs when Mrs. Willett is alone and in an almost normal state of consciousness: the words of the automatic script are in her mind a "hair's-breadth" before they are written. In the second stage, messages are conveyed to Mrs. Willett otherwise than by automatic writing. Mentally received communications are consciously apprehended and either written down at the time or remembered and recorded later. The third stage continues the lone script and silent messages as before, but a new departure is that messages, as they come to her, are repeated aloud by the automatist in the presence of a sitter who records them. In this third stage there is a tendency for the medium to become dazed; there is often, in fact, a transition into deep trance, although the term "trance" is purposely avoided by the communicators. Balfour says that although Mrs. Willett loses consciousness of her surroundings and the memory of what has happened, she *does not* lose consciousness of herself. He feels that this may be the "something new" which the communicators said they intended to try.

In contrast to Mrs. Piper and Mrs. Leonard, Mrs. Willett had no personal guides or controls. The communicators speak in the first person directly, without the intervention of a control, through Mrs. Willett's automatic script, silent messages, or speech, and at the same time are in contact with Mrs. Willett as Mrs. Willett. There are no indications that the personality of Mrs. Willett is ever "off the stage" or that she loses the sense of personal identity while communication is in process.

Many of Balfour's conclusions regarding the *modus operandi* of the trance seem to have been taken from the communicators' own descriptions of the process, with some material added by Mrs. Willett in the normal state. For example, she said while in the waking stage: "I can't remember who I am. I know I'm somebody; and I'm all coming together, you know, and the bits don't fit." . . . "It all seems to be whirling about—a number of me's whirling round and joining to make one me."[1]

Balfour notes:

> "Once, and apparently only once, in the case of Mrs. Willett are we given to understand that telergical methods [direct

[1] Balfour, G. W., "A Study of the Psychological Aspects of Mrs. Willett's Mediumship," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XLIII, 1935, p. 149.

> manipulation of brain substance] were employed in place of telepathic. This was when the name Dorr was telergically written, after attempts to get it written by telepathic communication had failed."[2]

From these and other similar statements found in the Willett scripts, Balfour has developed the theory that the self is composed of an integration of several selves which communicate with each other telepathically, just as they telepathically communicate with external "spiritual agencies." He says:

> "The self which we all habitually recognize as being *ourself* is one and indivisible, but it is associated in the personality as a whole, not only with an organism, but with a number of centres of consciousness each of which is to be regarded as similarly one and indivisible, that is to say, as a self or monad. Among these other selves it occupies a position of primacy, and in normal conditions is in supreme control of the organism."[3]

And he goes on:

> "Interaction within the group of selves I conceive to be telepathic; and I by no means exclude the possibility—or even the probability—of a similar interaction between them and a spiritual environment external to them."[4]

Balfour believes, then, that the self is not indivisible. Yet he does not regard communicators as secondary personalities; he accepts their identity at face value. His views on the "interacting selves" are simply statements about his belief as to the structure of the medium's mind. By virtue of this structure the medium's mind can extend itself to telepathic communication with other, possibly deceased, minds. He notes, however, that the communicators themselves do not say that the passage of thought from the subliminal to the supraliminal is telepathic.

The power to receive does not, in the opinion of the communicators, carry with it the power to give out (to act as agent or "send" the message), unless certain conditions are fulfilled. Even when the power to give out is in actual operation, specific causes may be at work to hinder or prevent particular parts of the message from emerging. This, for Balfour, explains the frequent mistakes and contradictions found in all automatic productions. In the final analysis, the whole process may depend (according to Balfour's view) on the conviction of the medium: "Indeed, in two remarkable passages the communicator seems to imply that his own realization

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[2] *Ibid.*, p. 173.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 311.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 312.

of self when communicating depends on the recognition of his reality by the sensitive."[5]

Balfour's original contribution to theory lies mainly in his conception of the integration of the several selves by telepathy to make up the single self. Whether or not this is true, the concept does not add to our understanding of the relation between the medium, the unknown source, and the sitter. It would appear that Balfour has been convinced by the statements of the medium and the communicators, and presents these statements as truly descriptive of the psychological aspects of mediumship. He further believes that these formulations can be extended to the work of other mediums:

> "The case of Mrs. Piper and other mediums of a similar type raises considerations of a somewhat different order, although here also I see no reason to suppose that there is any essential distinction, so far as process is concerned, between 'possession' of the organism by an invading spirit—if such a thing can really take place—and 'possession' by a dissociated self; or that in either case the *modus operandi* is different from that of the familiar but wholly mysterious control exercised over the organism by the normal self."[6]

Balfour goes on to say:

> "I do not contend that the interaction of mind and body has no bearing upon the questions to be discussed. But the phenomena with which I am specially concerned relate not to the interaction of mind with body, but to that of mind with mind, and I do not believe that much light is likely to be thrown upon them by attempts to correlate thought with brain function. The doctrine of psychophysical parallelism I am unable to accept in any form."[7]

Without going into the philosophy of psychophysical parallelism, it should be mentioned that in many reported cases of secondary personality (or multiple personality), in many instances of hypnotic trance, and in mediums such as Mrs. Piper and Mrs. Leonard, where differences between the various communicating intelligences are clear, there are well-marked physical changes which accompany the "mental" changes. This may lead us to the supposition that, contrary to Balfour's belief, the interaction of the "mind" and the "body" may be of such importance that a great deal of light can be thrown on the trance process when and if the exact nature of that relationship is known.

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[5] Balfour, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

[6] *Ibid.*, footnote 1, p. 47.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 48.

MRS. PIPER

Mrs. Piper's first contact with the field of psychical phenomena occurred in 1884 when she visited Mr. J. R. Cocke, a blind medium, in the hope that he would be able to relieve her sufferings caused by a tumor. She gave the following account of her early trances to Richard Hodgson in 1888:

> "He [Mr. Cocke] professed to be controlled by a French physician whose name was pronounced *Finny*. While there, she felt curious twitchings, and thought she might become completely unconscious. On a second visit to Mr. Cocke he placed his hands on her head, and shortly after she became unconscious. As she was losing consciousness she was aware of a flood of light and saw strange faces, and a hand moving before her. The 'flood of light' she had experienced once before, a few months previously; it immediately preceded a swoon, caused by a sudden blow on the side of the head."[8]

Subsequently, Mrs. Piper tried sitting at home with her relatives and friends. The first control to appear through her was a Dr. Phinuit, who claimed to be a deceased French physician (note the resemblance between Mr. Cocke's control, Finny, and Dr. Phinuit). Along with Phinuit there appeared Chlorine, Mrs. Siddons, Longfellow, J. S. Bach, Commodore Vanderbilt, and others. Then these communicators came to a decision to concentrate all their power in Phinuit. Some years later, when a group of controls known as the Imperator Band appeared, there was a similar "group decision" to give all the power to Rector. Rector acted in conjunction with Imperator, who was usually in the background. Phinuit always acted alone.

In 1892 the George Pelham (GP) control appeared. Occasionally GP or another control would be writing while Phinuit talked. According to Mrs. Sidgwick, 1892 was the year in which Mrs. Piper's automatic powers culminated. Phinuit made his final appearance in 1897. From 1897 to 1905 the Imperator Band was in control. After Hodgson's death in 1905, the Hodgson control was dominant. In 1909 the power of going into trance temporarily left Mrs. Piper. She continued, however, to do some automatic writing while in a normal state of consciousness. She again gave trance sittings for Dr. Gardner Murphy and others after 1920.

Mrs. Piper could go into trance at will. A short period of complete unconsciousness resembling deep sleep was followed by convulsive movements, grinding of teeth, etc. This was followed by the trance proper. In voice sittings, the whole body was muscularly

[8] Hodgson, R., "A Record of Observations of Certain Phenomena of Trance," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. VIII, 1892, p. 46.

alert, the eyes closed; there was some anesthesia to pain. In writing sittings, only the hand moved; the rest of the body was relaxed. No convulsive movements preceded Imperator sittings. The writing hand was extremely sensitive to tactile impressions. There were several other instances of bodily changes while the medium was entranced. Hodgson writes:

> "Phinuit claimed to get no sensations of smell from a scent-bag or a bottle of perfume,—at which I was not surprised, since, on a previous occasion, I could not detect the smallest signs of discomfort after he had taken several inhalations of strong ammonia."[9]

Hodgson said that Mrs. Piper suffered somewhat after this trance was over. Here is another example of the same kind of thing. Hodgson states:

> "Whenever I examined the eyeballs in the medium-trance I found them rolled up, and the pupils reacted to light . . . On one occasion, having persuaded Phinuit to stand up, I held the eyelids up and urged Phinuit to force the eyeballs into their ordinary waking position. This seemed to involve considerable effort on Phinuit's part, and Mrs. Piper's face became much drawn and rather ghastly during the process. The eyeballs, with a vacant stare, remained down for about half a minute, though I did not take the exact time, and then suddenly rolled up again. (At the end of that sitting Mrs. Piper was an exceptionally long time recovering from trance. Phinuit had said 'Au revoir,' but after several minutes spoke again in a low voice, and complained that he had 'got twisted round somehow and could not find his way out.' After a short interval, however, Mrs. Piper began to come to herself in the usual way.)"[10]

Dr. Amy Tanner in her book[11] says that Mrs. Piper's breathing varies from 22 respirations a minute when fully conscious to from 10 to 7 a minute when in trance. The medium asks for open windows, even in the coldest weather. Mrs. Sidgwick believes that this may be necessary because the greatly reduced breathing makes it imperative to obtain all the fresh air possible.

Some information about the *modus operandi* of Mrs. Piper's trance state is given by her controls. They say they hear through the writing hand, which is sometimes held up to the sitter's mouth. The controls state that some sitters have "light." The GP control, however, said that the sitters have nothing to do with it; possibly this

[9] Hodgson, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[11] Tanner, A. E., *Studies in Spiritism*, D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1910, p. 18.

was said to reinforce the spirit hypothesis and do away with the hypothesis of telepathy from the living. After trance Mrs. Piper slept from two to five minutes, stretched and opened her eyes and saw, not external objects and real surroundings, but visions. The controls stated that they communicated with Mrs. Piper's soul as she went back into the body. She said that it seemed to her as if she had been "sliding into the body on a cord." This was the "waking stage." She spoke incoherently; names were whispered and murmured and the use of the vocal muscles was slowly regained. In this waking stage the "I" was Mrs. Piper, not a control; she spoke both to the spirits and to the sitters. Sometimes the spirits spoke directly (through the medium) to the sitter without Mrs. Piper's being aware of it. In the waking stage she had veridical visions of friends of the sitters and was able to select, from a group of photographs, the photograph of the person of whom she had had the vision. In the waking stage she could refer back to previous waking stages, but there was rarely any memory in the waking stage of the trance proper, though the same personalities often figured in both. Shortly before regaining full consciousness she heard her head "snap," and this ushered in the return to the normal waking state. There was no conscious memory of the trance state, though memory within the trance state for preceding trance states was very good. This kind of memory structure is also common in cases of multiple personality.

There were several regular controls throughout Mrs. Piper's career, interspersed with short periods of direct control by the communicators themselves. In the trance, messages were given by voice or by writing, and sometimes the two operated simultaneously. Various physiological changes were found to coincide with various stages of trance, and with different well-established controls.

Next we will examine the theories of Myers, Hodgson, Mrs. Sidgwick, and Tyrrell as they relate to Mrs. Piper's trance phenomena. Myers, in *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, discusses the *modus operandi* of the trance in the chapter on "Trance, Possession and Ecstasy." The collection of records of the Piper trance was growing steadily at that time, and he drew on this source of material in developing his ideas. Myers was inclined to the view that the controls of the medium are actually the discarnate spirits they claimed to be, and that they are literally in possession of the medium's organism. He says:

> "The human brain is in its last analysis an arrangement of matter expressly adapted to being acted upon by a spirit; but so long as the accustomed spirit acts upon it the working is generally too smooth to allow us a glimpse of the mechanism.

> *Now,* however, we can watch an unaccustomed spirit, new to the instrument, installing itself and feeling its way."[12]

Myers points out:

> "In the case of Mrs. Piper it may be supposed that in the earliest stages of her trance-history she was not completely controlled by discarnate spirits, but that her subliminal self was used as an intermediary . . . that in the next stage the control by discarnate spirits was of the more direct and complete kind which I have specially called *possession;* and that [later she] reverted once more to the earlier stage where her subliminal self, or its influence, is not completely excluded."[13]

Myers consistently held to the opinion that the invading discarnate spirit entered the organism of the medium and acted on it as her own spirit would do, only less perfectly.

That Richard Hodgson was also convinced of the reality of the controls as discarnate spirits in possession of the medium is obvious in the following passage from his writings, though, as Mrs. Sidgwick points out, he never states his position in so many words. Hodgson writes:

> "Returning to the actual circumstances, I say that *if* the 'spirits' of our 'deceased' friends do communicate as alleged through the organisms of still incarnate persons, we are *not* justified in expecting them to manifest themselves with the same fulness of clear consciousness that they exhibited during life. We should on the contrary expect even the best communicators to fall short of this for the two main reasons: (1) loss of familiarity with the conditions of using a gross material organism at all—we should expect them to be like fishes out of water or birds immersed in it; (2) inability to govern precisely and completely the particular gross material organism which they are compelled to use. They learned when living to play on one very complicated speaking and writing machine, and suddenly find themselves set down to play on another of a different make."[14]

Hodgson further accepts survival and the identity of the communicators when he says:

> ". . . but at the present time I cannot profess to have any doubt but that the chief 'communicators' . . . are veritably the

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[12] Myers, F. W. H., *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death.* Longmans, Green & Co., New York, 1903-1904, Vol. II, p. 254.

[13] *Ibid.,* p. 250.

[14] Hodgson, R., "A Further Record of Observations of Certain Phenomena of Trance," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XIII, 1897-98, p. 366.

> personalities that they claim to be, that they have survived the change we call death, and that they have directly communicated with us whom we call living, through Mrs. Piper's entranced organism."[15]

Mrs. Henry Sidgwick contributed to the study of the trance state in two ways. First, in her thorough-going presentation of the arguments for and against telepathy, as contrasted with possession, as a mode of communication between the medium and the possible discarnate spirit. Second, in her theory which emphasizes the role of the sitter's unconscious mind in the production of the trance utterances. It should be kept in mind that Mrs. Sidgwick herself admits that she was never a "good sitter," and that in her sittings she got little or nothing of evidential value; and she admits the possible influence of this fact on her general outlook and the formulation of her personal convictions. It is her scholarly integration of material from the records of sittings held by others with Mrs. Piper, her analysis of the conclusions drawn by other writers on the subject, and the formulation of her own theory which make her statements particularly valuable.

Her line of argument regarding the telepathy versus possession controversy is set forth as follows:

> ". . . I think that Dr. Hodgson, in his able analysis of the Piper evidence, has hardly done justice to or discussed sufficiently the hypothesis that in all cases, and however true it may be that there is really communication between the living and the dead, the intelligence communicating directly with the sitter, through Mrs. Piper's organism, is Mrs. Piper.
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> "The alternative hypothesis to which Dr. Hodgson inclines, and which, even when not explicitly stated, seems constantly to be assumed in his summary of the evidence for communication from the dead, is that spirits other than Mrs. Piper's use her organism when she is entranced, and that in particular the spirits of certain dead persons known to certain sitters speak to them directly with her voice or write for them directly with her hand. This is the hypothesis I wish to oppose."[16]

Some of her main objections to the possession hypothesis are that in the case of the Phinuit control, no statements he made about himself could be verified and he had no knowledge of French (which he was never able to explain). Mistakes made by the controlling personality are frequently of a nature which led Mrs. Sidgwick to the view that this is "the confusion of a person talking about what

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[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 405-406.

[16] Sidgwick, Mrs. H., "Discussion of the Trance Phenomena of Mrs. Piper," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XV, 1900-01, p. 19.

he does not understand, not the confusion of a person who knows, but has a difficulty in expressing himself."[17]

Mrs. Sidgwick cites a curious case in which the communicator was not the person he professed to be. Hodgson gave Mrs. Piper a manuscript belonging to a Dr. Wiltse to hold. Wiltse was impersonated and said he was dead and that his body was in the water. Wiltse was actually alive and well. In the GP case Mrs. Sidgwick notes that the handwriting was not GP's; the language was not the same; the gestures and expression of the voice were not similar, and the intellectual calibre was far inferior to that of the living GP; there is a tendency to excuses and prevarication, with foolish recourse to previous matters. Mrs. Sidgwick points out that "the likeness of the trance personality to the person it purports to be does not strike every one equally."[18] It is interesting to note, moreover, that there is often a gradual improvement of the impersonation as its appearance becomes more frequent. She further points out that some subjects under hypnosis are able to give accurate impersonations of others. (William James has warned us, however, that "the only lesson of the facts I report seems to be that we should beware of making rash generalizations from a few cases about the hypnotic state. That name probably covers a very great number of different neural conditions."[19])

Mrs. Sidgwick notes:

> "We have presented to us in Mrs. Piper's trance a number of *soi-disant* different personalities—some of them known to have lived and to be now dead, some of them living, some probably imaginary. The statements and the intellectual calibre of many of them are utterly inconsistent with their claims, and even in the best personations there are lapses which cannot easily be explained if we are in direct communication with the professed communicator. These lapses and limitations, and other characteristics of the communications, are just such as have been frequently observed in secondary personalities, and in particular correspond to what we should expect to find in Mrs. Piper's secondary personality under the suggestive influence of the conditions of the sittings. I am, therefore, driven to the conclusion that Mrs. Piper's trance-intelligence has a strong tendency to unconscious dramatic personation; and is continually dreaming itself to be a number of different persons under the influence of suggestion (including self-suggestion) somewhat as an ordinary hypnotic subject can be made by

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[17] Sidgwick, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[19] James, W., "Reaction-Time in the Hypnotic Trance," *Proc.* A.S.P.R., Vol. I, 1885-89, p. 248.

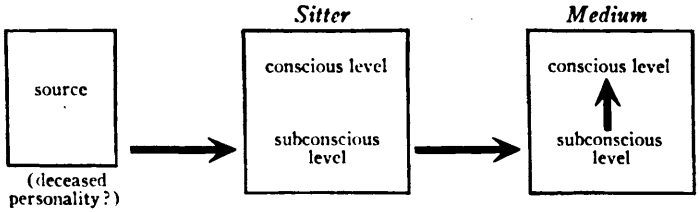
suggestion to assume different characters with startling dramatic effect."[20]

Thus, having discarded the theory of direct possession of the medium by the communicating entity on the grounds that the evidence does not lead necessarily to such a conclusion, Mrs. Sidgwick proceeds to a theory which she feels will more adequately explain the data. She notes that in a typical sitting the sitter is brought into communication with exactly those "spirits" in which he is interested. Somehow the presence of the sitter must have a "selective" property, otherwise any discarnate spirit at all might communicate. Mrs. Sidgwick feels that the importance of this selective property of the presence of the individual sitter (or his proxy) has been ignored in the previous attempts to account for the process of the trance state. She says: "We require a hypothesis which allows for all three minds—the mind of the deceased friend, of Mrs. Piper, and of the sitter—being subliminally concerned in the result."[21] She notes that the controls frequently say that some sitters give "light," that is, the controls seem to feel that some sitters bring to the sitting additional "psychic power" of their own.

The sitter, then, is an integral part of the sitting as a whole, and Mrs. Sidgwick sets forth her theory of the *modus operandi* of the trance states as follows:

> "The departed spirit communicates, we may suppose, telepathically directly with his friend the sitter, but this communication is entirely subliminal, and the sitter is not normally conscious of it at all. Mrs. Piper in trance receives telepathically impressions from some sitters which do rise, partially at least, to her trance consciousness, and are then given back by her to the sitter through the ordinary channels of sense in speech or writing."[22]

Mrs. Sidgwick's theory may be diagrammed as below to show more clearly the direction of the telepathic communication:



[20] Sidgwick, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 36.
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

It is interesting to compare a theory dealing with spontaneous cases of telepathy, outlined by G. N. M. Tyrrell, with these theories of Mrs. Piper's trance. Tyrrell presented to the S.P.R. in the "Seventh Frederic W. H. Myers Memorial Lecture," in 1942, a report under the title "Apparitions." In the course of this work he developed a theory to describe the interaction process between agent and percipient which would account for the production of apparitions, particularly in those cases where several persons see the same apparition at the same time and in the same place—the so-called "collective" cases.

Tyrrell suggests that the distant agent (whose apparition is seen by the percipient) affects the mind of the percipient telepathically, activating those brain areas which control the percipient's perception in such a way as to translate the agent's idea into a sensory representation of that idea. The percipient then experiences his own sensory representation of the agent's idea, so that the percipient "sees" the apparition. This process of coordination or interaction which gives rise to the experience of seeing an apparition, and the apparition itself, Tyrrell calls an "idea-pattern." He says: "A telepathic apparition may be described, to a first approximation, as an idea received telepathically from an agent and expressed by creating for itself within the percipient's personality the appropriate sense-data."[23] To explain the *modus operandi* of the collective cases, he writes that the "producers" (the maker of the idea-pattern) and the "stage carpenters" (that part of the personality which has the power to generate sense-data) of the collective percipients "must, in fact, be got to collaborate with those of the agent and principal percipient."

> "Thus, collective percipience depends on the physical positions of the percipients, *not because physical facts have anything to do with it*, but because their physical positions bring them into the scheme of the idea-pattern. In a word, it may be said that the explanation of collective percipience of apparitions lies, not in the 'metetherial' presence of a figure in space, as Myers thought, nor in the 'infectious' propagation of the telepathic impulse from one percipient to another, as Gurney thought, but in the fact that spectators, by their physical presence, become *relevant* to the theme of the apparitional idea-pattern and, because relevant, are drawn into it."[24]

The theories of Tyrrell and of Mrs. Sidgwick are based on a kind of interaction process. We have seen that Mrs. Sidgwick felt that the sitter played a controlling part in determining not only the subjects of conversation, but also the personages who should take

[23] Tyrrell, G. N. M., *Apparitions*, p. 66.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. 79.

part in it, the function of the sitter being to receive telepathic communications from a source relevant to him, whereas the medium operates with a certain sensitivity to these unconscious contents of the sitter's mind. The contents of the sitter's unconscious are perceived by the medium's unconscious and then "percolate" up into consciousness, or at least into the consciousness of that part of the medium's personality called the control. Once in consciousness, the material can be spoken or written. Mrs. Sidgwick says: ". . . such impressions are not only received by her [Mrs. Piper] as the result of her own telepathic activity or that of other spirits—spirits of the living or may be of the dead—but rise partially or completely into the consciousness operating in the trance communications, and so are recognized."[25]

Both in the case of the apparition and in that of the trance utterance, the agent's idea is translated by the percipient into a sensory form which can be consciously perceived by the percipient. In both cases the interaction process operates to transpose material knowable to the unconscious mind so that it becomes knowable to the conscious mind.

MRS. LEONARD

Mrs. Leonard informs us in her autobiographical writings that her family brought her up very strictly. In early childhood she saw visions of pleasant landscapes and she assumed they were seen by everyone. When she mentioned these visions to her parents they sternly forbade her to think or speak of them, and reproved her for being too imaginative. Some time before her adolescence her family lost its fortune and her father's erratic behavior "made it impossible for us to remain with him."[26] "Childhood to me was a time of pain and torture rather than the care-free, merry time it is usually supposed to be . . ."[27]

In her early teens she went to her first Spiritualist meeting. Although the meeting was disappointing, she felt it held something for her. She always had a strong faith in God, but did not participate in any organized religion. As she grew up, she discovered that she had a good singing voice, which she lost after an attack of diphtheria. Since an operatic career was no longer possible, she became an actress instead. She married an actor who was sympathetic towards spiritualism. With two friends in the company she began table sittings, during a long wait in the play. It was not until the twenty-seventh trial that the table moved and messages were spelt out.

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[25] Sidgwick, Mrs. H., "A Contribution to the Study of the Psychology of Mrs. Piper's Trance Phenomena," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XXVIII, 1915, p. 330.

[26] Leonard, Mrs. Gladys Osborne, *My Life in Two Worlds*, Cassell & Co., London, 1931, p. 14.

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 9.

Then a new communicator who gave her name as Feda appeared, and several years later Feda controlled Mrs. Leonard in trance. At the insistence of friends and Feda, Mrs. Leonard became a professional medium. Her mediumship reached a high level early in World War I and she became widely known to members of the Society for Psychical Research.

In trance Mrs. Leonard may occasionally produce automatic script. When this occurs, the trance is light; that is, she is in a drowsy, sleepy state. It is in a deeper state of trance that the personalities other than her normal self are manifested, and it is this deep trance for which she has total amnesia. As in the case of Mrs. Piper, there are physiological changes which appear to be identified with the primary control Feda, with the personal controls (who do not communicate through Feda, but directly to the sitter), and with the different stages of the trance. Mrs. Leonard says she has hyperesthesia of hearing before the trance begins; she is in general very sensitive to noise, and lives in quiet places for that reason.

Throughout the long records kept of the Leonard trance phenomena, the habitual control, Feda, has had much to say about the *modus operandi* of communication. Both Feda and the personal control known as "AVB" admit telepathy between medium and sitter. Feda says that the communicators find it easy to remember the answers to questions, names and specific facts away from the sitting, but that they forget when the sitting is in progress; consequently, communicators try to prevent this by preparing the material beforehand. General ideas are easier to get across than specific words. One communicator puts it this way:

> ". . . if you know you must hit the bull's-eye or not make the attempt, you will have less chance of success than if you think it does not matter whether you do it or not. Anyone anxiously waiting to see you hit the bull's-eye makes for you a slightly strained condition, this strained condition is not with me, but with Feda."[28]

Feda says she does not know, when controlling, whether the thoughts come from the communicator or from the medium. Communicators have reported when in direct control that if they have two things they wish to speak of through Feda, Feda will chose the item which most pleases her.

Feda has frequently said that when the communicator wishes her to describe something, he "builds up" the image for her to "see." Very often, however, in describing such a built-up image, Feda makes mistakes which would not be made if the perceptual process

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[28] Thomas, C. D., "The *Modus Operandi* of Trance Communication according to Descriptions Received through Mrs. Osborne Leonard," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XXXVIII, 1928-29, p. 71.

occurred as Feda says it does. For example, Feda described a photograph of Mrs. Salter's mother, the deceased Mrs. Verrall, rather accurately, but left out the very striking feature that Mrs. Verrall was holding a book. From this Mrs. Salter concludes that Feda's statements that letters or objects are being "built up" for her to see cannot always be taken as accurate. When Feda purported to "see clearly" a communicator and gave an accurate account of his features, complexion, expression, and so on, to Lady Troubridge, she apparently remained in ignorance of the two most distinguishing features of his appearance—an abundance of snow-white hair and peculiarly vivid blue eyes. Feda describes persons who are still living; so she must get her knowledge and "images" by means other than having the spirits "build up" the etheric body or object.

Messages which are "heard" are given more accurately than those which are "felt." When Feda speaks as if from dictation, the messages are usually very precise and accurate. Feda says that the "power" actually exists in space between herself and the communicator. Feda asks new sitters to come close, for power also comes from the medium and the sitter. When the power goes, the brain becomes tired, memory is poor, and the organism becomes drowsy. The power is never static, but always changing. The "power" of Mrs. Leonard, then, seems to correspond with the "light" of Mrs. Piper.

Mrs. W. H. Salter, Una, Lady Troubridge, the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, as well as a number of other investigators, have worked with Mrs. Leonard over a period of years. Our next step will be to examine their conclusions as to the *modus operandi* of Mrs. Leonard's trance.

Mrs. Salter's work has been largely to collate the material of Leonard sittings and series of sittings, with the primary goal that of recording, organizing, and presenting the evidence. She believes the process of communication to be complex: "Another point to consider is the way in which knowledge derived from various sources, of which direct thought-transference from the sitter may be one, but cannot be the only one, seems to be blended into a consecution of ideas appropriate to the supposed communicator."[29]

As to the probable source of the supernormally acquired knowledge on the part of the medium, Mrs. Salter has this to say:

> "I think this whole question of association of ideas is interesting and important, because what we seem to get in these trance

[29] Salter, Mrs. W. H., "Some Incidents Occurring at Sittings with Mrs. Leonard which May Throw Light upon their *Modus Operandi*," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XXXIX, 1930-31, p. 306.

> sittings is not a clear stream of communication from any one source, but evidence of modifications and deflexions of Mrs. Leonard's mind having their origin in the influence of other minds, possibly discarnate. Apart from all physical characteristics a man's personality is chiefly expressed in the associations of ideas which constitute his memory, and his reaction to any new idea or image presented to him will be founded on these pre-existing associations."[30]

Lady Troubridge never states any confident opinion as to the *modus operandi* of the trance state. She writes: "I feel strongly that, to whatever conclusions each individual investigator may come as to the possible source of the phenomena, his conclusions will always be open to doubt, so long as he is obliged to confess an almost total ignorance of the nature of the processes whereon they are based."[31] Her acceptance, however, of the survival and identity of AVB as manifested through the Leonard sittings, particularly through the AVB personal control (during which Feda's intermediation is not involved), is implicit in every line of her writing. Perhaps the best indication of the strength of her conviction, and of the carefulness of her inhibition, is her answer to a statement made by Dr. Alrutz. Dr. Alrutz had said that if he could telepathically communicate with a subject under deep hypnosis he could reproduce the phenomena of personal control, such as the AVB control. Lady Troubridge answered him:

> ". . . I honestly do *not* believe that if Doctor Alrutz, having induced a deep hypnosis in a subject, were able to restore to that subject the 'Vocal organs, peripheral *and* central, and then by the help of telepathy make these restored parts of [the subject's] organism talk and give utterance to [his] thoughts,' he would have achieved a process that could be compared, in any conclusive manner, with what takes place when the Leonard organism gives, *via* the Feda Control or the A.V.B. Personal Control, a really evidential sitting."[32]

In contrast with Mrs. Salter and Lady Troubridge, the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, who has also worked extensively with Mrs. Leonard, is very explicit in stating his position:

> ". . . the Communicator comes to the sitting in that body which is now normally his in the Etherial Realms. He takes up the position, some two or three feet in front of the medium, which Feda finds most convenient for her reception of the

30 Salter, *op. cit.*, pp. 325-326.

31 Troubridge, Lady, "The *Modus Operandi* in so-called Mediumistic Trance," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XXXII, 1922, p. 347.

32 ———, "Some Further Consideration of the *Modus Operandi* in Mediumistic Trance," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XXXIV, 1924, p. 309.

messages. He *speaks* his message in words during those periods of the sitting which favour this method of communication, while for other periods it seems more effective to give it by telepathy. The difference between these periods in a sitting is caused by variations in the output of an emanation which flows from the medium, with possible additions from sitter and note-taker. This emanation is termed by Feda 'The Power'; it varies in density from moment to moment, and its gradual exhaustion brings progressive difficulty in communication and finally stops it altogether."[33]

Accepting the reality of "direct voice," *i.e.*, the production of a voice at a point in space independent of the speech organs of the medium, he adds:

"On my hypothesis the vocal organs and the complete body are already in existence, the Communicator comes to us in that body—his other-world body—and has but to make use of such conditions as the séance room offers. He can, for materialization, clothe or impregnate his body with the ectoplasm; while, for Direct Voice, he simply speaks and relies on the vibration produced in the psychic emanation to effect a secondary vibration in the air, so making his speech audible."[34]

Conclusions

As we look over the material considered, we see several trends of argument stand out sharply. The present arguments do not center in the survival evidence as such, but in the various concepts of the *nature* of the something that in some way survives and how it *communicates* with the living.

Lord Balfour, working with Mrs. Willett, accepts the Myers communicator as Myers "living somewhere else," we might say. It seems to be Balfour's feeling that in the trance state of Mrs. Willett an "I" other than the normal waking "I" exists at various levels of her personality. His belief in the surviving personality of Myers is integrated with the evidence that the medium's personality can be in a state of dissociation. Further, it is to a state of mind which has no memory continuous with the normal Mrs. Willett that the acquired supernormal knowledge comes. He assumes that this knowledge is acquired through telepathy. Then he undertakes to explain how the various "I's" are related within the personality of Mrs. Willett so that she normally is perceived and perceives herself as a unit. He is thus led to the belief that the means of communication between one level of the self, or one "I," and the discarnate spirit,

[33] Thomas, C. D., "A New Hypothesis Concerning Trance-Communications," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XLVIII, 1947, p. 122.
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 163.

is telepathic. *This is the way the mind works.* Telepathy is a mental process, and as such it must logically be extended to include the fact that the several "I's" do "get together" when the medium is in the normal state; it is telepathy that permits their intercommunication. But the important thing for our present problem is Balfour's belief that some level of the medium's consciousness is able to communicate telepathically with the personality of the deceased communicator. With this general view Mrs. Salter and Lady Troubridge, working with Mrs. Leonard, seem to be in agreement. Mrs. Sidgwick accepts this same general view in relation to Mrs. Piper.

The other side of the argument is presented by Myers and Hodgson. It is their belief that the spirit of the deceased is somehow "present"; that is, actually near the sitter and the medium. Myers and Hodgson share the belief that the discarnate spirit directly inhabits the "mind" or organism of the medium and "manipulates" it as does the "owner" of the organism. Drayton Thomas accepts this theory as far as it goes, and adds to it his own formulation. He, like Balfour, seems to have accepted the accounts given him through the entranced medium as to the true explanation of the *modus operandi.* Thomas believes not only that the spirit is physically present and sometimes does work the medium's organism, but also that the spirit may be present and near the medium, but instead of simply using the medium's organism, may through its own "etherial body" work upon emanations from the medium and the sitter so as to speak in direct voice.

The differences between the theoretical assumptions of these writers do not seem to rest with the medium worked with, or to be greatly influenced by the differences between mediums. A large amount of evidential material was obtained through each of them. On the whole, all these investigators had but a single fact to work with: the fact that a medium in a state of dissociation (to use the most inclusive word) can somehow report facts which she could not have gained through her normal senses. The nature of these facts often seems to indicate a source other than a living person. The elementary phenomena for all the theorists are, in other words, the same. In all cases the hypothesis of telepathy from the deceased seems to be a reasonable one. But one may regard the deceased as sources of telepathic information, or as present controlling forces.

Why, then, the different views of what is happening, and how it happens? The differences seem to derive largely from the subtlety of the concept of what "here" or "present" means. It is at best an insoluble metaphysical problem, at least for the present time. Thomas was convinced of the "here and now" presence of his father and sister. Mrs. Sidgwick carries us away from the physical organism of the medium. We are really dealing with a matter of personal

opinion. To account for such varying opinions leads not only to questions of evidence, but also to individual differences in the temperament and personality of the investigators. There can be no doubt that it would be a great comfort to believe that the deceased friend is physically present, near enough to be touched, even though invisible; it is harder to draw any kind of warm and personal support from a theory such as Mrs. Sidgwick's. But the question of fact remains open. The answer to this question may have very broad implications for psychical research. Mrs. Sidgwick and Tyrrell emphasize the importance of the *modus operandi* as it affects the interaction between the conscious and unconscious levels of the mind. As we have noted, Mrs. Sidgwick suggests the possibility that all minds may be set in telepathic communication with one another, and that it is the fact that the medium is able to express, or to bring into consciousness at some level, these telepathic impressions, that makes her a medium at all. Likewise with spontaneous cases of apparitions, as discussed by Tyrrell, it is the transformation of the agent's idea in the unconscious mind of the percipient into a form which can be consciously apprehended that constitutes the essence of the *modus operandi*. In this connection, we might think again of the peculiarly potent and decisive part played in Mrs. Piper's mediumship by the "waking stage," that stage where the levels of consciousness are being in some way reorganized so that the normal self may again predominate. While this process is occurring, a great deal of highly evidential material has been obtained. Myers, too, in a sense, emphasizes the importance of this "transition" factor in his discussion of genius, where it is the "uprush" of ideas and emotions from the subliminal, sometimes felt by the individual to come from an external source, which is the unique factor in the mind of the genius. The problem of *modus operandi* is one aspect of the broad problem of communication between different levels of the same mind and between different minds. Perhaps if we learn more about the way in which the various levels of consciousness *interact* with each other, we will stumble on a clue as to that process we so confidently and so loosely call telepathy.

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In Memory of Mrs. Leonora Piper

The death of Mrs. Leonora Piper, on July 3, 1950, at the age of ninety-one, recalls her unsurpassed service to psychical research. No other trance medium has submitted to such prolonged and intensive investigation by so many eminent scholars, admirably and variously equipped to probe the rare phenomena of genuine and long-sustained mediumship. While there has been no unanimity of opinion as to the origin of Mrs. Piper's trance utterances, there has been uniform agreement that in trance she unquestionably displayed knowledge of facts that were wholly inaccessible to her in her normal state. No conceivable deception, conscious or unconscious on her part, could explain the facts.

The year after the discovery of Mrs. Piper's mediumship in Boston in 1884, William James visited her a dozen times and sent her a large number of anonymous sitters, whose testimony enabled him to weigh the results of numerous first sittings. After further investigation, Professor James became absolutely convinced that Mrs. Piper knew things in her trances which she could not possibly have heard in her waking state.[1]

When Richard Hodgson came to Boston in 1887, as Secretary of the old A.S.P.R., Professor James introduced him to Mrs. Piper. This meeting was destined to have a profound influence on the future of psychical research. Hodgson assumed the principal management of Mrs. Piper's sittings, and the study of her trance phenomena became his most absorbing interest during the next eighteen years. Before coming to Boston, Hodgson had taken an important part in the work of the S.P.R. He was a man of wide intellectual attainments with great power of observation, and he was specially well qualified for the detection of fraud. He had exposed Madame Blavatsky in India, and on a brief visit to England in 1895 he unmasked Palladino at the Cambridge sittings. He was the terror of fraudulent mediums. From this it might be inferred that Hodgson had a cold and forbidding nature but the reverse was true.

Dr. Gardner Murphy[2] has urged the study of the interrelations of personality between experimenters and subjects, and Mr. J. G. Piddington has warned us against ignoring the personal equation of the investigator and confining our attention to the mere record of his investigations. He has drawn a graphic portrait of Hodgson's

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[1] James, W., "A Record of Observations of Certain Phenomena of Trance," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. VI, 1889-90, pp. 651-659.

[2] Murphy, G., "Psychical Research and Personality," JOURNAL, A.S.P.R. Vol. XLIV, January, 1950, pp. 15-19.

real nature as it "blossomed forth" during his last eighteen years in "the large and charitable air" in America. "Some of you may have pictured him to yourselves as the severe recluse absorbed in his metaphysical studies, careless, if not contemptuous of all that did not belong to the intellectual or to the spiritual side of life. He was nothing of the sort . . . He was the most sociable of beings."[3]

Mrs. Piper was not very comfortable when she first realized that she was a medium. In 1924 she told me she cried all night after the discovery of her gift because, if pursued, it meant giving up much of her home life and being separated from her young children a good part of the time. But she hoped that science would throw light on her unusual manifestations.

Hodgson began his study of Mrs. Piper with his habitual skepticism. As the work progressed he became more and more convinced that Mrs. Piper, in her trance state, displayed knowledge which could only be accounted for on the hypothesis that she had some supernormal power. His caution and restraint are apparent in his first report on Mrs. Piper because he believed that the evidence he presented for survival of personality after death, together with that previously published, was very far from sufficient to establish any such conclusion.[4] In his second report, published six years later, Hodgson accepted the survival hypothesis.[5] But he prefaced his acceptance with: "What my future beliefs may be, I do not know . . . . And it may be that further experiment . . . may lead me to change my view." It is a tragic loss to psychical research that Hodgson did not live to write his third report on Mrs. Piper.

Referring to Mrs. Piper in an address to this Society in the spring of 1950, Mr. W. H. Salter said:

> "The principal work of investigation was of course done here in America, by James, Hodgson, and Hyslop, but the visits of Mrs. Piper to England in 1889, and again in 1906, with the reports made by Myers, Lodge, and Leaf on the first visit, and by Piddington on the second, produced evidence of great value, while Mrs. Sidgwick's psychological study on her mediumship in 1915 is, I think, the best and most comprehensive study of any medium. It was through Mrs. Piper that Myers at long last received, as he considered, that conclusive proof of personal survival for which he had all his life been seeking."[6]

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[3] Piddington, J. G., "Richard Hodgson: In Memoriam." *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XIX, 1905-7, p. 363.

[4] Hodgson, R., "A Record of Observations of Certain Phenomena of Trance." *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. VIII, 1892, p. 57.

[5] ———, "A Further Record of Observations of Certain Phenomena of Trance." *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XIII, 1897-98, pp. 405-406.

[6] Salter, W. H., "History of the Society for Psychical Research." JOURNAL, A.S.P.R., Vol. XLIV, October, 1950, p. 146.

I met Mrs. Piper at tea in 1924 when she had long been retired by the S.P.R. Sittings, of course, were out of the question, but when an opportunity arose, I was eager to form a personal impression of the woman who seemed like a miraculous legend to me. No one would have thought that this modest, amiable, and reserved woman had shaken the philosophies of a host of eminent thinkers. Mrs. Piper seemed typical of the home-loving wife and mother of a bygone era, far removed from anything that bordered on unorthodox pursuits. Two reasons paved the way for a closer acquaintance.

Margaret Bancroft,[7] who died in 1911, was a favorite cousin of my husband. Her active interest in psychical research extended back to her friendship with Richard Hodgson. Mrs. Piper spoke with great affection of Miss Bancroft and called her "my dearest friend," and we enjoyed reviving old memories. The other reason was that Mrs. Piper loved England and "every inch of London." On my recent visits to England I had met some of her old friends and sitters, and she was eager to hear every detail I was able to tell her about them and about the S.P.R. She spoke repeatedly of the "wonderful kindness and consideration" shown her by everyone connected with her sittings on her three visits to England. She hoped to visit England again and renew old ties. It is of interest to note Mrs. Piper's view concerning death. When her mother died in 1924 she wrote: ". . . it was not difficult when my dear mother's spirit fled from me to feel that she had just slipped out of the imprisoning body into another life far superior to this. And *so* I believe."[8]

Things turned out very differently from what I had expected. In 1925 I had half a dozen sittings with Mrs. Piper in a special series arranged for Dr. Murphy. The trance was the deepest and most impressive I have ever witnessed, with all the "life" of the communicating personalities concentrated in the hand. The sittings were reminiscent of Mrs. Piper's third period when the "Imperator Band" was in control. In the main the writings were not successful, but they contained a few evidential passages, fully allowing for the fact that the sittings were not anonymous.

We are deeply indebted to Mrs. Piper for her long and faithful service to psychical research. Without her staunch character, she would hardly have attracted the systematic researches of some of the best minds of her era.

LYDIA W. ALLISON

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[7] See "The Owl's Head Series," pp. 47-61, in William James' "Report on Mrs. Piper's Hodgson Control," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XXIII, 1909, pp. 2-121.

[8] For the *Modus Operandi* of Mrs. Piper's mediumship, see this JOURNAL, pp. 21-27.

Reviews

THEMES AND VARIATIONS. By Aldous Huxley. Harper & Brothers, New York, 1950. 272 pp. $3.50.

Themes and Variations consists of seven essays, of which one, "Variations on a Philosopher," occupies more than half of the book. The philosopher was a Frenchman, François-Pierre Maine de Biran (1766-1824), who held not unimportant positions during the Revolutionary, Napoleonic, and Restoration times. "Philosophy," remarks Mr. Huxley, "is written for the most part in terms of the highest abstractions, the widest generalizations. Rightly, I suppose, and properly. Nevertheless, it seems good, for a change, to consider some of its problems, not, so to speak, in the void, but within the framework of an actual existence."

To accomplish this, Mr. Huxley takes Biran's *Journal Intime*, and discourses on its often Pepysian revelations of Biran's private life, as well as on his characteristically introspective reflections on politics, religion, and philosophy. The private diary of the philosopher thus provides a succession of openings for Mr. Huxley to express his own opinions on the various themes that arise. How well he caters for general readers who are above popular spoon-feeding may be gathered from such extracts as these:

"Such evidence as we have tends rather emphatically to suggest that collective efforts to make the sexual life of individuals conform to a socially accepted pattern are seldom successful" (p. 74).

"History as something experienced can never be fully recorded. For, obviously, there are as many such histories as there have been experiencing human beings" (p. 63).

"How electrical events are converted into perceptions or abstract ideas, or how a volition becomes a nerve impulse leading to muscular activity, we do not know. Biran expressed the belief that nobody ever would know, that the hiatus between thought and matter was unbridgeable by any theory devisable by man, and must simply be accepted as a brute fact. He may have been right; on the other hand, it may some day turn out that he was wrong. In any case the ignorance prevailing at any given period of history may not legitimately be promoted to the rank of a philosophical principle" (p. 98).

The last extract is an excellent example of how Mr. Huxley handles profound problems in a balanced facile manner. There is never anything revolutionary about him, nor is there anything reactionary: his agnosticism is exactly suited to the taste of the time.

Animal magnetism was much studied in the days of Biran, and this leads Mr. Huxley to speak of parapsychology. With his usual acuteness he points out at once how the *psi* phenomena threaten the positions of the typical academic philosophers:

"The great majority of philosophers have not treated hypnotism and the allied phenomena of healing and extrasensory perception as the serious study of a year or even a semester. And yet if they had looked into the matter, if they had examined the masses of carefully sifted evidence accumulated by such scientific organizations as the Society for Psychical Research, they would have found themselves confronted with strange data very hard to explain in terms of the philosophic systems recently current in the West" (p. 130).

Let us hope that Mr. Huxley's words will induce some in the philosophical world to realize the unreality of their present position. Unfortunately, at this point Mr. Huxley himself rather forgets scientific detachment; and in the course of denouncing totalitarianism and dictatorship, commends "nineteenth-century materialism" and "nineteenth-century idealism" for having deferred the time when, he says, hypnotism is being used to extort confessions in the police state; and he fears that soon even the techniques of yoga may be taken up by the West, and applied "for the purposes of achieving purely mundane and even diabolic ends."

Mr. Huxley's tenderness towards nineteenth-century materialism, of which his grandfather was such a distinguished luminary, is well-known and understandable. But he should not forget the mundane and very bloody if not diabolic ends to which physical science also has been directed; nor the horrors of degradation and poverty that accompanied the idealism and gentility of the Victorian era. The abuse of knowledge is a poor reason to commend its deferment: the first man who was burned alive by his fellows would not have escaped some other brutality if the discovery of fire had been deferred till after his time.

To show what his philosopher, Biran, might have done, but did not do, Mr. Huxley gives a summary of the views of Dr. C. D. Broad, and of Professor H. H. Price. These two eminent philosophers, he says with approval (p. 137), "have taken account, when writing about man and his place in the universe, of the facts of parapsychology." What Mr. Huxley has to say on this subject, coming as it does from so well-known a writer and a member of a famous family of scientists, will have a very good effect in just those quarters where it is so important that parapsychology and psychical research should be more accurately understood than they often are.

The remaining essays in the book are entitled "Art and Religion," "Variations on a Baroque Tomb," "Variations on El Greco," "Varia-

tions on *The Prisons*," "Variations on Goya," and "The Double Crisis." Two have been printed before. All reflect the immense and varied range of Mr. Huxley's reading and interests. The last-named essay contains stimulating comments on the political problems that confront the divided world today.

The book lacks an index; and a minor fault is that in putting a full-stop after the abbreviations *Mme* and *Mlle*, the printers depart from the practice in France and among informed English writers about France.

W. H. W. SABINE

THIS WORLD AND THAT: An Analytical Study of Psychic Communications. By Phoebe D. Payne and Laurence J. Bendit. Faber and Faber, Ltd., London, 1950. 194 pp. 10*s* 6*d*.

There have been, in this reviewer's experience, two recognizable approaches to the subject of psychic phenomena. In the first of these the claimants make little or no pretense at objectivity. Weighed down with credulity and with but half-hearted efforts to filter down to veridical material, they attempt to describe or explain (or both) observations and experiences with the subject. Articles and books written in this vein range from the highly imaginative speculations of the lunatic fringe to honest and straightforward accounts of unexplainable phenomena.

The second approach is born not only out of interest, but also out of the desire to understand, and here one finds the claimants to scientific objectivity. There is an attempt critically to evaluate the findings within the framework of the scientific method.

The authors of *This World and That* seem to have chosen an intermediate path in which all the basic tenets of the lay approach (the a priori tie-up of psi with non-material forces, the absence of any rigorous or meaningful exposition of terms, the ill-founded and highly personalized conclusions in regard to survival) are preserved side by side with an attempt to relate them to current psychiatric ideas and theories. There are scattered insights as to psi functioning derived from experiences with patients and mediums, and these are of value to the extent that they can be plucked out of their resting place amid spiritualistic verbiage. The need to come to grips with psi effects in analytic studies, particularly in the case of highly sensitive patients, is clearly stated.

In choosing the path that they have, Miss Payne and Dr. Bendit have of necessity indulged in a rather uncritical and loose examination of the various conventional categories of psi activity—ghosts,

spiritualism, the séance, guides, communications, and healing, etc. There seems to be a heavily weighted bias toward acceptance of the survival hypothesis in almost all of its historical ramifications.

MONTAGUE ULLMAN, M.D.

THE SENSE AND NONSENSE OF PROPHECY. By Eileen J. Garrett, Creative Age Press, New York, 1950. 279 pp. $2.75.

In this, the latest volume from the pen of a distinguished psychic, the reader will instantly notice a striking difference in style from its predecessors, a lightness of touch that sometimes becomes gay mockery. This tone is suggested by the jacket even before the book is opened, for it is bright with color and adorned with a medieval devil flanked with cabalistic signs.

This light, even flippant, touch becomes puckish in most of the chapter headings. These are word plays on familiar phrases. "Sorry, Wrong Number," for example, is the title for the chapter on numerology; "The Unhappy Medium" deals with psychics from the Fox sisters down to the present; "The Handwriting on the Wall" covers graphology; and "The Devil's Pasteboards," cartomancy. In "Prophet and Loss" the hoary pun is a bit too much.

The word Prophecy in the title is made to cover all psychic and pseudo-psychic activities, as suggested by the foregoing chapter headings. This is putting a heavier strain on "prophecy" than the word deserves, but perhaps there was no other one handy that would cover everything.

As might be expected, the author makes merry with the spurious swamis and gurus who batten on rich women, especially in California. Chapter 10 is a delicious take-off on palmistry. In fact, the sample "reading" is so good, helped out by the full-page drawing of the hand, that it may even tempt some readers to go into the business, because it sounds so easy. But not all of the discussion is satire. The description of cults, ranging from goat worship to "I Am" is an appalling revelation of what some people will fall for even in this so-called enlightened age. The author gives an account of the groups of society people of top rank, avid for new sensations, who gathered in London drawing rooms for dark unholy rites during the period between the two wars.

Throughout the book the nonsense of prophecy is emphasized at the expense of the sense. In the chapter on mediums, for example, Mrs. Piper and Mrs. Leonard are never mentioned, but there is much fun poked at the cheats and their mushy-headed sitters. The

discussion of automatic writing, the ouija board, and the divining rod is headed "Cagliostro's Step-children." Since he was a thoroughgoing scoundrel and charlatan, the impression is created that what follows in that chapter must be fraud. It is true that Mrs. Garrett speaks a good word for Geraldine Cummings and Mrs. Curran's "Patience Worth," but it would seem that the Glastonbury scripts of Bligh Bond, which are not mentioned, are far more evidential. Hester Travers Smith (Mrs. Dowden) obtained results on the ouija board which also deserve respectful consideration. As to the divining rod (p. 202), the author, on the basis of her own experience, is predisposed to believe that it is "only a dramatic accessory to one's clairvoyant ability." This may be true, but has it yet been proved?

Here and there are certain errata. Crookes (p. 230) was not the founder of the Society for Psychical Research. That credit belongs principally to Sidgwick, Myers, and Gurney, with Barrett taking the initiative in the organization. And it was Margaret or "Margaretta" Fox who drank herself to death, though her sister Kate left much to be desired in what was expected of a lady. Also, it was not in 1892 (p. 118) but in 1889, after the ghastly failure of her lecture tour, that Margaret recanted her confession of the previous year that all her revelations had been frauds, and, it is said, went back to table-tipping. The scorpion and the crab (p. 38) are a long way apart in the zodiac. Robert Hare (p. 119) was a professor at the University of Pennsylvania, not Harvard. But these are trivia. A more important criticism falls on the absence of an Index, that incomparable aid to the reader and the reviewer.

Perhaps it is better, once in a while, to stress the nonsense of the subject, as the author has done, because, as she observes, it is the frauds and the fools who have held back the development of knowledge in this field more than anything else. The pity of it is that the subject is one of transcendent importance. If the book helps to discredit the irresponsible charlatans who come to America in the guise of swamis, and if it assists its readers to discriminate between fake and honest mediums, it will have contributed a much-needed service. And it is specially good medicine for the vast army of trusting souls who will swallow any humbug and pay handsomely for the privilege. Mrs. Garrett's warnings are needed, and she might have printed as her text on the title page the passage from Saint John, bidding us to "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world."

WILLIAM OLIVER STEVENS

HISTORY OF THE SOCIETY

The First American Society for Psychical Research was formed in 1885, in consequence of a visit by Sir W. F. Barrett to this country, and Prof. Simon Newcomb became its President. In 1887 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 very able guidance of Dr. Hodgson until his death in 1905. The American Society for Psychical Research was then re-established with James H. Hyslop, Ph.D., formerly Professor of Logic and Ethics in Columbia University, as its Secretary and Director.

THE ENDOWMENT

The American Society for Psychical Research, Inc., was originally incorporated under the Laws of New York in 1904 under the name of American Institute for Scientific Research, for the purpose of carrying on and endowing investigation in the fields of psychical research and psychotherapeutics. It is supported by contributions from its members and a small endowment fund. The income of the Society pays only for the publications and office expenses, but does not enable the Society to carry on its scientific investigations. A much greater fund is required before this work can be carried forward with the initiative and energy which its importance deserves.

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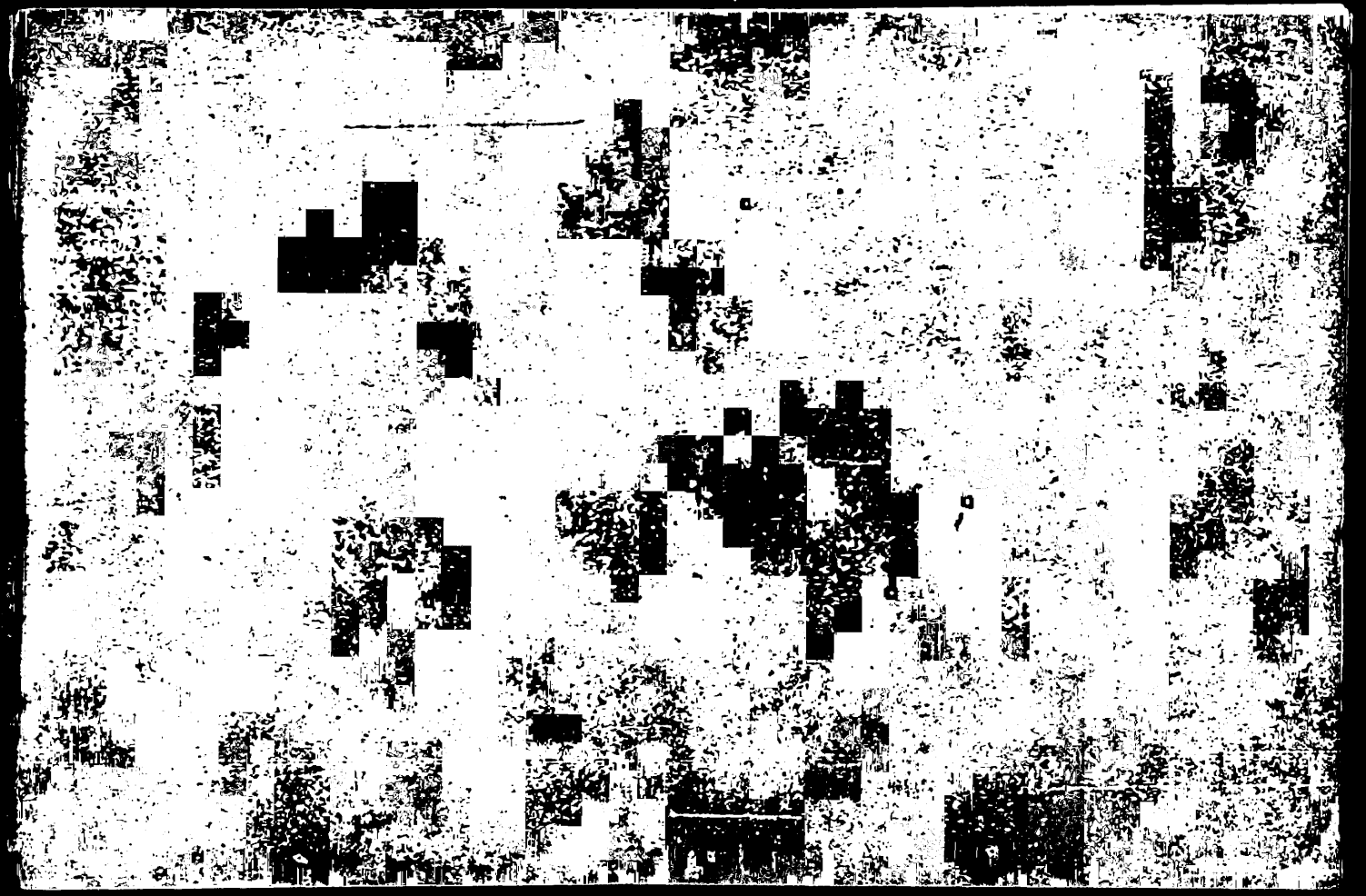

THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

VOLUME XLV APRIL 1951 NUMBER 2

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THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH, Inc.
880 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK 21, N. Y.
Single Copy, $1.50 Published Quarterly $5.00 a year

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1. The investigation of claims of telepathy, clairvoyance, veridical hallucinations and dreams, psychometry, precognition, dowsing, and other forms of supernormal cognition; of claims of supernormal physical phenomena, such as raps, telekinesis, materialization, levitation, fire-immunity, poltergeists; the study of automatic writing, trance speech, hypnotism, alterations of personality, and other subconscious processes: in short, all types of the phenomena called psychic, mediumistic, supernormal, parapsychological and metapsychic, together with the bordering subjects.

2. The collection, classification, study and publication of reports dealing with the above phenomena. Readers are asked to report incidents and cases. Names must be given, but on request will be treated as confidential.

3. The maintenance of a library on psychical research and related subjects. Contributions of books and periodical files will be welcomed.

4. Cooperating in the above tasks with qualified individuals and groups who will report their work to the Society.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE SOCIETY

Members, who receive the Proceedings and the Journal, pay an annual fee of $10. (One may become a Life Member or endow a Memorial Membership on payment of $200.) *Associates*, who receive the Journal only, pay an annual fee of $5. (Life Associate membership, $100.) *Fellows*, who receive all publications of the Society, pay an annual fee of $25. (Life Fellowship, $500.) *Patrons and Founders*: For those who wish to make a still larger contribution to the Society's work, these classes are open at $1000 and $5000, respectively.

It is to be remembered that membership in a scientific society means more than merely a subscription to its publications. The work must be carried on largely through the income from membership fees. Therefore members, old and new, are urged to make their membership class as high as they feel they can. *If a comparatively small proportion of the present members went one class higher, the money available for research would be more than doubled.*

THE JOURNAL of the American Society for Psychical Research is published quarterly by the American Society for Psychical Research, Inc., 880 Fifth Avenue, New York 21, N. Y. "Entered as second-class matter July 15, 1941, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879."

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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Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Voting Members of the American Society for Psychical Research, Inc., was held on January 30, 1951, at the Rooms of the Society. The President, Dr. George H. Hyslop, presided at the meeting. The following Voting Members were present: Mrs. E. W. Allison, Mrs. Valentine Bennett, Mr. Edward N. Ganser, Mr. Arthur Goadby, Mr. Gerald L. Kaufman, Mr. Alan F. MacRobert, Dr. Russell G. MacRobert, Miss Hettie Rhoda Meade, Dr. Gardner Murphy, Miss Margaret Naumburg, Mr. William O. Stevens, Miss Gertrude O. Tubby, Dr. Montague Ullman, Mrs. John Jay Whitehead, and Dr. J. L. Woodruff.

The following Trustees of the Society were re-elected for another terms of three years: Mr. Gerald L. Kaufman, Dr. Edward J. Kempf, and Dr. J. B. Rhine. Two new Trustees were elected: Professor C. J. Ducasse and Mr. Edward Latham.

At the meeting of the Board of Trustees held immediately after the Annual Meeting, the following officers of the Society were re-elected for the year 1951: President, Dr. George H. Hyslop; First Vice-President, Dr. Gardner Murphy; Second Vice-President, Mrs. Lawrence Jacob; Secretary and Assistant Treasurer, Mrs. E. W. Allison. Mr. Edward Latham was elected Treasurer of the Society.

Committees for 1951

The President reappointed the Chairmen of the Standing Committees for the year 1951, with power to select the members of their respective committees, at the meeting of the Board of Trustees following the Annual Meeting.

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Some Observations on the Scripts of the S.P.R. Group of Automatists*

MRS. W. H. SALTER

Before entering on a discussion of the scripts of "the S.P.R. group of automatists" I should explain that I include in that group Mrs. Piper, who could more strictly be described as a medium, and that for brevity I use the term "scripts" to include not only automatic writing, but the records of Mrs. Piper's sittings, and the visual impressions of Mrs. Stuart Wilson, another member of the group.

The scripts began in March, 1901, a few weeks after the death of Frederic Myers, and continued until 1930 or later, several thousand scripts being produced by about a dozen different automatists, and new members of the group replacing earlier members who had dropped out through death or other causes.

The study of the scripts was (and is) difficult, owing to their consisting largely of literary quotations and allusions, and to the obviously symbolic nature of much of their content.

It was not, however, long before one feature of the scripts attracted attention. Between the scripts of two or more automatists there were found concordances that did not appear to be fortuitous. The same quotation would be made at about the same time independently by more than one of them, or the same topic alluded to. Sometimes the scripts of several automatists put together gave a coherent message which could not be extracted from the scripts of any one of them taken separately. Such concordances were called "cross-correspondences." Numerous examples of them will be found in the volumes of the S.P.R. *Proceedings* from 1906, together with elaborate discussion of the argument based on them that they constituted a new type of evidence for survival, inasmuch as they implied a design not attributable to any of the automatists, but characteristic of the ostensible communicators, who included Frederic Myers. Into the argument as to the origin of the design I shall not enter, but design in my opinion there undoubtedly was. It is to the nature of the design that the observations which follow are directed.

The Cross-correspondences are historically important, because the study of them led to a thorough examination of the scripts as a whole, but they are to be regarded not as the main purpose of the scripts, but as incidental thereto. Mr. Piddington made this point in a paper published in 1923:

* This paper is a summary of an address by Mrs. Salter to the members of the A.S.P.R. on April 24, 1950.

> ". . . now that we have had time to make a more thorough-going study of the scripts, we can assert with confidence that the scripts of each automatist are not independent units, or fall now and again into small inter-connected groups, but that the entire output of each automatist is made up of a long series of connected groups . . . . whether one of the automatists has produced 50 or 1000 scripts, these scripts are not 50 or 1000 isolated units, but fall into large groups. This being so, it follows that while a cross-correspondence between a single script of A's and a single script of B's on the face of it establishes a connexion between these two scripts only, in fact it may involve a connexion between a large group of A's and a large group of B's. And so it comes about that a comparatively small number of cross-correspondences may effect very far-reaching links between the scripts of different automatists, and create between them a far deeper unity than the evidence published so far might suggest."[1]

I will not attempt to summarize Mr. Piddington's explanation of the manner in which the scripts are linked, but will refer you to his illuminating introduction to the paper from which I have quoted above.

Now it is the considered and unanimous opinion of those who have had the opportunity of making a detailed study of the scripts that the whole body of them, covering a period from March, 1901 to 1930, purport to derive from seven main communicators, working as a group, four men and three women. (I repeat I am not begging the question as to whether this claim is established.) The identity of the three women has never been revealed, and I am not at liberty to reveal it now. The four men are Myers, Sidgwick, Gurney (names so familiar in psychical research that nothing further need be said), and Francis Maitland Balfour, a younger brother of Mrs. Sidgwick. He was professor of morphology at Cambridge, and a specialist in embryology. He was killed in an alpine accident in 1882. Perhaps it is not psychologically irrelevant to point out that he was a man of great intellectual brilliance, who died in the full vigor of his early manhood, leaving his life's work incomplete. The same may be said of Gurney.

The scripts comprise a Story and a Plan. The Story is a narrative of events concerning various members of the communicating group, some of which were known to some of the automatists. In their entirety, however, the facts were not known to any single automatist. They are told in cryptic form, and the disclosure of them is gradual, the timing showing evidence of design. For these reasons they rein-

[1] Piddington, J. G., "Forecasts in Scripts Concerning the War," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XXXIII, 1923, p. 444.

force the evidence for survival and identity to be derived from the cross-correspondences. The Plan is a statement, cryptic also in form, but unmistakable in meaning, of the intentions of the communicators, over and above the proof of their survival and identity.

The Plan can best be briefly described as a determined refusal of the seven communicators to accept death as a final severance of their loves, or a final closure of work begun but unfinished on earth. The following passage from Myers's *Human Personality* (Vol. II, p. 274) seems relevant and significant:

> "We cannot simply admit the existence of discarnate spirits as inert or subsidiary phenomena; we must expect to have to deal with them as agents on their own account—agents in unexpected ways, and with novel capacities. If they are concerned with us at all, the part which they will play is not likely to be a subordinate one . . . the kind of action which now seems likely to be transmitted from the one world to the other is of a type which in the natural course of historic evolution has scarcely been likely to show itself until now. For it depends, as I conceive, on the attainment of a certain scientific level by spirits incarnate and excarnate alike."

In the Plan as set out in the scripts the communicators appear to justify the view expressed by Myers in the passage I have just quoted by representing themselves as agents on their own account, agents in unexpected ways. In particular they claim to influence the birth, character, and destiny of children, and they claim that they are able to use their own capacities for this purpose, e.g., the special embryological knowledge of F. M. Balfour, and the psychological knowledge of Gurney.

Mention of this Plan will explain in part why it is impossible to speak frankly about the meaning of the scripts. The Story presents difficulties: there are incidents in it about which silence is still necessary, but the difficulties are far greater in regard to the Plan, because there is in it an element of prevision. The communicators allege that they are working for results some of which have not yet taken place, and involve people who are completely ignorant of the prophecies made. Obviously a premature revelation might either prevent the fulfilment of the prophecy, or rob it of any evidential force.

You will not expect me in this short summary to present a detailed statement of the evidence in support of the assertions I have made. The scripts are too numerous and the symbolism too involved. I propose to give a few instances of the indirect way, in my view the intentionally indirect way, in which topics are introduced and developed, and then to apply the same principles of interpretation to two groups of scripts which have no superficial connexion with

each other, but are both on more thorough examination found to bear closely on the Plan I have outlined above.

But first I must pay tribute to Mr. Piddington for the amazing industry and perspicacity he has brought to bear on the elucidation of this enormous mass of symbolic and allusive matter.

Now for a few examples of the allusive methods of the scripts. Catherine is a name of significance both in the Story and the Plan. The scripts are full of references to famous Catherines: Katharine of Aragon, Caterina Cornaro, Catherine de Medici, and above all St. Catherine and her wheel. Now again whatever intelligence directs the scripts wishes to refer to lighthouses. It does so by making me misquote in one of my scripts part of a line of Vergil, which in its correct form was perfectly well known to my conscious mind. The identical misquotation is made by Sir Walter Scott at the end of a diary of a tour he made in the "Lighthouse Yacht" to inspect lighthouses round the Scottish coast. The same intelligence wishes to connect the Catherine topic with the lighthouse topic. Well, it was St. Catherine of Alexandria who was connected with a wheel, and the Pharos of Alexandria was the most famous lighthouse of the ancient world. The scripts are not, however, content with that easy association, and seek something more recondite. So my scripts quote the nursery rhyme "Three Blind Mice." Then after a lapse of more than five years they revert to this nursery rhyme and at the same time make several references to another nursery rhyme about a Fairy Ship, the crew of which were "four and twenty white mice." This puzzled the interpreters until, through the scripts of another automatist, they realized that the allusion was not to the Fairy Ship so much as to a story of Kipling's, "The Disturber of Traffic," in which that nursery rhyme plays a large part, and the line about the four and twenty white mice is quoted. Kipling's story is all about lighthouses and the scene of it is laid in St. Catherine's lighthouse off the Isle of Wight.[2] When I wrote the scripts mentioned above in which indirect allusions to lighthouses are made, I can most positively state that I had not the faintest idea what my scripts were aiming at.[3]

Now the interesting point is, as Mr. Piddington has clearly shown, that there is a coherent symbolic scheme running through the whole body of the scripts, a scheme the significance of which could only be grasped by some one who had all the scripts before him, which none of the automatists ever had during the period (1901-1930) when the scripts were being produced. It would be expecting too

[2] The identification is certain, though Kipling uses another name.

[3] For the report on the "lighthouse" topic, see Mrs. Salter's paper "A Sermon in St. Paul's," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XLV, 1938, pp. 34-42.

much of any human effort to suppose that in so many scripts produced by so many automatists over such a length of time there would be no inconsistencies or ambiguities in the use of symbols; there are, but they do not obscure the general scheme. The purpose of the scheme was apparently dual:

(1) To ensure that the Plan was understood when, and not before, the script-intelligence (to use as non-committal a term as possible) wished it to be, and (2) to ensure that when the time came it could be shown that the Plan was already in existence when the first cryptic references to it occurred in the scripts.

The immediate purpose of the Plan has already been indicated, the influencing of the birth, character, and destiny of children with the help of the embryological knowledge of F. M. Balfour and the psychological knowledge of Gurney, psychological eugenics, as it is described in one of the scripts. But it should be clearly understood that the communicators do not claim any exclusive monopoly in this purpose, which is shared by others not named in the scripts; it is a first step towards the production of a better world-order founded on peace. I shall quote some scripts bearing on this, and for other scripts tending in the same direction I would once again refer you to Mr. Piddington's paper.[4]

In some early scripts of my mother, Mrs. Verrall, to which I am about to refer, F. M. Balfour is twice referred to by name among a considerable number of other persons. He had not during his life shown any particular interest in psychic matters. There was therefore no particular reason why he should appear as a communicator in my mother's scripts, or in those of any of the other automatists, and still less reason why she or they should credit him with any active share, along with Sidgwick, Myers, and Gurney, in promoting any kind of post-mortem enterprise. It may be for this reason that, while the script references to the other three are overt, those to F. M. Balfour are, except in a few instances, cryptic. The following are the principal symbols applied to him in the scripts: from his first name Francis, allusions to St. Francis, the Franciscan Order, and to Seraphs, that Order being known as the Seraphic Order; from his special study of fish life, references to fishes and fishing; from his mountaineering and his death in an alpine accident, references to high mountains and snow peaks.

The scripts of my mother's of which I am speaking are a group, nine in number, written at various dates between November, 1901, and February, 1902, and linked together in several ways. In two of these scripts F. M. Balfour is mentioned by name, and two con-

[4] Piddington, *op. cit.*, pp. 523-576.

tain references to fishes and fishing: in two scripts appear the symbols of one of the women communicators. So much for the authorship of these scripts: now as to their content. The apparent plan of these nine scripts is to develop side by side two lines of thought which are finally merged in the last script of the series. The first, which is developed in three of the scripts, is based on two lines of Book I of the Aeneid (1. 33 *Tantae molis erat Romanam condere gentem,* 1. 282 *Romanos rerum dominos gentemque togatam*) in which are predicted the foundation of Rome and her rise to the state of a world-empire based on peace, the toga being the robe of civil life. The second consists of playing on real or fancy words, English, Greek, and Latin, derived from the root gen-, which signifies a begetting: three scripts of this group are devoted to this topic. The final script combines the two lines of thought by three times quoting the phrase *gens nata togae* (i.e., the race born for the robe of peace), a non-Vergilian adaptation of Vergil's phrase *gens togata.* The famous Pax Romana, which Vergil celebrates, is often in the scripts taken as a type, an imperfect type, of the world-order that the Plan is to bring about. It could hardly have been more clearly stated, without disclosing the Plan to the automatist's conscious mind, that F. M. Balfour, and the other communicator alluded to, are engaged in producing children capable of giving effect to a world-wide reign of peace.

I now turn from my mother's early scripts of the winter of 1901-1902 to the scripts of one of the later members of the group, Mrs. Stuart Wilson.

Mrs. Wilson, an American lady who had been for some years an Associate of the S.P.R., answered an appeal in 1915 for persons willing to take part in telepathy experiments. There was no expectation in the mind of Mrs. Wilson, or any one else, that she would be involved in the general script development, but so it unquestionably was. Mrs. Wilson is an important figure in script interpretation, because she can fairly be described as an "outsider." She had no knowledge of the scripts except what an intelligent educated woman might derive from published reports, and she never had any personal contact with any of the other automatists except myself.

And yet in her scripts are found, not only the same key topics as in other scripts, but the same combinations of topics. I have already mentioned that Mrs. Wilson's so-called "scripts" are in fact records of visual impressions received by her. Here are some extracts:

> "Where the trees stopped there were alpine pastures, and far off rising above a bank of clouds a sunlit snow peak. The little seraph with its four wings and its halo" (August 13, 1915).

It would not be remarkable that Mrs. Wilson should refer to an alpine peak, or to a seraph. But why does she combine these topics?

And here are two other even more curious and suggestive quotations:

> "All sorts of glass retorts, tubes, wheels . . . in fact the belongings of a laboratory . . . some of the receptacles were full of a clear liquid full of shining bubbles. It ended as far as I was concerned in a most beautiful radiant seraph's head in a large test-tube" (March 19, 1916).
>
> "A bright iridescent object like a soap-bubble or crystal, and forming in it something like the face of a golden-haired child with wings. St. Francis' seraph with its wings crossed over its face" (June 3, 1917).

These last two scripts are closely connected, the idea common to both being the production of infant seraphs in a laboratory: surely an odd idea for Mrs. Wilson to hit on, but singularly apt, when one remembers that one of the communicators is constantly symbolized in the scripts by a seraph, and is alleged to be using his embryological knowledge to carry out something in the nature of experiments concerning the birth of children.

If this interpretation of the scripts is correct, it throws light on some of the problems which have in the past given rise to much controversy. The appropriateness of the "Sevens" cross-correspondence[5] to the view of the scripts given above is too obvious to need elaboration. If, as seems likely, Mr. Piddington set the ball rolling as an independent agent when he wrote his "posthumous" letter, he was presenting the script-intelligence with ready-made material which the script-intelligence had no difficulty in fitting in to its own scheme. For reasons which it would take too long to formulate, the three Greek words which were the subject of the "One Horse Dawn" experiment (see the discussions of this case in S.P.R. *Proceedings*, Vols. XX, XXX, and XXXIV) were remarkably apt to the general scheme of the scripts, so apt that I find it impossible to suppose that the success of the experiment depended on my father's arbitrary choice of these words. I suggest that either he was himself influenced in his choice, so as to become himself *pro tem.* an automatist, or that he made his own choice, but the experiment *succeeded* because his choice was one the script-intelligence could turn to its own use.

In presenting this view of the scripts I wish, at the risk of tedious repetition, to say that I do not beg the question as to whether the "communicators" are the persons claimed to be such in the scripts, or whether they are in fact promoting such a Plan as is outlined

[5] *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XXIV, 1910, pp. 243 ff.

above, and I most certainly do not ask you to accept the success of the Plan as more than a pious hope.

May I conclude by quoting from an article by Professor Gardner Murphy in the JOURNAL of the A.S.P.R., entitled "Field Theory and Survival"[6]:

> "Now this way of approaching the problem leads to a way of answering the question: 'What is the most cogent type of survival evidence?' The answer, I believe, is that it is evidence which by definition takes the form of post-mortem *interaction* of two or more communicators. It is specifically a field expression; not expression of a solitary individuality, but of an enduring relationship . . . . Generalizing, I would say that to me the strongest of survival evidences would be this kind of evidence of continued purposeful interactions of personalities after death."[7]

After some discussion of "interpersonal systems of forces," Professor Murphy observes that "there is some reason to believe that personality continues after death to be, as it is now, an aspect of an interpersonal reality . . ."[8]

That is the kind of picture of survival which the scripts seem to suggest—an interaction between two groups of personalities, a group of automatists in this world, and a group of communicators in the other.

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[6] Vol. XXXIX, October, 1945, pp. 181-209.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 208.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 209.

Possible and Impossible

What Constitutes "Impossibility"?

HEREWARD CARRINGTON

Psychical researchers, perhaps more than any others, are constantly confronted with this problem: A man or a woman has some sort of psychic experience. Usually he is hesitant about telling it because he is afraid of being considered queer, a crank, a "nut." The immediate reaction of the average listener, when any experience of this kind is told, is to exclaim at once, "Oh, but that's impossible!" Obviously, he fails to remember the old adage, "The 'impossibilities' of one generation are the commonplaces of the next." Is it not true that many things considered impossible in 1870 are accepted without question today? Obviously, this is an elastic term, which needs more consideration than has hitherto been given to it. Without indulging in absurdities, or "going off the deep end," are we not justified in thinking that some sort of discussion of this question is needed and even necessitated?

There are some who would contend that "nothing is impossible." This is obviously absurd. We are certainly justified in using this term in connection with certain claims or statements. For example, it *is* impossible for a man to jump from New York to London in one step. But suppose a man tells us that he can move a material object merely by looking at it, or placing his hand over it. Is this equally impossible? Some might contend that it is, but it is surely wiser, in such a case, to employ a milder term, and say that it is "improbable"—meaning by this unlikely and contrary to ordinary human experience. It is surely not "impossible" for a man of seventy, who has never touched a piano, to become a great pianist before he dies; but it is so improbable that, for all practical purposes, we might be justified in using the harsher word. Impossibility, therefore, is obviously a relative term; there are degrees of probability and possibility, which are related to one another and to the solid ground beneath, as though they were perched upon a slanting board—some nearer the ground than others. But this is a very different thing from asserting that all events seemingly contrary to the common experience of humanity are necessarily "impossible."

The acceptance or rejection of such reported events doubtless depends very largely upon the structure of the human mind—which in turn is dependent upon one's early environment, training, education, etc. Take, for example, the question of a future life. The skeptic and rationalist, basing his arguments upon physiology, the facts of

evolution, and above all "common sense," would at once reject the idea as an absurd superstition, a myth, founded upon childish logic and wishful thinking. The innately religious man, on the other hand, would accept it almost as a matter-of-course, and denounce as heretical and sacrilegious the views of the confirmed skeptic. *His* "common sense" tells him that it *is* a fact—just as the common sense of the rationalist tells him that it is not. Obviously "common sense" is a poor arbiter in such matters, incapable of rendering a final verdict, and some higher judge must be found, capable of rendering an impartial and valid decision.

In the observation of psychic phenomena, the same psychological mechanisms are obviously involved and brought into play. A man attends a materializing séance and believes that he has seen, touched, and talked with some deceased relative or friend. He tells this experience to another, who immediately assures him that he has been deluded by the most trumpery fraud. In order to settle the question, the scoffer is invited to attend the next séance—which he does. Each man emerges from the sitting more completely convinced than ever that he is right; the skeptic still contends that it is all trickery, while the believer maintains that this was ruled out by the very conditions of the experiment and the nature of the results. The latter can accept the phenomena easily; the former only with the greatest difficulty. Each appeals to the evidence of his own senses, and to the relative probabilities and improbabilities involved. How is any ultimate decision to be arrived at, in view of their conflicting opinions and testimonies?

Let us consider this question from another point of view. Most students of psychic phenomena, I imagine, accept the evidence for telepathy, regarding it as something now definitely proved: it is a "fact in nature." The average psychologist, on the other hand, is still highly skeptical, and refuses to accept telepathy as an actuality. But let us ignore his opinion for the time being. What would be the reaction of the average investigator of psychic phenomena to e.g., the phenomenon of lycanthropy—the ability of a man to transform himself into an animal? Would not this be immediately and indignantly rejected as an "impossibility"? Undoubtedly it would. And yet anyone who has taken the trouble to study the literature of the subject must have been struck by the mass of impressive evidence in its favor, both as to quantity and (occasionally) as to quality. Intrinsically, and from the point of view of common sense, such a belief is of course preposterous. And yet there is the evidence confronting us. Why, therefore, should telepathy be accepted and lycanthropy rejected? Obviously, this is largely because of the "degree of improbability" involved in its acceptance. One is more

probable than the other because (*a*) it does less violence to our accepted modes of thought; (*b*) it involves less strain upon our imagination and credulity; (*c*) it seems more in keeping with accepted scientific thought; and (*d*) the evidence produced is far stronger in the one case than in the other. But it will be observed that the first three of these arguments are all a priori.

The fourth argument is valid. We must always bear in mind one fundamental maxim: "the strength of the evidence should be proportional to the strangeness of the facts." The stranger the fact, the more evidence is needed in order to establish it. But in the above illustration it will be noted that precisely the reverse of this is true. The amount of evidence in favor of telepathy, both as to quality and quantity, is a thousand times stronger than the evidence in favor of lycanthropy; and, this being true, we feel that the former may reasonably be accepted while the latter should be rejected. Intrinsic impossibility is only one factor here; the final verdict is only arrived at because of our possible appeal to scientific standards and the criteria of evidence.

When the term "impossible" is applied, then, this surely means that, in this individual's opinion, the degree of improbability is so great that its opposite is hardly worthy of serious consideration. And yet, in many instances, this is a faulty standard. I well remember my father (who was quite an accomplished mathematician) proving to me, as a boy, why heavier-than-air machines could never fly! What scientific fact seemed to be more solidly and irrevocably grounded than the indestructibility of matter? What more conclusively proved than the wave theory of light? And yet, as we know, both of these fundamental concepts, seemingly founded upon unshakable scientific data, required later modification or ultimate rejection. A ninety-nine percentage of improbability is obviously not enough. We must attain a hundred percent certainty before such a term can validly be employed.

Now, in such questions as telepathy, clairvoyance, etc.—or of a future life—such certitude clearly cannot be attained. No decisive proof can be adduced, either pro or con. Logic tells us that a negative cannot be proved. The positive remains in the realm of probability—*more* or *less* probable, depending upon the action of the observed or reported facts upon the mind of their recipient. It is a matter of common observation that the same occurrence will often evoke entirely opposite and contrary opinions in any two given observers. Both bring with them a differing mental background, upon which the event reacts. It is largely this mental background which determines the acceptance or rejection of the evidence presented. As Charles

Richet has so forcibly reminded us: "Certainty does not follow on demonstration, it follows on habit."

All this being true, the question naturally arises: How may one ever hope to arrive at a valid conclusion, in things psychic, and attain some measure of ultimate truth? I am not presumptuous enough to believe that I can answer this question in any way conclusively, but—since I have been an active member of the S.P.R. for more than fifty years, and have been immersed in psychical research during all that time in a way that few have—it is possible that certain reflections and suggestions of mine may be of interest to others in this connection.

In the first place, then, it has frequently been pointed out that the sort of "proof" obtainable in this field is not the same sort of proof acquired in the exact sciences. A chemical experiment, for example, can be repeated over and over again any number of times, by any number of individuals, and (experimental error aside) the same results may always be attained. In our field, relatively few experiments can be repeated at will, since many of the phenomena are spontaneous and sporadic. Psychical research is and seemingly must remain to a great extent observational rather than experimental. It is for this very reason that many scientists have been repelled by this difficulty, and refuse to devote their time and energy to this subject.[1]

The type of evidence obtainable in psychical research more nearly approximates *legal* evidence—where the "balance of probabilities" decides the case one way or the other. If this is overwhelming the man is considered guilty; if it is dubious or problematical the Scotch verdict of "non proven" is frequently rendered. In many such instances, further evidence may decide the case either pro or con.

Assuming this to be correct, what determines the "balance of probability" in any given instance, or when applied to the subject as a whole? It cannot be only the *facts themselves,* for, as we have seen, the same set of facts (or alleged or seeming facts) have produced diametrically opposite viewpoints in two individuals. In the ultimate analysis, therefore, any "proof" (i.e., conviction in the individual) must depend very largely upon the mental background before mentioned—that is, the character of the mind a man brings to bear upon the scientific observations or data before him. His final judgment will be determined by this reaction.

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[1] It has been pointed out, however, that even in the exact sciences observation rather than experiment is often necessitated. Lightning flashes, meteors, etc., can only be noted as and when they occur, and cannot be repeated at will.

If this be granted, the question then arises: what sort of mental background is trustworthy and dependable, and what is not? Obviously, the opinion of everyone is not equally valuable, in judging any individual case or the evidence *en masse*. Some are better observers—more trustworthy and accurate—than others. Really competent researchers are few and far between. The opinion of the average person, untrained in this field, is generally conceded to be almost entirely valueless.

What, then, may be considered the factors involved in building our ideally impartial investigator, and what may be held to be the constituents of his personality? I feel compelled to divide my answer to these questions into three parts, viz., the investigator of physical phenomena, the investigator of mental phenomena, and the general mental background of any given individual in relation to the question as a whole. Let us touch upon each of these as briefly as possible.

The primary and fundamental requisite in dealing with physical phenomena is, in my opinion, a thorough knowledge of trickery and the psychology of deception. So much fraud enters into this field that this is absolutely essential. The ability to separate the wheat from the chaff is of prime importance. Anyone devoid of training in this direction is absolutely incompetent to pass upon the validity of physical phenomena—distasteful as this conclusion may be to many. The history of the subject, however, amply bears this out.

Granted the *genuineness* of certain phenomena, the next requirements are: accurate observation, infinite patience, a calmness of mind (and temperament), extreme caution, a certain grounding in related sciences (biology, psychiatry, etc.), and at least some knowledge of laboratory technique. These are basic essentials.

When we come to mental phenomena, we are on far more debatable and difficult ground. In the first place, the phenomena themselves cover a wide and varied field. Some of these are spontaneous, some experimental. Insofar as they are experimental (e.g., when a psychic attempts to read, clairvoyantly, a written message enclosed in a sealed envelope or a locked box) the remarks just made with regard to physical phenomena may be said to apply. When, however, this element is lacking (e.g., in trance-speech, automatic writing, crystal gazing, etc.), the character of the material obtained must be judged entirely upon its merits—the *content* of the messages obtained. Do these supply definitely supernormal information, or do they not? Are they indicative of spirit-communication, or may they be accounted for otherwise? This of course is the heart of the problem and represents the crux of the whole matter.

In estimating the validity of such material, it is probable that the personal factor can rarely be eliminated. Emotional bias will tend to warp the judgment one way or the other. An entirely detached attitude is the rarest thing in the world to encounter. The best that we can hope for is to make this as detached and impersonal as possible. A verdict should be reached as to the result of the *evidence presented*, and that alone. Judged solely on its own merits, what does the evidence tend to prove?

We return to our "mental background." A man having a definitely mystical or religious temperament might well accept evidence of a spiritual world and spirit-communication far more readily than one reared as an atheist or an agnostic. Such a man must be shown "the error of his ways." He must not let this factor influence him. As Professor Hyslop once remarked, "in order to appreciate the importance of psychic phenomena, a man should first be innoculated with materialism." On the other hand, the materialist should not permit his innate skepticism to warp his judgment, or prevent him from maintaining an open and receptive mind. If the ultimate goal be the attainment of truth—no matter what that may be—these personal feelings and predilections must be put resolutely to one side, and allowed no place in the ultimate verdict.

Assuming this to be the case, the question now arises: What criteria have we for estimating the supernormality of any single phenomenon, or the value of the accumulated evidence *en masse*? And particularly, what will help us to distinguish the seemingly spiritualistic material from other data, genuinely supernormal in character, which are probably not spiritualistic in the final analysis?

A thorough knowledge of psychology is required here—both normal and abnormal. However, this is not enough. Most books on psychology and psychiatry ignore psychic phenomena completely, or at best treat the subject very inadequately and ignorantly. They are for the most part prejudiced and unsure guides. On the other hand, spiritualistic literature is for the most part utterly credulous and superficial. Neither of these sources can be depended upon for arriving at a just estimate of the case. Of course, the obvious thing to recommend is for the student to read through the whole of the material published by the societies, but in the vast majority of cases this can hardly be expected. Were I asked to point to a single book which would give the reader a sound, sensible viewpoint from which to begin, I should unhesitatingly recommend Flournoy's *Spiritism and Psychology*,[2] which in my estimation is one of the most illuminating works ever written. The reader may not agree with his conclu-

[2] Harper & Brothers, New York, 1911.

sions (at any rate not with all of them) but it is my belief that the *viewpoint* expressed is sound, valid, and scientific. After reading this book, he will be in a far better position to estimate the validity of others, and to judge the relative degree of probability and improbability in any phenomena which may come to his attention.

Doubtless there is no Royal Road which one may travel in order to become a competent psychical researcher. But advice and suggestions may help, as well as personal experience. The initial reading of good books on the subject is absolutely imperative, and I should strongly urge every would-be investigator to read extensively *before* undertaking any personal experimentation. For, as William James expressed it—and I cannot do better than conclude in his words, "Silently, between all the details of his business, the *power of judging* in all that class of matter will have built itself up within him as a possession that will never pass away."[3]

It is this "power of judging" which is so invaluable to the psychical researcher. Upon it the future of this subject depends.

[3] James, W., *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 1, p. 127, Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1890.

Psychokinesis Reconsidered

CARROLL BLUE NASH

Extra-chance scoring and significant position effects in experiments with freely falling dice and disks have been attributed to psychokinesis. In the writer's opinion the evidence provided does not sufficiently exclude the possibility that the significant results in these experiments were produced by precognition.* The reasons for this belief are herein presented. Criticism which leads to a refinement of experimental procedure and an exact distinction between the results of PK and Pcg can be considered only as constructive.

In PK tests in which the same die face or combination of faces, e.g., high dice, is not used throughout the experiment, the target configuration, for the experiment as a whole, varies, not only with the targets selected, but with the number of dice per trial and with the number of consecutive trials for each target. For example, in the around-the-die method the target configuration is different with one die per trial than it is with six dice per trial, and it is different with one trial per target than it is with six consecutive trials per target. Many targets have been used in PK tests with dice (any one of the six die faces, high dice, low dice, sevens, doubles and around-the-die) and several of these targets have been used with various numbers of dice (1, 2, 3, 6, 12, 24 and 60) and for various numbers of consecutive trials for the same target. In addition to the large number of targets-dice-trials combinations that have been used in PK experiments, there are many other combinations of targets, numbers of dice and numbers of consecutive trials which may be used. It would be possible to compose from the vast number of possible targets-dice-trials combinations a target configuration that would yield significant scoring with any given series of die faces. Also, it is possible that the die faces that will appear uppermost in the trials of the experiment are precognized and a target configuration selected that will yield significant scoring with those die faces. While, even if the future die faces of the experiment were available in recorded form, it would be a decidedly difficult task to select a target configuration that would yield significant results, the ability of the psi faculty cannot be concluded without empirical evidence to be so limited.

* This paper was originally written in 1946 and shown to several parapsychologists at that time. Since its acceptance for publication two papers containing matter on the possible effect of Pcg in PK experiments have appeared to which the interested reader may refer: "Experimental Precognition and its Implications," by Robert H. Thouless, *Journal* S.P.R., March-April 1950, pp. 201-210, and "The Experimental Evidence for PK and Precognition," by C. W. K. Mundle, *Proc.* S.P.R., July, 1950.

Similarly, in PK tests in which the same target is used throughout, the significant scoring may be caused by a precognitive selection of a favorable target configuration. In such experiments the factors of the number of dice per trial and the number of consecutive trials for the same target may at first thought seem irrelevant. It is true that, if the target alone is selected and the number of dice and the number of consecutive trials for each target are not subject to selection, the probability of the significant scoring being due to a precognitive selection is greatly reduced. However, in these experiments the choice of the use of the same target throughout is made from many possible targets-dice-trials combinations, and it is possible that the use of the same target throughout is the most favorable target configuration for the production of significant scoring with the particular series of die faces that will appear uppermost. When such is the case, use of the same target throughout the experiment will be the natural precognitive choice. Furthermore, in experiments in which the same target is used throughout, the significance of the scoring is rendered doubtful by the possibility that a target favored by dice bias was selected. The higher faces of dice with excavated spots tend to be favored by dice bias (3) and, in a majority of the experiments with a single target in which significant results were obtained, the higher faces of the dice were used as the target. That the higher faces are generally selected by the subject when he has a choice of target (1) may indicate an ESP selection of a target favored by dice bias.

Proof that the significant scores were not due to dice bias, in experiments in which the same target was used throughout, has rested largely on the appearance of significant position effects in the recorded data. However, significant position effects, as well as significant total scoring, may be the result of a precognitive selection of a favorable target configuration. If the die faces that will appear uppermost in the trials of the experiment are precognized, it would be possible to select, from the vast number of targets-dice-trials combinations, a target configuration that will yield significant position effects. It is unlikely, however, in an experiment in which the same target is used throughout, that a target selected to score highly because of dice bias could at the same time be selected to yield significant position effects. However, significant position effects need not be ascribed to a precognitive selection of a favorable target configuration, since there are two additional precognitive sources of significant position effects.

One of the sources of significant position effects is the precognitive selection of a method of recording the data that will produce them. Nash (2) has shown that position effects occurring in the run scores

of the set as recorded may differ from the position effects inherent in the chronological order of the run scores of the set. In most PK experiments the run scores have been recorded in more than one column or row within the set, which places them in a position relative to one another within the set that is not equivalent to their true chronological order. With a given set of data, the occurrence and character of position effects within the set will depend upon the number of columns into which the run scores of the set are divided, and significant position effects may be produced by a precognitive determination of a favorable number of these columns. Similarly, position effects within the series, session, page, and half-set may be produced by a precognitive determination of a favorable method of positioning the data within these experimental subdivisions.

The third precognitive source of position effects in PK tests is the precognitive selection of a favorable method of subdividing the experiment. By a precognitive survey of the chronological order of the hits, the trials may be divided into series, sessions, pages, sets, or runs, either arbitrarily or by a change of target, subject, time interval, or experimental procedure, which causes a larger percentage of the hits to occur in similar positions within comparable subdivisions of the experiment. Position effects would result. Thus, position effects within experimental subdivisions, unless those subdivisions are determined by chance, may not be considered valid indicators of PK.

The prevalence of the decline between the first and fourth quarters of experimental subdivisions has been cited as commanding evidence of the PK hypothesis. The strength of this evidence is increased by the occurrence of the typical quarterly decline in experiments conducted before 1942, when the existence of position effects was discovered. It is possible that the future importance of position effects and the particular significance attached to the decline between the first and fourth quarters were precognized in these early experiments, in spite of the large number of experimenters conducting them, and produced by precognitive selections in a manner heretofore described. It is also possible that, after the prevalence of the quarterly decline in these early experiments was discovered, further experimenters aimed for this particular position effect and produced it by precognitive selections. But, since each of these possibilities depends upon the occurrence of the other, they cannot both be true. As an alternative explanation, the writer offers the hypothesis that the typical quarterly decline, both before and after the discovery of its occurrence, may be the result of a wide-spread psychological tendency to focus the attention on the beginnings of the tentative subdivisions during the precognitive selections. This would result in the selections

of a target configuration and methods of subdividing and recording the data that would place the hits with greater frequency in the beginnings of the subdivisions where the attention would normally be focused. Fewer hits would appear in the other parts of the subdivisions and the typical decline between the first and fourth quarters of the subdivisions would result without cognition of the importance of position effects and without desire to produce them.

Position effects, typically declines, in the chronological order of all the hits in the whole experiment, and not merely in experimental subdivisions, can be explained, other than by the PK hypothesis, only by the precognitive selection of a favorable target configuration. This is due to the fact that, if all the hits of the experiment are arranged in their chronological order, precognitively selected methods of subdividing the experiment and positioning the recorded data will have no effect on the presence of position effects in the data so arranged. It is extremely improbable that, in an experiment in which the same target is used throughout, a target could be found that would produce both significant total scoring and significant position effects in the chronological order of all the hits, and the occurrence of such results would provide strong evidence for the PK hypothesis. In a search through the literature, however, no experiment, in which the same target was used throughout, has been found that provided both significant total scoring and significant position effects in the chronological order of the hits for the whole experiment. The PK hypothesis must rest on other evidence than this at the present time.

Although the possibility that the highly significant results in some of the PK experiments, particularly those conducted before 1942, are entirely attributable to Pcg may be remote, the possibility must be recognized to exist. If it were necessary to establish the existence of PK as a psi faculty distinct from Pcg on the basis of probability, the probability of its existence might be considered to be sufficient to presume its existence. However, PK can be distinguished from Pcg by experimental procedure. While the significance of the results in an experiment designed to test pure PK would be based on probability, the exclusion of Pcg from the experiment would be based on experimental procedure. It would seem unwarranted to assert that the Pcg hypothesis for significant results in PK tests is untenable because it is considered to be improbable (and the writer expects this assertion to be made), when an experiment can be carried out to determine the facts of the matter. Furthermore, whether or not one believes that the significant results in PK tests may possibly be entirely attributable to Pcg, one can have no doubt that Pcg

could have been active to some extent in all the reported PK experiments and that a test of pure PK has yet to be performed.

In a test of pure PK, Pcg would be precluded by determination of the target configuration and the experimental subdivisions by chance. The method of positioning the data within the subdivisions would also be determined by chance, or else all hits for the whole experiment would be recorded in a linear order corresponding to their chronological order. If significant results are obtained in a PK test in which the entrance of Pcg is precluded, the reported tests on PK, although still subject to the Pcg hypothesis, will afford strong additional evidence of the existence of PK. If, on the other hand, it proves impossible to obtain significant results in tests of pure PK, the significant results in the reported PK experiments must be attributed to Pcg.

It should be mentioned that counterhypotheses for the significant results in the reported Pcg experiments (4) cast an element of doubt on the proof of the existence of Pcg. PK is the counterhypothesis offered for the significant results in some of the Pcg experiments. Thus, if tests of pure PK should prove the non-existence of PK, they would by the same act confirm the existence of Pcg.

In addition to the Pcg hypothesis, there are two other hypotheses that may be offered as explanations of the significant results in the PK experiments, and glimmerings of these hypotheses have appeared in the literature (5, 6). These two hypotheses can be respectively termed possibility-precognition and ESP-prediction.

Possibility-Pcg is the cognition of the connection between a possible future cause and its effect. The cause and its effect may not occur since the cause may not be invoked. In distinction, Pcg is the cognition of a future event (cause or effect) that will inevitably occur. According to the possibility-Pcg hypothesis, a cause that will produce the desired target in PK tests or the predicted order of cards in Pcg tests may be precognized, following which it may be invoked to produce the desired target or predicted card order. By employment of this psi faculty, a desired target or predicted card order could be obtained without the use of PK. It appears impossible, however, to know that a cause will produce a particular effect unless that cause and its effect will eventually occur—and in this apparent impossibility lies the weakness of this hypothesis.

In ESP-prediction, an effect or the cause of a desired or predicted effect is predicted through the aid of ESP faculties other than Pcg. If it is the cause of the effect, rather than the effect itself, that is predicted, the cause may be invoked in an attempt to produce the

effect. It is possible through the use of ordinary mental faculties to predict some effects or the causes of some effects with a degree of success that would not be possible by chance alone, and there can be no doubt that such predictions could be achieved with an even higher degree of success through the use of ESP. ESP-prediction differs from possibility-Pcg, since a possibility-precognized effect will take place if its possibility-precognized cause is correctly invoked, while there is no surety that an ESP-predicted effect will occur whether or not its ESP-predicted cause is correctly invoked. It differs from clairvoyance and telepathy in that it makes use of clairvoyance and/or telepathy to predict a future event, while clairvoyance and telepathy are the ESP of an event that is occurring or has occurred.

In PK or Pcg tests, if a certain target or card order were successfully predicted with the aid of ESP or if the cause of a certain target or card order were successfully predicted with the aid of ESP and then successfully invoked, the desired target or predicted card order would result without the use of PK or Pcg. For example, a target might be predicted to appear uppermost by the knowledge gained through ESP of the dice bias; or a position of the dice before release that would be favorable to the desired target might be predicted by ESP, and this cause invoked by placing the dice in that position; or a method of cutting and shuffling the cards favorable to the predicted card order might be predicted by ESP, and invoked by cutting and shuffling the cards in that manner. However, in many PK tests opposite die faces were used equally as targets so that the effect of dice bias on the total scoring was precluded, or there appeared in the data significant position effects not attributable to dice bias. Methods of rolling the dice and shuffling the cards have generally been so mechanical that there has been little chance for the subject or the experimenter to place the dice in a favorable position within the container or to cut and shuffle the cards in a manner conducive to significant results. It must be concluded that, while ESP-prediction undoubtedly takes place, it has been sufficiently excluded in most PK and Pcg experiments not to have been the cause of the significant results. It is of interest to note that either the ESP-prediction hypothesis or the possibility-Pcg hypothesis would eliminate the paradox between determinism and free will that is occasioned by the Pcg hypothesis.

In conclusion, it is possible that the significant results in PK tests so far reported have been due to Pcg instead of PK. In any case a test of pure PK has yet to be performed. Possibility-Pcg is thought to be theoretically untenable, and ESP-prediction, although an ad-

mitted psi faculty, is believed to have been sufficiently excluded in most PK and Pcg tests not to have been the source of the significant results.†

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6. Thouless, R. H., "A Program of Parapsychology," *Journal of Parapsychology*, Vol. 12, 1948, pp. 113-119.

† Since this paper was ready to go to press a report by Dr. R. H. Thouless has appeared in which he states that one of the objects in his PK experimentation was to devise a method which would eliminate the possibility of success being due to precognition of the way in which the dice would fall. See "A Report on an Experiment in Psycho-Kinesis with Dice, and a Discussion of Psychological Factors Favouring Success," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XLIX, 1951, pp. 107-130. — Ed.

Report of the Research Committee

Since early Spring the major efforts of a Research group consisting of Dr. Montague Ullman, Dr. J. L. Woodruff, Mr. William Triebel, and Mrs. L. A. Dale, Research Associate, have been devoted to establishing an experimental procedure designed to clarify the problem of whether or not the physiological concomitants of psi effects can be detected instrumentally. After consultation, special electrical equipment and recording devices were obtained by the Society. Exploratory trials have been made thus far in two principal directions. The first has been the study of the psychogalvanic skin reflex (PGR) in relation to simple ESP testing. The results here were provocative but, owing to the low yield of ESP in most subjects, a second line of endeavor was pursued. By means of controlled electrical stimuli, subjects were conditioned to a selected symbol and were then tested to determine the PGR response before extinction of the conditioning. Various procedures were introduced to heighten the conditioning and to explore the possibility of establishing a conditioned response (as indicated by the PGR) to a clairvoyantly perceived stimulus. An average of three experimental sessions are held weekly and the work is going forward in a spirit of optimism and enthusiasm.

The Research group will welcome volunteers to take part as subjects in the series just described. The only requirements are that the subject be able to attend a minimum of two sittings of an hour and a half in length and be willing to accept a light electric shock. Special interest will focus on subjects who have had personal psychic experiences, but this is not a requisite in this particular series.

An important function of the Research group is testing persons who appear to have special psychic gifts. During the past year six such persons, five of them patients of several members of the Medical Section, have cooperated with the Research Associate in a number of ESP series of varying lengths. The five patients were referred to the Society because they reported spontaneous psychic experiences to their analysts. Out of this group, one subject's work was of considerable interest. This young woman had reported many precognitive dreams to her analyst and she seemed to be completely convinced as to her abilities in this direction. During a preliminary discussion with the Research Associate she evinced great interest in the Hunt clairvoyance machine (see JOURNAL A.S.P.R., Vol. XLII, pp. 50-55), and therefore arrangements were made for her to take part in a series of experiments, using this apparatus under precognitive conditions. At eight sittings, she performed a total of 60 "runs" (1500

single "guesses") with a deviation of +37. This positive deviation gives a C.R. of 2.38 and is statistically significant. Experiments in the telepathic cognition of drawings with this subject yielded only chance results.

The other subject whose work promises to be of interest wrote to the Society offering his services for card-calling experiments. He suggested specifically that he should work at a distance and with an agent personally unknown to him. Arrangements were made and the experimental procedure is carried out daily for five days a week. At the present writing the experiment is still in progress, but it may be said that so far the subject is running ahead of chance. It may be of interest to point out that in correspondence the subject has stated that he has little doubt as to his ESP abilities and that he feels sure they will improve with practice.

On the average, five or six people a month phone or write that they would like to be "tested" for ESP. In these cases it is rare that any special gifts are claimed; they are often college students who have become interested in the problem of ESP through Dr. Rhine's writings or through the popular presentations which have become rather frequent in the last several years. These people are seen, their special interests discussed, and various miscellaneous tests carried out. None of the results have so far been of a nature to warrant detailed discussion, but it may be noted that several of those coming to be tested have joined the Society.

A major project on the part of the Research Associate has been a detailed inquiry into the large mass of case material which came to the Society as a result of a popular article on ESP which appeared in *This Week Magazine*, issue of March 26, 1950. Preliminary reports on this material have been made to the Study Group by Mrs. Wenberg and to the Medical Section by the Research Associate and an article is due to appear in a forthcoming issue of the JOURNAL. Plans are under way for a long-distance telepathy experiment in which not only members of the Society and their friends can take part, but also those persons from the *This Week* inquiry who answered to the personal letters and questionnaires which were sent to them. It may also be mentioned that as a result of this correspondence the Society gained 24 new members (14 Members and 10 Associates).

Despite the disadvantages of limited space, time, and personnel, the research program under way at the present time, especially the study of conditioned responses with the aid of specially constructed electrical equipment, bears promise of opening up new horizons in parapsychology.

Psi Patterns Amongst the Australian Aborigines

LYNDON ROSE

Anthropological literature abounds in stories of psi experiences among primitive people. This is especially so in that relating to the Australian Aborigines.[1]

While carrying out some routine tests in PK and ESP among detribalized aborigines at Woodenbong (New South Wales) in August-September, 1949, and Tabulam in January-February, 1950, my husband and I heard of several psi experiences, some from aborigines themselves, some from the white people connected with them. A point which impressed me at the time was the remarkable similarity of pattern of these psi experiences to those recorded of white peoples and reported in the A.S.P.R. and S.P.R. publications.

There was no attempt on our part to document these stories completely. Our interest in them lay in their patterns, and the leads they could give to our research. The probability or otherwise of these stories having foundation in fact lay in the standardized tests applied to the aborigines and the analysis of them.

A most interesting point regarding these stories told to us was that during the ensuing discussions with the various aboriginal informants we found them cognizant, in many respects, of the *modus operandi* of ESP. There was no claim for anything mysterious (i.e., relating to ritual known only to a few) concerning the use of the sacred clan totems during psi experiences. The aborigines readily acknowledged the appearance of a totem on some occasions as the mediating vehicle for the knowledge acquired by extrasensory means. In fact, we found that the Bundulung dialect (used in the far north coast of N.S.W.) differentiated between crisis telepathy and a message consciously received telepathically. A third word was used to indicate a telepathic message telling of a death. Again, the incarnate spirit was differentiated from the discarnate spirit. A special word, again, indicated a "ghost."

While the aborigines were also found to be cognizant of PK, they claimed the exercise of such power to be the prerogative of "clever men" or doctors. The general belief appeared to be that these clever men, chosen in the first place because of their outstanding psi experiences, were further tutored by the other doctors in such things.

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[1] Elkin, A. P., *Aboriginal Men of High Degree*, Sydney, Australasian, 1945; Porteous, S. D., *The Psychology of a Primitive People*, Arnold, London, 1931.

The cases cited below follow no special order of classification, but the pattern of each will no doubt be familiar to readers. On our arrival at Woodenbong the manager of the aboriginal settlement told us of two apparent psi experiences of Frank Mitchell, a full-blood Minyung from South Queensland.

1. The first case concerned the death of Frank's small son, some three weeks before our arrival, in Kyogle Hospital about forty miles distant. The manager informed us that Frank had come down to the Residence before breakfast one morning and announced his son had died during the night. This was later confirmed when the hospital rang through to the Residence, which had the only telephone in the district. Later, when we met Frank and got to know him a little, we asked about this experience. He claimed that he was lying in bed in his shack, when he heard faltering footsteps on the verandah outside. These he recognized as the footsteps of his deceased mother, and he heard the tapping of her walking-stick. Taps were heard on the window pane. He interpreted this as a sign of death, or a feeling of death, and concluded his son had died. His wife also heard these footsteps and taps.

2. On our arrival at the settlement Frank was away. The manager explained that the aborigine had asked permission to leave the settlement a few days before (about 7 P.M.) to visit his brother in Brisbane, one hundred miles distant, who he stated was dying. (Aborigines leaving or entering the settlement are required to report to the manager.) After Frank had left for Brisbane by the evening bus service, a telegram was received the following morning announcing his brother's death during the night. Frank told us that in this case he was aware of the occurrence by a "feeling."

3. Eileen, Frank's wife, claimed to have seen an apparition of Frank's mother some years before. She had experienced difficulty at the birth of a child and had been sent to hospital. Eileen told us that during the night she could scarcely breathe, and no nurse came near her for some hours. Suddenly, the door opened and an old aboriginal woman entered, leaning on a stick. The old lady sat Eileen up, shook up the pillows, and then went out again. After the visit Eileen said she felt much better. Frank recognized his mother from her description of the old lady, who had died before he met Eileen. She described the old lady as wearing a red handkerchief round her head and using the walking stick, which Frank said she always did.

4. Bertie Mercy, an old half-blood whose father was a clever man, gave us an account of telepathy he had experienced. The plover

totem was used as the mediating vehicle (*vide* Tyrrell).[2] This instance occurred during our visit to the Settlement but was not told us until some days after its occurrence. Bertie claimed that he and his wife (a full-blood) had seen two plovers circling over their hut during the night, and he had remarked "something's up." After contemplating for a period he said to his wife, "I suppose old uncle's dead." Next morning a telegram arrived at the settlement announcing that his uncle at Coff's Harbour, two hundred miles distant, had died during the night. On being questioned, Bertie explained that plovers were his uncle's totem and agreed that plovers flying at night (most unusual) could not be seen from inside a hut. He explained that he knew they were not real plovers, but "mind" plovers, which acted as a stimulus for the operation of crisis telepathy.

5. Bertie also told us he had "felt" the ghost (i.e., discarnate spirit) of his grandfather on the occasion of his being lost in the bush. Bertie had lain down for the night, deciding to go no further until daylight. As he lay there he "felt" his grandfather lying back to back with him, and he knew immediately that he was safe. At daybreak he got up and walked straight back to the camp, finding his way with ease. He attributed this to his grandfather's visit. He did not see his grandfather but only felt his presence.

6. A clever man at Tabulam, Fred Cowlin, was famous throughout the district. When we were at Woodenbong Walter Green claimed he had seen this doctor call up a storm some years before. He had done this by "singing" over an axe-head planted in the ground. When we later asked Fred about the mechanics of such phenomena, he said that something went from the doctor to make the air cold and precipitate rain. This was an interesting statement (actually Fred only claimed to make "cold") since some observations on individuals causing temperature variations have been reported, such as the automatically recorded drops in room temperature obtained with the medium Stella C.

This strong belief in the apparent psychokinetic powers of clever men amongst the aborigines gave rise to an amusing incident during our stay at Woodenbong. On one occasion, Bertie Mercy became violently drunk and attacked his wife who ran to the station manager for protection. It should be understood that a mission operated in the settlement, and most of the aborigines had at one time or other attended service. When Bertie's wife sought shelter at the manager's residence, she complained that although she had asked the white man's God to paralyze Bertie's arm if he should strike her again,

[2] Tyrrell, G.N.M., "The *Modus Operandi* of Paranormal Cognition," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XLVIII, 1947, pp. 68 ff.

He had not done so. She claimed that during her tribal days, had the doctor been requested to effect such drastic punishment, it would undoubtedly have been carried out. Such practical demands from one's religion are reminiscent of literature dealing with saints of the early Christian Church and the Hebrew prophets.

7. At Woodenbong we were told that a few months prior to our visit a young aboriginal, returning from a visit to Queensland, brought back a "pointing bone." (Aborigines believe that the bone as well as the doctor who possessed it have a peculiar power.) The station manager told us that the boy suddenly ran amok one evening, attempting to hatchet several people. He was finally overpowered and taken to the local police lockup. The boy's relatives claimed he was possessed by the spirit of the real owner of the bone, and only a doctor who was stronger than the original doctor-owner could cure him. As the boy could not be quieted in the lockup, permission was given for the aboriginal doctor (Fred Cowlin) to see the boy. After his visit the boy became quiet and apparently normal. The settlement manager confirmed this account. The case indicates that belief in the doctor's power is very strong and suggestion may play an important part in such cases.

8. Robin Walker, said to be the last of the Upper Clarence River aborigines to be initiated, told us that during his initiation he saw the clever men, present at the ceremony, climbing trees whilst in a horizontal position, by means of a "magic cord." He also claimed to have observed a substance exuding from the eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and navel of clever men, to a distance of fifty feet. There appears to be some similarity between this account and reports of ectoplasm in the séance room. Robin also claimed that he rolled through a fire at his initiation without being burnt.

9. A sophisticated lighter-caste lad, who worked as stockman at a Tabulam station, informed us that Fred Cowlin had cured him of a torn knee cartilege, overnight. This boy was a member of the town football team which was captained by the local police constable. During a game in the season prior to our visit, the lad injured his knee. The injury appeared to be a torn knee cartilege. The boy visited Fred Cowlin on the evening of the injury, with the result that the knee was cured next day.

The doctor, passing his hand over the injured knee, produced a small piece of bone which he claimed was the immediate cause of the trouble. The boy found he could walk straight away, and the swelling disappeared by the morning. This was also corroborated by the town doctor. There are two interesting sidelights to this account:

Firstly, the boy although cognizant of the Bundulung dialect of his parents could not speak it himself, nor had he been instructed in tribal lore by them. (It is the policy of tribal initiates to withhold the tribal heritage from the younger men whom they consider unworthy of the honor, with the result that many practices and much of the lore die with the old men.) Yet, partly educated as he had been at a mission school, this lad still returned to his tribal doctor for treatment, the doctor's attraction, of course, being in the effectiveness of his cures.

The second point concerns the old doctor himself. We asked him about the bone "extracted" from the boy's knee. Suddenly, he produced a small twig between his fingers which he had hidden there a few moments before, and my husband asked if this were not the method used to produce the "bone." The old doctor agreed and explained that sleight of hand tricks were legitimate aids to his "mind cures." Such procedure parallels some modern psychosomatic practices.[3]

10. While visiting Woodenbong we heard about Fred Ferguson, an old full-blood known to most of the camp, but now dead for some years. It was said that he had warned his wife, who was considerably younger than himself, if she married again after his death she would go blind. After his death she married Fred Cowlin (whom we later met at Tabulam) and she subsequently went blind. She continued to be blind for some years, until she tripped over a hole dug in the ground and fully regained her sight.

Later, a cataract grew over one of the woman's eyes. At this time Fred and she were camped at Tabulam and the police constable there informed us he had seen Fred flick it off with a twig. When we met Bella, although old and feeble, she could see quite well and had no sign of the cataract.

It is hoped that the above cases will indicate that while the tribal aborigine is fast dying out, it is possible to carry out some laboratory-type research to test their "magic" among a people who actively practice and believe in psi. The growing away from belief in psi experiences by the young sophisticated aborigine is inevitable if he is to be absorbed into the white community. Thus the claims of his own people must be investigated soon or not at all. Preliminary field work of this kind, carried out by my husband and myself, has shown that the aborigine can adapt himself, in some instances, quite successfully to laboratory tests.

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[3] Margolin, S. G. & Kaufman, M. R., "What is Psychosomatic Medicine?" *The Medical Clinics of North America*, May, 1948, pp. 609-610.

The patterns of psi experiences among our aborigines appear, from popular and anthropological accounts, to be similar to claims made by a great many diversified native peoples. This common feature in itself calls for investigation along scientific and not anecdotal lines.

Reviews

SCHIZOPHRENIC ART: Its Meaning in Psychotherapy. By Margaret Naumburg. Illustrated. 247 pp. Grune & Stratton, New York, 1950. $10.

Interest in the artistic productions of psychotics has passed through several stages since the turn of the century. Old-school psychiatrists saw in them little more than bizarre and, sometimes, repulsive expressions of the deranged mind. It was the advent of a new approach to art in general which discovered the striking creative qualities, especially of the art of the schizophrenic patient. Notably Prinzhorn's monograph on the *Art of the Mentally Ill* (1922) drew attention to the similarity between art productions of preliterate peoples, children, and schizophrenics.

Again, Schilder (1918) and other psychoanalysts commented on the relations of this type of artistic productions to the work of modern cubistic and expressionistic artists and analyzed their underlying symbolic significance.

It is at this point that Miss Naumburg's approach takes up the work where it was left by her predecessors. Her book is based on a careful analysis of the art of two schizophrenic patients studied at the New York Psychiatric Institute. It shows how the patients may use drawing, painting, and sculpturing as means of expression to bring out deep-seated emotional conflicts which they are unable to express on the verbal level. Thus, with the aid of the therapist, they are helped to gain increasing insight into the meaning of their own world of symbols, much in the same way as this can be achieved by the psychoanalytic approach to the imagery of the dream. This may, in turn, lead to the gradual release of pent-up emotional tensions and result in striking improvement of the whole clinical picture. Miss Naumburg's approach can thus be used as a new tool of psychotherapy on the nonverbal level.

Yet, the importance of her work goes beyond its purely clinical and psychiatric implications. It demonstrates the basic identity of the creative impulses that lie dormant in the unconscious in both health and disease, in primitive peoples as well as in civilized man. At the same time it brings home to us once more the importance of giving free rein to the creative aspects of the unconscious through socially recognized and culturally determined channels.

Miss Naumburg's view modern abstract painting and sculpturing as well as primitive art and the untutored expressions of the schizophrenic artist spring from the same common matrix of what Jung has described as the Collective Unconscious and are subject to the identical laws of psychodynamics as discovered by Freud.

It may well be that, as far as their origin from deeper layers of the personality is concerned, certain creative manifestations of the spiritualistic trance are derived from the same layers of the personality structure, although they may greatly differ in their degree of integration—or distortion and fragmentation, as the case may be—from schizophrenic productions.

The book is profusely illustrated with beautiful colored and black-and-white reproductions and will be enjoyed by every reader interested in the creative potentialities of the human mind, be it in its "normal," "abnormal," or "supernormal" aspects.

JAN EHRENWALD, M.D.

SIXTY YEARS OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH: Houdini and I among the Spiritualists. By Joseph F. Rinn. 618 pp. The Truth Seeker Company, New York, 1950. $5.00.

This book, in spite of its title (so reminiscent of one of the classics in the field of parapsychology, *Extra-Sensory Perception after Sixty Years*[1]), has actually little to do with serious psychical research. A glance at the Table of Contents discloses some strange bedfellows. Sir William Barrett rubs shoulders with Martinka's Magic Shop; Drs. Hodgson, James, and Hyslop share a chapter with a mysterious self-filling champagne bottle and one J. Randall Brown, Psychic Marvel; Dr. Stevens, who "married a ghost," leaves the center of the stage in favor of Mrs. Piper and her control "Phenuit" (*sic*), and they in turn are quickly replaced by Evatima Tardo, a lady fortunate enough to be immune to both cobra and gila monster bites;

[1] Pratt, J. G., Rhine, J. B., *et al.*, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1940.

and Dr. Rhine shares the honors with the Indian rope trick! By thoroughly perusing this volume, we learn how to kiss a baby ghost, how spirits operate a typewriter, about Myna, the bird with a human voice, how Houdini did many of his feats of magic, and, above all, how Mr. Rinn himself out-magicked (if we may coin a word) the magicians, outdid an imposing roster of pseudo-mediums, and, single-handed, outwitted absolutely everybody else—including, of course, Drs. Hodgson, Hyslop, W. F. Prince, and Rhine, as well as Mrs. Sedgwick (*sic*) and others.

It might well be asked why space in the JOURNAL is used for a review of such a shoddy volume as this. The answer can be given in the words of the Rev. M. A. Bayfield, who said, when asked by the Editor of the *Journal* of the (English) Society for Psychical Research to review two books, one by Charles Mercier and the other by Edward Clodd: "Were it not that to ignore these books might be taken as an acknowledgment that their contentions are unanswerable, I should have replied to the Editor . . . that they really do not deserve notice."[2] When Mr. Rinn discloses to his readers how Houdini walked through a brick wall, made an elephant disappear, and swallowed 200 threaded needles, he is on home territory and we have no quarrel with him; when he goes to infantile lengths to expose "mediums" that no parapsychologist would have taken seriously in the first place, we may smile indulgently and hope that he found it a pleasant way to pass his time. We are all entitled to our opinions, and if Mr. Rinn feels that the evidence[3] for paranormal phenomena is insufficient to establish their reality, then he has every right to say so. But what he *does not* have a right to do is to make up situations and conversations out of the whole cloth (as we are prepared to demonstrate that he does), presenting them as if they were historical facts, for the purpose of making men of the calibre of Hodgson, Hyslop, and W. F. Prince appear to be fools and knaves. One cannot help wondering how Mr. Rinn thought he was going to be able to "get away" with his slanderous imputations against the sanity and honesty of some of the keystone figures of psychical research, for even a child could see that he becomes quite irrational when speaking of these men. For example, what are we to think of Mr. Rinn's own sanity when he says that he got up at a meeting at which Dr. Prince was the speaker and announced to him and to the audience: "I won't

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[2] *Journal S.P.R.*, Vol. XVIII, 1918, pp. 198-200.

[3] It should be pointed out, however, that Mr. Rinn's knowledge of psychical research seems to be derived in the main from newspaper reports — even these he is unable to quote accurately — and from the writings of his hero, Edward Clodd, whose misspellings of names, etc., are faithfully reproduced.

stand for your appearing here and telling lies . . . I am one of the oldest members of the Society for Psychical Research[4] and I know the facts. That man [Dr. Prince] is a liar, because he makes his living out of this nonsense" (p. 470); but then, on p. 479, "I wanted Dr. Prince retained on the committee [the Scientific American Committee] for I trusted implicitly in his integrity." How Dr. Prince could be both a "liar" and a man of integrity is somewhat hard to understand.

To point out all the instances of inaccurate reporting, misinterpretation of data, and downright, crude misrepresentation of published facts which appear in this work would take a review of mammoth proportions. We will thus have to limit ourselves to giving a few examples:

1. P. 28. "In the fall of 1886, Mrs. Hannah V. Ross, of Boston, had a reputation as a high-class medium. When Richmond and I learned that she was to give a séance in New York, we decided to attend it. At that séance the materialized spirits . . . looked so much like living persons that Richmond suggested that we grab one of them and find out. I prevailed on him not to do so, for my connection with such an act would hurt my standing in the Society for Psychical Research." Since Mr. Rinn did not become a member of the Society until 1897, it is difficult to see how his standing could have been hurt by his action 11 years earlier. This is just one of his innumerable attempts to make the S.P.R. and/or A.S.P.R. appear in a poor light.

2. P. 72. Mr. Rinn claims to have met Dr. Hyslop in 1888. "In the course of conversation we found out that we were both members of the Society for Psychical Research . . . This fact led to our working together in psychic investigations for many years." This is indeed a curious statement, since Dr. Hyslop himself did not become a member of the Society until 1891, nor Mr. Rinn, as we have already pointed out, until 1897. It is also curious that, since Mr. Rinn and Dr. Hyslop "worked together in psychic investigations for many years," not a reference to the former appears anywhere, as far as we have been able to ascertain, in Dr. Hyslop's voluminous writings.

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[4] Throughout the book Mr. Rinn repeatedly states that he was a member of both the British and the American Societies for Psychical Research. On p. 15 he says he joined the American Society in 1885, after having heard a lecture given by Sir William Barrett; a search of the membership lists of both societies discloses, however, that Mr. Rinn first joined the (then) American branch of the S.P.R. in 1897 — a discrepancy of only 12 years! He was never at any time a member of the English Society, and remained a member of the American branch for only four years, that is, until 1901, at which time his name ceased to appear in the membership list.

3. The author's accuracy in dealing with the problem of Mrs. Piper is exemplified in the following. P. 73. "After a short test he [Hodgson] felt that Mrs. Piper's alleged powers merited examination by the leaders of the society in England. Accordingly Mrs. Piper was brought by Dr. Hodgson to London, where a series of tests of her powers was made. Although no formal report was issued, members heard remarkable stories of the powers of Mrs. Piper, which in 1890 revived the waning interest in psychic research." This paragraph seems to be almost entirely a dream production on the part of Mr. Rinn. The "short test" referred to was actually over two years of continuous observation on the part of Professor James and Dr. Hodgson. In 1889 Mrs. Piper went to England (Dr. Hodgson stayed in America, Mr. Rinn would have found out, if he had troubled to ascertain the facts). Mr. Rinn then intimates that it was the "remarkable stories" which circulated about Mrs. Piper which in 1890 revived the "waning" interest in psychical research, and states that no formal report was issued. Actually, of course, in 1890 there appeared the massive paper by Myers, Lodge, Leaf, and James on the results of Mrs. Piper's English series.[5]

4. P. 133. Mr. Rinn states that neither he nor Dr. Hyslop had made Dr. Hodgson's acquaintance until Dec. 4, 1895, at which time they went to hear him deliver an address before the Society for Psychical Research. If this be so, then Dr. Hyslop must have been suffering from a painful loss of memory when he wrote in his Obituary of Hodgson that their "acquaintance began in 1889 soon after I came to Columbia University and it soon ripened into a warm friendship."[6]

5. P. 134. The author again states that he and Dr. Hyslop made Dr. Hodgson's acquaintance for the first time in 1895 at his lecture before the Society. Rinn then quotes Hodgson as saying, in answer to questions from the members: "It's impossible for me to answer your questions here. You'll get the whole story before long when my report is issued." Dr. Hyslop is then quoted as saying: "I don't know, Doctor, if you have formulated any theory about Mrs. Piper's powers, but my friend Rinn here, who knew Washington Irving Bishop, has expressed the opinion that Mrs. Piper's powers may be similar. If we could witness a test by Mrs. Piper, we might be able to obtain valuable information." To this, Dr. Hodgson is said to have replied: "When I get back to Boston, I'll try and arrange a séance with Mrs. Piper which you can both attend." This alleged

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[5] *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. VI, 1889-1890, pp. 436-659.

[6] JOURNAL A.S.P.R., Vol. I, 1907, p. 14.

conversation[7] is of course ludicrous since not only was Dr. Hyslop well acquainted with Dr. Hodgson's theories about Mrs. Piper's phenomena through the 1892 report[8] and close personal contact, but he had himself already had a sitting with Mrs. Piper three years earlier, in 1892.[9]

6. Pp. 134-137. Mr. Rinn at this point goes on to describe in detail a sitting with Mrs. Piper that Dr. Hodgson arranged for himself and Dr. Hyslop. It is alleged to have occurred "late in 1896." Mr. Rinn was "not favorably impressed [with Mrs. Piper] because of her thin lips and rather hard, shrewd face." Needless to say, all the participants in this sitting, with the exception, of course, of Mr. Rinn, are made to appear in the worst possible light. Mrs. Piper's fingers "began writing on the pad but the sentences were disconnected and meaningless, although Dr. Hodgson guided her hand and interpreted many of the sentences. Some names were given piecemeal, often in a tentative form that made no sense. The writing 'eb-s-t-gl-nm-thl' was interpreted by Dr. Hodgson as meaning 'Billings.' " At the end of the sitting Mr. Rinn explains to Dr. Hodgson and Dr. Hyslop that the whole affair was nonsensical. "Dr. Hodgson did not invite me to any more séances with Mrs. Piper. Wishing to have the endorsement of Professor Hyslop, [however], he invited him to many of her séances." Actually, it can be proved that no such sitting ever took place. Dr. Hyslop, as stated above, had his first sitting with Mrs. Piper on May 20, 1892. He writes in his Report (footnote 9, p. 298): "So far as I am aware, I never saw

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[7] The volume is liberally studded with lengthy conversations (quotation marks being used) alleged to have taken place between the author and Hodgson, Hyslop, Prince, and others. Mr. Rinn's memory is indeed remarkable, for he recalls, after so many years, not only their exact words but also their very facial expressions! We learn, for instance, on p. 203, that Hyslop's face "flushed and then turned pale" when Mr. Rinn "felt too kindly toward him . . . to expose his ignorance" in the case of a conjuring trick. Possibly, however, Mr. Rinn in 1902 used a wire recorder and color motion picture film, by means of which he refreshed his memory when the need arose. In another passage, appearing on p. 294, Dr. Hyslop is quoted as having said, at a meeting in 1910 before the Brooklyn Philosophical Association, "We believe pretty well in the powers of Mrs. Piper, and I think the members of the English branch of our association do, too, but they are too aristocratic to say so." It is really straining our credulity to the breaking point to ask us to believe that Dr. Hyslop would refer to the English S.P.R. as a "branch" of our Society! This, and the delightfully naive remark about the "aristocratic" attitude of the English investigators, sounds more like the phantasy of a man who started his career at the age of 15 as a wholesale grocer than the utterance of a university professor.

[8] "A Record of Observations of Certain Phenomena of Trance," by Richard Hodgson, *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. VIII, 1892, pp. 1-167.

[9] "A Further Record of Observations of Certain Trance Phenomena," by James Hervey Hyslop, *Proc. S.P.R.*, Vol. XVI, 1901, pp. 4-649. (A full account of all his Piper sittings between the first one, May 20, 1892, and the last in the series, in 1899, is given.)

Mrs. Piper again or had any communication with her till I went out to Arlington Heights on December 23rd, 1898." Possibly, however, Dr. Hyslop was suffering from still another painful attack of amnesia at the time of writing this report, which would account for his "forgetting" that he had gone up to Boston with Mr. Rinn "late in 1896" and taken a sitting with Mrs. Piper! If the objection be raised that possibly Mr. Rinn was guilty merely of an innocent lapse of memory as to the correct date of the sitting, and not of making up "an awful whopper," we can again refer to Dr. Hyslop's report. Between December, 1898 and June, 1899 he had 12 sittings with Mrs. Piper, all recorded in detail. None remotely resembles the "Rinn sitting," nor was Mr. Rinn present at any. Finally, it was not Dr. Hodgson who invited Dr. Hyslop to have sittings with Mrs. Piper, but Dr. Hyslop who requested them of Dr. Hodgson. Dr. Hyslop writes: "The sittings which form the subject of my present report were arranged for in the following manner. I had written in August (1898) to Miss Edmunds [Dr. Hodgson's secretary] for them, but had concealed myself under the pretence of wanting them for some one else. Of this I was very careful, but Mrs. P. was absent on her vacation and the plan fell through. After Dr. Hodgson's return to this country I wrote to him for sittings" (footnote 9, p. 298).

There would be nothing to gain in pointing out further examples of Mr. Rinn's inability to distinguish fact from fiction. Two instances of his curious processes of reasoning, however, will be given for whatever light they may shed on the conscious and unconscious *needs* which motivated the production of this volume. The first is trivial and amusing in its childish petulance; the second can hardly be characterized by a word less strong than "disgusting."

(*a*) In 1922 Dr. Prince went to Nova Scotia to investigate, at the invitation of the proprietor of several Halifax newspapers, some alleged poltergeist phenomena occurring in a house near Antigonish. In his report[10] Dr. Prince says: "Many statements and acts have been attributed to me in certain papers, and thence have become widely disseminated, which have no foundation. There have even appeared purported interviews with me which never took place." Dr. Prince's final conclusion was that the phenomena were due to normal human agency. Mr. Rinn devotes pp. 395-399 to quoting some of these newspaper stories, and then says: "Dr. Prince proved his incompetence in his investigation." Apparently Mr. Rinn cannot stomach it if anyone other than himself gives a negative verdict in the case of alleged psychic phenomena!

[10] "An Investigation of Poltergeist and Other Phenomena Near Antigonish," by Walter F. Prince, JOURNAL A.S.P.R., Vol. XVI, 1922, pp. 422-441.

(*b*) Pp. 291-292. In 1921 Houdini is said to have heard from Francis Martinka, the owner of a magic supply company, that Hereward Carrington had bought luminous paint from the shop in 1910, when he was managing Palladino's sittings. Houdini is quoted as saying: "You'll do me a favor, Martinka, by putting that statement in writing. Some day, when I write a book on my experiences with mediums, I may wish to use it to show up Carrington." In March of that year, Houdini showed Rinn a letter from Martinka which contained the statement he had made about Carrington, signed by Martinka and by two witnesses to his signature. Hereupon Mr. Rinn draws the conclusion that Carrington is a "faker," saying: "I wonder what reasonable explanation Carrington could give for buying luminous paint while he was acting as manager for Eusapia Palladino, considering that it was sold only to *crooked mediums*" (italics the author's). It hardly need be pointed out here that there are a number of perfectly legitimate uses for luminous paint in the investigation of physical mediumship, and to impute dishonesty to an investigator solely on the grounds that he quite openly buys such paint in a well-known magic supply shop is too childish to warrant further discussion.

There is of course a constant need for thoughtful, rational, and constructive criticisms of the theories, methods, and results of parapsychological research. So far, as has often been pointed out, such criticisms have come from the researchers themselves—from men and women of the calibre of Mrs. Sidgwick, Miss Alice Johnson, Frank Podmore, Andrew Lang, W. F. Prince, and Gardner Murphy, to mention but a few. There is no excuse, however, for the shoddy display of eccentric reasoning, emotional bias, and lack of knowledge of the basic problems of the field which is exemplified by Mr. Rinn's volume. It is indeed a mystery to this reviewer that any publishing house, however obscure, could have accepted such a manuscript. It is the practice of reputable publishing houses to submit manuscripts to "readers." One of the tasks of such a reader is to check supposedly factual statements for accuracy. If the "Truth Seeker" Company had seen fit to do this, the present reviewer might at the moment be enjoying a cross-word puzzle instead of pondering on the psychiatric and psychoanalytic implications of a mind so incapable of dealing with problems in an honest and realistic way.

L. A. Dale

THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION. By William S. Morgan. 413 pp. Philosophical Library, New York, 1950. $6.00.

Although the author is evidently familiar with the history of philosophy and has given particular thought to the implications which the views of a number of the great philosophers may have for religion, the treatment of the topics discussed is throughout vague, literary, and pious, rather than incisive, rigorous, or philosophically penetrating. As a sample of the manner of thought prevalent in the book, a statement in which the author summarizes its main contention may be quoted from one of the terminal chapters. "The burden of this essay," he writes, "has been to contend that self-consciousness, or in more precise language, something to which our self-consciousness is an index, of which it is a faint expression, something which, while it is infinitely beyond all conception, is not inscrutable, for it is ourselves in our infinitude. This is the ultimate and irreducible principle of the universe . . . It is Ultimate Reality" (p. 344).

The only connection between this book and psychical research consists of less than three pages (pp. 380-2) in one of the chapters given to the topic of immortality. The author there commends the attempts, when scientifically conducted, which have been made to communicate with departed spirits; but he believes the earlier parts of his book have shown that many of the theories on which such attempts are based are "futile and superfluous." As an example, he quotes F. W. H. Myers' conception of the subliminal self, and declares that "such a conception is absurd," because in it "no provision is made for the conversion of this potential power [to wit, that of the subliminal self] into a kinetic force." The trouble with Myers is that he "does not take into account an all-inclusive being in which all souls are united." This being, which the author believes is the true and larger subliminal self, he characterizes variously as the "principle of the universe," the "Infinite," "Ultimate Reality"; attempting, by the use of capital initials customary among writers who employ such phrases, to inhibit criticism of them and to enlist reverence instead towards the nebulous entity they postulate—a practice which has moved J. H. Leuba to remark that the chief service the word "Infinite" renders in definitions of religion is "to betray man's ineradicable megalomania."

C. J. Ducasse

Brown University

HISTORY OF THE SOCIETY

The First American Society for Psychical Research was formed in 1885, in consequence of a visit by Sir W. F. Barrett to this country, and Prof. Simon Newcomb became its President. In 1887 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 very able guidance of Dr. Hodgson until his death in 1905. The American Society for Psychical Research was then re-established with James H. Hyslop, Ph.D., formerly Professor of Logic and Ethics in Columbia University, as its Secretary and Director.

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The American Society for Psychical Research, Inc., was originally incorporated under the Laws of New York in 1904 under the name of American Institute for Scientific Research, for the purpose of carrying on and endowing investigation in the fields of psychical research and psychotherapeutics. It is supported by contributions from its members and a small endowment fund. The income of the Society pays only for the publications and office expenses, but does not enable the Society to carry on its scientific investigations. A much greater fund is required before this work can be carried forward with the initiative and energy which its importance deserves.

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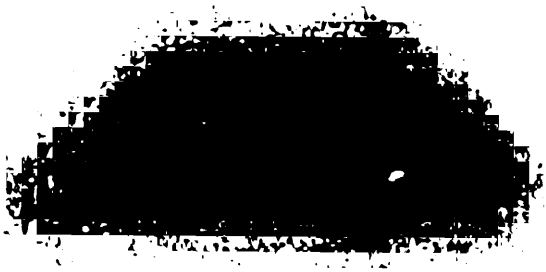

THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

VOLUME XLV JULY 1951 NUMBER 3

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THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH, Inc.
880 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK 21, N. Y.
Single Copy, $1.50 Published Quarterly $5.00 a year

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2. The collection, classification, study and publication of reports dealing with the above phenomena. Readers are asked to report incidents and cases. Names must be given, but on request will be treated as confidential.

3. The maintenance of a library on psychical research and related subjects. Contributions of books and periodical files will be welcomed.

4. Cooperating in the above tasks with qualified individuals and groups who will report their work to the Society.

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It is to be remembered that membership in a scientific society means more than merely a subscription to its publications. The work must be carried on largely through the income from membership fees. Therefore members, old and new, are urged to make their membership class as high as they feel they can. *If a comparatively small proportion of the present members went one class higher, the money available for research would be more than doubled.*

THE JOURNAL of the American Society for Psychical Research is published quarterly by the American Society for Psychical Research, Inc., 880 Fifth Avenue, New York 21, N. Y. "Entered as second-class matter July 15, 1941, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879."

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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A Series of Spontaneous Cases in the Tradition of *Phantasms of the Living*

L. A. DALE

[Author's Note: This paper was first read at a meeting of the Medical Section of the A.S.P.R. Since the members of the Section, almost all of them psychoanalysts, were primarily interested in the cases as *human experiences* which they could compare with the experiences of their patients, and not in their evidential value, questions of corroboration and validation were barely touched on in the original presentation.]

It is a pleasure to speak to you this evening about a series of spontaneous cases, which, for reasons which will become obvious, we have characterized as being in the tradition of those presented in that great work of Gurney, Myers, and Podmore, *Phantasms of the Living*.[1] Perhaps the main point of interest in these cases for you, as psychoanalysts, will lie in the fact that they are qualitatively *very different* from those which you yourselves have presented from time to time to this group. After you have heard some representative ones, it may be useful to consider these differences in the hope that

[1] Trübner and Co., London, 1886.

some light may be shed on the dynamics both of psi in the psychoanalytic situation and psi as it occurs, so to speak, "in the raw."

The cases have been selected from about a thousand letters which came to the attention of the Society as a result of a popular article on ESP which appeared in *This Week Magazine*, issue of March 26, 1950. Appended to this popular presentation was a so-called psi-questionnaire and readers answering in the affirmative were invited to send in accounts of their most clear-cut psychic experiences, with the promise that "parapsychologists would study and analyze" the material.

Before going on to the specific cases, it might be worth while to discuss briefly the total material from which they were selected. Of the 949 communications received to date,[2] 705 were from women and only 244 from men. They came from every state in the Union, with California rather far in the lead. The educational background of the respondents varied all the way from medical and graduate school to probably not more than a few years of grade school. The bulk seemingly came from persons of middle-class background with a high-school education, with a very fair sprinkling of college graduates from upper middle-class homes.

Since it was obviously impossible for a single individual to handle such a bulk of mail as this, it was decided to place each letter in one of five categories and to answer personally only those falling into the first of these. Category I, at the upper end of the continuum, contained those cases where corroboration seemed possible, and/or which were of unusual psychological or parapsychological interest. Eighty-nine communications fell into this category and each was answered personally. Category V, at the opposite end of the continuum, contained communications, 104 in number, from people so obviously disturbed that even the layman could hardly overlook the fact. The categories in between simply contained accounts that were too trivial or too vague to warrant a personal follow-up and form letters were sent out to these correspondents. Sixty-five cases further selected from Category I will provide the main data to be presented for your consideration this evening, but before going on to this we might clear the decks so far as the disturbed group is concerned by reading excerpts from several rather typical communications:

> From Mr. H. M.: "There are approx. 40 women spirits here in my room all of the time. They are beautiful young women, when at times I am able to see their faces. However, they can disguise themselves in numerous ways, making themselves large

[2] It may be of interest to note that *This Week Magazine*, a syndicated feature which appears in the Sunday editions of newspapers all over the country, is read by approximately twenty-two million people.

or small at will. They possess elaborate wardrobes, and sometimes dress as show girls, but never as chorus girls. Always fully clothed in dresses that reach the floor . . . At night it is amusing to watch a number of them floating over the housetops as I watch from my bathroom window . . . it does not matter where I go, they always appear . . . I never mention any of these incidents for the reason that people are so skeptical in matters of this kind. But these experiences are absolutely true and in no way reflect any imagination or exaggeration on my part."

From Mrs. E. P.: "After reading your questionnaire, I wish to state that I am publicly mind-read and visioned, and I guess far ahead on your experimenting. Different persons have visioned themselves to me, among them the King of England, Mussolinny (*sic*), and one of the Vanderbilts once brought me some food, visioned lobster."

From Mr. A. S.: "You parapsychologists make me and a great many like me laugh. It would be quite funny indeed were it not for the fact that you come close to mocking GOD ORANGROC himself with respect to this Thing nearest to Himself in our hands. Doubtless you know about my new word ORANGROC as a name for the salt of life, this chief substance in our hands from time immemorial and its direct use by way of the mouth. For it not only gives us direct users of it a monopoly over ordinary telepathy but it also purifies our bodies and develops our brains so as to make us completely conscious of our *six senses*."

These pathetic, although somewhat humorous, excerpts from letters in the disturbed group need concern us no longer. They were touched on simply to help in giving focus to the total material from which our selected cases are drawn. With few exceptions, the apparently veridical cases seem to come from "normal" persons leading "normal" lives.

The veridical cases,[3] many of them corroborated by at least one person and clarified by extended correspondence with the percipients, fall into the following classifications: Dreams, 27, borderland experiences, 9, and waking experiences, 29. Nearly 50 per cent of the total concerned death. Thirteen experiences were of the precognitive type, that is, the dream or impression seemingly related to an event which took place *after* the dream or impression had been experienced. In those cases where a mind-to-mind, or telepathic, effect apparently obtained, in contradistinction to a clairvoyant sort of process, the relationship between percipient and ostensible agent was one of

[3] Although a number of the cases do have some independent corroboration, they on the whole suffer from one serious flaw—the length of time elapsing between the occurrence of the experience and the date of making the first written account. In the present version, the material has been expanded to allow for a discussion of problems such as this.

either close blood relationship or marital relationship in 28 cases. In 12 cases percipient and agent were either friends or acquaintances, and there were 5 cases concerning owners and dogs. There were two cases of fully externalized apparitions, one of a living person, one of a deceased person, and in each instance both sight and hearing on the part of the percipient were involved. Following are two cases concerning dreams of death.[4]

> 1. Mrs. Henrietta Block:[5] Percipient had an unusually vivid dream that the manager of the bank where she was a depositor died suddenly of acute indigestion. "I knew the manager by sight, but nothing of his personal or business characteristics." She had seen him casually at the bank a week prior to the dream, at which time he seemed to be perfectly well. Because this dream was so vivid, she told her mother about it next morning. Two days later she learned that the bank manager had in fact died very suddenly of acute indigestion at about the time of the dream.

In answer to inquiries, we learned that this experience took place 8 or 9 years ago. Mrs. Block was good enough to give us the name of the manager and the address of the bank where he was employed so that we could verify the details of the death; we did not follow up on this, however, because of the number of intervening years. The mother of the percipient, Mrs. Ida Pollack, wrote us the following note of corroboration: "Regarding the incident of Mr. Cooper's death, as far as I can recall, my daughter awoke one morning and described her dream to me. She saw Mr. Cooper lying on the ground. People were gathered around him and a doctor said he had died of acute indigestion."

> 2. Miss N. S.: Percipient dreamed that an old friend of her mother's, whom she herself knew only slightly, came to her and said "This is very serious. I want you to tell your mother that I am dead. She must not worry or feel badly because her health is very poor. Tell her that my happiness now is more than I could have dreamed of during my life." This dream was so vivid that it awoke the percipient, who found that she was stretched out stiffly and uncomfortably.
>
> "When I woke, my arms were stretched over my head and my legs had been so rigid I had to sit up in bed and work the

[4] For reasons of space, some of the cases are summarized. Quotation marks indicate that the percipient's own words are used.

[5] All respondents whose letters fell into Category I received questionnaires concerning their experiences, and the following question was included: "In the event that we publish in our JOURNAL an account of the results of the *This Week Magazine* inquiry, would you be willing for us to refer to your experience (*a*) using your real name, or, if not (*b*) using a pseudonym?" About 75 per cent of those replying to the questionnaire gave us permission to use their real names. Thus, when a complete name is used it is the real name of the percipient. Initials are used where permission to publish the name was not granted.

muscles which had locked." At breakfast next morning she told her mother and sister about the dream. They laughed at her, but she insisted that this was no ordinary dream, it was a message. Later it was learned that her mother's friend, 600 miles away, had died on the operating table the day before the occurrence of the dream.

In answer to questions, Miss N. S. wrote us that the dream occurred in 1934. She feels that her memory of the dream is accurate because "that dream was different from any dream I have ever had before or since in that I felt after I wakened that I had been in *real contact* with someone." On the back of the questionnaire which Miss N. S. returned to us filled out, her sister, to whom she described the dream at the breakfast table, wrote: "The above statements are true."

Both these dreams are unusual because in each case the percipient was only slightly acquainted with the ostensible agent. In the case of Miss N. S., the percipient seemed to be dreaming on behalf of the mother; in the case of Mrs. Block, however, it is very difficult to see any conscious-level motivation whatever.

In our category of dreams not directly concerning death is one which is of interest because it may actually have saved the percipient's life. From the evidential point of view, it is regrettable that 34 years elapsed between the event and the percipient's recording of it. It seems worth presenting in full, however:

3. Mr. C. A. Nash: ". . . I will relate an occurrence that happened to me thirty-four years ago, which I believe saved my life or at least saved me from serious injury. In July, 1916, I was working on the Soo Line wheat elevator which was then being constructed and I worked on the steel gang which did the reinforcing, and most of our work was on ladders and scaffolds, as the elevator rose to a height of 200 feet. We received our pay one Saturday and that evening I went to the theatre and afterwards home to bed. I am usually a sound sleeper, but that night I dreamed that I was back on the job and I saw the ladder to the 75-ft. scaffold break and a number of men killed and injured. I told my folks about my dream Sunday morning and they asked me what I had eaten to give me such a nightmare. I even told Clarence Farber, a chum of mine, who worked with me, about the dream, but he laughed it off. We did not work Sunday, but on Monday I heeded the warning and stayed on the ground where I bent rods on the bending table. At 11:45 the foreman ordered me to go up on the dryer tank scaffold and help the men, but I told him that I had only a few rods left to bend and that the noon hour was only 15 minutes away. He excused me and got someone else to help. When the whistle blew for dinner at 12 o'clock, 14 men hurried to come down that ladder. It broke and 2 or 3 were killed and 6 or 7 badly injured. Dr. Noonan,

who is still living, was called to the scene. He said that one man had his neck broken and another every bone in his body. I was never able to find out exactly how many men were killed, but it could be verified by the company building the elevator, the Starrett and Thompson Company of Kansas City. My mother is still living and can verify the dream I foretold. I am now 55 years old and have been a letter carrier over 30 years.

"P.S.: I stayed on the elevator job until it was finished and was up on scaffolds every day but that one day. The accident happened to the ladder I dreamed about."

In answer to questions, Mr. Nash reported to us that at the time of the experience he was a sound sleeper and seldom dreamed. He had been working on the Soo line elevator for about three months when the dream occurred. It was a temporary job as his trade at the time was that of a glazier. There had been no accidents on the ladders, etc., during the three months he had worked on them, other than the one to which his dream seemed to relate, and no accidents subsequent to it, up to the time the job was completed. Mr. Nash's chum Clarence Farber died several years ago, but his mother, Mrs. Charles H. Nash, wrote: "This is to verify that my son's account on the reverse side is true to the best of my memory."

Edmund Gurney, who was responsible for a large part of the authorship of *Phantasms of the Living*, had this to say about "Borderland" cases: " . . . the passage from sleep to waking admits of many degrees; and a very interesting group of cases remain which cannot properly be classed as dreams, and yet which do not appertain to seasons of complete normal wakefulness. The discussion of these experiences, which occur on the borderland of sleeping and waking, will form the natural transition to the waking phenomena with which we shall be occupied during the remainder of our course . . ." (Vol. I, p. 389). Gurney points out that, considering how small a portion of our waking life is included in the few moments before falling asleep or after waking from sleep, it is remarkable how large a proportion of veridical cases occurs at these times. In the present series there were nine experiences falling into the Borderland category, two of them as follows:

4. Mrs. Bert Cook: Percipient, just before falling asleep, distinctly heard her deceased husband's voice say "Carrie is here." Carrie was her late husband's sister, living some 300 miles distant. Percipient asked her cousin, who was sharing the room, whether she too had heard the voice. She hadn't, but both women got up and noted the time, which was about 11 P.M. The next morning percipient told her daughter about the experience. That afternoon they received a telegram saying that Carrie had died the night before at 11 P.M.

In further correspondence with Mrs. Cook we learn that the experience took place in February of 1942. Mrs. Cook had not seen her sister-in-law, Carrie, for five years, but they wrote to each other quite often. Carrie was believed to be in good health, and died unexpectedly. Percipient was certain she was wide awake at the time of the experience as she had just turned out the light, but it seems rather likely that she was dozing off. The cousin who was sharing the room at the time is now dead so that no corroboration from her was possible, but Mrs. Cook's daughter, Mrs. Lois F. Sarg, wrote us as follows: "Yes, Mother did tell me that she heard Father's voice say 'Carrie is here.' Mother and her cousin had spent the previous night in my home. Later in the day she received a telegram saying that my Aunt Carrie had passed away."

The next case is perhaps the strongest from the evidential point of view of any in this series, since not only is it corroborated, but it was recorded about four months after it occurred.

> 5. Mrs. Edwin M. Fuller: "The week before Thanksgiving, 1949, I had a waking dream — that is, I was half asleep and half awake — and so vivid that the next day I could hardly believe that it hadn't happened. A bell rang and I went to our front door to find our family doctor in a sad state. His clothes were dirty and torn, and his mouth bleeding. He leaned his head on his arm. I asked him what was wrong, and he answered 'You should see Jane (his wife) — she was almost killed and the car is a total wreck.' The day after Thanksgiving they were in a wreck, in which their car was totally demolished, his front teeth knocked out, and his wife very seriously hurt. They were in a hospital in a strange city and when we heard we called to offer to be of service, and his first words to me were exactly as I had heard them in my dream."

Mrs. Fuller was most cooperative in answering questions. When asked to differentiate between her "ordinary" dreams and her "waking" dreams, Mrs. Fuller wrote: "The dream I described to you occurred during the 'waking up' stage. I usually find it hard to remember my dreams — though vivid, they are disconnected. These waking dreams seem very real and for hours — sometimes days — I can't believe it hasn't really happened. Somehow I seem to know that it's not a real dream. It's almost as though I am making up a play or drama in my mind and the actors materialize." Mrs. Fuller had known the doctor and his wife for 22 years. They were neighbors and good friends. She had not seen them for about six weeks prior to the dream. She told her daughter, Miss Joyce Fuller, about the dream before the accident occurred. Miss Fuller wrote us: "Mother told me of her 'dream' before the accident occurred."

The two cases just cited typify what Gurney meant by borderland experiences, one occurring just as the percipient was dropping off to sleep, the other at the point of awakening. But we have for a long time felt the need to distinguish still a third category, in which the percipient is literally jolted out of a sound sleep into a wide-awake state by the impact of the impression. Such an experience is exemplified in the following case of a fully externalized apparition:

> 6. Mrs. Gladys Watson: "I am the daughter of a minister, and if you know our ministers very well you will realize that their children are schooled against superstition from the time of their birth . . . I am sane, healthy in mind and body, love people, people like me, and I hold a responsible position in my town . . . My husband's father was a Methodist minister also and his charge was in the Middle West. So after my husband's discharge from World War I we decided to make our home at some neutral point between my in-laws and my own parents in Delaware. Because we had friends there, we decided on Indianapolis, Indiana.
>
> "My husband obtained work and we set up housekeeping (next door to the Lilly Laboratory). I was expecting a child and could hardly wait until I could take it home on a visit to see my granddad who at the time was living with mother and dad. I loved granddad very much. One night after being asleep for three or four hours I was awakened by someone calling my name. I sat up in bed and there stood granddad. Very calmly he said, 'Don't be frightened, it's only me. I have just died.' I started to cry and reached across the bed to awaken my husband. Granddad continued, 'This is how they will bury me.' I saw him dressed with a black bow tie. 'Just wanted to tell you I've been waiting to go ever since Ad was taken.' Adaline was my grandmother who had been gone several years. My husband awoke and asked what was the matter. I told him my grandfather was just here and that he told me he had just died. My husband insisted it was a nightmare but I knew it wasn't. It was 4:05 A.M. when my husband went to a public telephone on the corner and called my parents' home in Wilmington to prove to me that I had been asleep, but my mother answered. She was surprised at the call and said she had been up most of the night. She was waiting to call us in the morning to let us know that Granddad had died at 4:00 o'clock that morning."

We learn through correspondence with Mrs. Watson that her experience occurred on June 11, 1923. Her grandfather, in spite of his age, was considered to be in "very good health" at the time. Further questions, with Mrs. Watson's answers, are below:

[After being awakened by hearing your name called, you saw your grandfather. Do you mean you saw him "out in space," as if in the flesh, or did you see him with your "inner eye"? If the former, where

did he seem to be standing in relation to the bed?] "On the right hand side, near the foot of the bed—very close to the bed, in sort of slight leaning position toward me."

[About how much light was there in the room, from street lamps, etc., when you awakened?] "The house was next door to the Lilly Laboratories in Indianapolis. There were lights from the laboratory in the background and the light of just before dawn in the room. No direct light."

[About hearing your grandfather speak. Was it like hearing someone in the flesh, or did you hear with your "inner ear"?] "Like hearing him in the flesh—soft, yet determined voice."

[Do you recall the time you saw your grandfather? You say your husband put in the phone call at 4:05 A.M., but you do not say how long after the experience this was. What we really want to know is just how long after he passed away you saw him, taking into account any differences in time between Wilmington and Indianapolis.] "I saw and heard him speak at approximately 3:30 A.M., Indianapolis time—4:30 Eastern Time. My husband got up, dressed, and made the phone call at about 4:05 Indiana time. My grandfather died at 4 A.M. Eastern Time, a half hour before I saw him. He said to me 'I have just died.' "

Mrs. Watson's husband died several years ago, but her father is still living and corroborated the case as follows:

> "My son-in-law called our home in Wilmington from Indianapolis early in the morning of June 11, 1923, and told us Gladys woke him up and said my father had been there (Indianapolis) and told her he had just died. Gladys had always been my father's favorite grandchild and we had promised her to let her know if and when he became seriously ill. (He made his home with us.) He took sick the day before. We called the doctor and thought he was going to be all right. The end came suddenly around four o'clock in the morning. We were going to wait until later in the morning to get in touch with Gladys . . . I believe sincerely in the truth of this experience as my daughter writes it."
>
> (Rev.) Walter E. Parker, Sr.

We come now to waking experiences—experiences taking place, that is, when the percipient is up and about, and reasonably active. Some rather interesting cases fall into this category.

> 7. Miss Margaret Kaulbarsch: Percipient had not seen her father, who had been a dress goods clerk, for seven years. One afternoon she entered a store and approached the dress goods department, behind the counter of which stood a man clerk. "As plain as though I were face to face with my father, that man's face changed and appeared to become the face of my father."

Going home, she found a telegram announcing her father's death two days earlier.

No corroboration for this case exists since Miss Kaulbarsch left the store, went directly to the hotel where she was staying without speaking to anyone, and was there handed the telegram. This experience occurred 28 years before Miss Kaulbarsch wrote her account of it and she herself is well aware of the difficulties this raises. She writes, however: "Sometimes we have an experience which is so unusual and which makes such a profound impression upon our minds that nothing can ever erase its vividness, and it stands out as an isolated incident throughout the years. I think that it was the experience of having my father's face suddenly flash before me, obscuring the features of the clerk, that impressed me most, and even if it had not occurred just before I received word of my father's death, it would have continued to stay in my memory." She further points out that, although her father had been a dress goods clerk, he had never worked in that store, and although she had scores of times shopped at dress goods counters and been waited on by male salespersons, this "illusion" was an unique experience in her life.

It is interesting to compare this experience with one published some years ago in this JOURNAL. The percipient was sitting in a bar in Boston. Suddenly the face of a stranger sitting near him at the bar seemed to become the face of a school friend he had not seen in years. He later learned that this friend had died in New York of acute alcoholism at about the time of his experience.[6]

The next waking case is not unlike the second case discussed this evening—that of the girl whose mother's friend appeared to her in a dream—except that here the percipient was wide awake. But in both instances the apparent agent was hardly more than an acquaintance.

8. Mrs. L. W.:[7] Percipient, who is a violin teacher, had a student, Carl Morgan [pseudonym], who took only about six lessons and then she saw him no more. Two or three months after his last lesson she heard that he was in the hospital with a heart attack, but since the man "had never been a friend in any sense of the word," she forgot all about the matter. About a week later she had the following experience: "I was sitting in my living room reading. It was about 7:30 in the morning on a nice clear day. Suddenly the room seemed to be filled with brilliant light—not light seen by the physical eye but a *quality of light* akin to ecstatic joy or triumph, and yet with the physical

[6] JOURNAL A.S.P.R., Vol. XXXVIII, 1944, pp. 48-52. (The fact that the ostensible agent died, according to the death certificate, of "acute ethylism" was not brought out in the original presentation of the case.)

[7] The percipient wrote us that we could use her real name if we felt that it was essential to do so. Since it was apparent, however, that members of her family might be upset, we prefer to use initials.

radiance of light too. In a moment I 'heard' Carl Morgan telling me it was wonderful, that he had always believed that death must be something like this. He was free now and so happy he could scarcely believe it. The experience lasted for about two minutes and was so vivid I can recall every detail. I did not hear a physical voice but the words seemed to speak inside my head somehow and were unmistakably Carl Morgan's in 'voice' and intonation. My sister-in-law taught in the same studio with me at that time and as soon as we met there (about 8:30 that same morning) I told her of this experience. She insisted that I write it down and that we both sign it before we tried to check on Carl Morgan's condition."

Going to considerable trouble, the two women finally learned that Carl Morgan had died in a hospital in their city early on the morning of the experience, after having been in coma for some hours. They never were able to ascertain the exact moment of death (for he was found dead by a hospital nurse), but it seems reasonably certain that it occurred within a half hour to two hours before the auditory apparition was experienced by Mrs. W. In further correspondence, she explained that she kept the statement written at the time and signed by her sister-in-law and herself for many months, but since she moved rather frequently since 1946, the time of the experience, she was unable to find it. We suggested that as an alternative her sister-in-law, Miss S. L., write a note of corroboration. Miss L. did in fact send us a long and detailed letter of corroboration, prefaced by the following opening paragraph: "You will find enclosed with this a letter which I received this morning from my sister-in-law, asking me to write you a corroborative letter describing what I remember of the experience we had concerning the death of one of her violin students, Carl Morgan. I include her letter as an extra help to you because I think it may help you to believe that Mrs. W. hasn't used any influence in helping me to remember—which is as scientific as we are able to get! Though why we should bother with anything less than honesty in the matter I don't know." Although there are some minor discrepancies, the rest of Miss L.'s letter corroborates her sister-in-law's statement of the case in all important particulars.

The last two waking cases that we shall discuss were selected because in each instance *two people*, as well as a dog (or dogs), were seemingly involved as percipients.

9. Mrs. F. A.: One afternoon percipient was sitting in her living room knitting, with her dog lying at her feet. The colored maid was ironing in the basement. Suddenly percipient heard her mother's voice, "very clear and loud," calling her name. Then came a loud crack, sounding like a "huge window being broken." The maid, hearing both the call and the cracking sound, called upstairs to say "someone called you, Mrs. A." The dog was "wild

with excitement and ran barking around the house." Percipient and the maid searched the house to see if a child playing ball had broken a window, but everything was in order. Later percipient learned that her mother suffered a stroke at the time of the experience and died a few hours later.

In further correspondence with Mrs. A. we learn that the episode occurred two years prior to her first writing us. At the time she lived in Ohio and her mother in Massachusetts. She was not thinking of her mother nor particularly worried about her on the day of the experience. In answer to a question about the reactions of the dog, she wrote: "Yes, indeed, I am sure he heard both the voice calling me and the cracking sound. He rose to his feet and went toward the dining room facing the west, from where the voice seemed to come. It sounded just like my mother's voice—clear, high, and quick. After the cracking sound, which came very soon after the voice, my dog made the rounds of the house to see 'what was what'!"

Unfortunately the colored maid was no longer with Mrs. A. when she wrote us, so it was not possible to get a statement from her.

The last case in our series of waking impressions is, so to speak, in the "grand tradition" of *Phantasms of the Living*. It comes from Mrs. Justin Cavanagh,[8] of Southampton, Long Island, one of the most fashionable summer resorts in the country. A minor case which she first describes sets the stage—riding prize-winning horses, a house full of silver trophies won by the family at dog shows and horse shows over a period of many years, and so forth. Unfortunately the experience occurred 25 years prior to the first written account of it, but there is some corroboration and it thus seems worth presenting in full.

10. Mrs. J. C.: "It happened when I was fourteen. My mother was suffering from a nervous disorder. One night at nine o'clock she decided to leave our house on Long Island for New York, a distance of about 26 miles.[9] She took the train due to arrive in New York at ten. My father, a hard-bitten atheist who believed in neither God nor man, and I were alone upstairs, in his den, with our pointers Lee and Sport. At about ten-thirty we heard a distinct moaning outside. 'Did you hear that?' my father asked. 'Guess she decided to come back after all.' There was another moan and Mother's voice calling 'Sport! Sport!' Father, the two dogs, and I flew down the stairs to let her in. She sounded in terrible distress. The dogs jumped at the door and barked. The voice called again, very loudly for Sport, then ended in a deep

[8] The percipient gave us full permission to use her actual name in presenting her case in any published report. In spite of this permission, however, we prefer to use a pseudonym because of certain family difficulties which are rather frankly revealed in her account of the experience.

[9] At the time of this experience, percipient was not living in Southampton.

moan. We ran out in the gardens trying to find her. We looked everywhere with that uncanny awful feeling one gets.

"The telephone interrupted just then. It was the superintendent of nurses in a hospital in New York. She said that Mother had been met at the train by her maid who, finding her in a deplorable condition, had taken her directly to the hospital. The nurse said that Mother was calling constantly for Sport. He was not her favorite dog, either. We were badly frightened and told the nurse what had happened. She said they had all heard a distinct bark in Mother's room."

In answer to a series of questions, Mrs. C. gave us the following additional information:

"At the time of the experience Father and I were discussing horses mainly. However, we were very concerned about my mother because she had been acting very peculiarly, as though in a daze. We were depressed, of course. The house was quiet because the servants had turned in for the night."

About her father's reaction to the experience:

"He assumed that she was there, naturally, and was as startled as I. When we could not find her, he became increasingly alarmed. The voice called again and sounded very close, as though she were hidden in the shadows of the garden. It was a cold, frosty night so our search continued frantically. My father turned pale and shivered and he seemed quite frightened although nothing ever scared him really, and he never believed in any phenomena. It made us ill, however, with apprehension and fear."

In answer to a question about getting corroboration for the fact that Mrs. C.'s mother's voice was heard:

"My father, whom I have not seen in some years, will, I hope, corroborate the experience. Certainly he has not forgotten. He is a mean, stubborn old man who may refuse to reply. His meanness drove Mother out of her mind and drove me away."

We wrote to Mrs. C.'s father at the address she supplied and were somewhat surprised to receive the following answer:

"Sorry about the delay, but I had to give some thought to the matter in question. I recollect the incident to be essentially as reported to you by my daughter, but it has not remained very vivid and I had long since forgotten it, especially as I have not seen or heard from my daughter in many years. I trust I may have been of some help for whatever purpose. Very sincerely yours, J. H. N."

We also attempted to get some corroboration for the facts (*a*) that in the hospital Mrs. C.'s mother was constantly calling for the dog Sport and (*b*) that a dog's bark was heard in her hospital room. Mrs.

C. gave us the name of the nurse who phoned her, but her address was not known. The maid who was with Mrs. C.'s mother in the hospital at the time had since married and moved to California. Neither her married name nor her address was known. Mrs. C. gave us the name and present address of her mother, saying: "She knows the story but does not remember what happened at the hospital as she was delirious then. However, she might supply additional information. She is bedridden, having suffered an attack of coronary thrombosis. I feel sure she will be glad to help if she can." We did not write to Mrs. N., however, feeling that since there would be little she could add in the way of verification, there was no use in upsetting her.

Before going on to a brief discussion of the cases already presented, some cases will be cited which do not easily fall into the categories already mentioned. We are referring to those cases in which the percipient, while not having any specific visual or auditory imagery, acts in an unusual or atypical way as a result of a *hunch*.

> 11. Mrs. Earl Lange: Percipient and her married daughter, Mrs. Edith Grife, live some 60 miles apart. They phone each other seldom because of the expense, ordinarily only on holidays, etc. One morning in January, 1950 [three months before writing the account of the experience], however, Mrs. Lange felt that she must phone her daughter, but she resisted the impulse and continued doing her breakfast dishes. Finally she succumbed to the urge and put in her call. The operator got it through, and she heard crying, then the sound of her son-in-law's voice. The daughter had put a call through to her, but was then unable to talk. Her husband was about to take her to the hospital because she was very ill with a "strep" throat and she badly wanted to talk to her mother. Mrs. Lange had no reason to suppose her daughter was ill.

Mrs. Grife, who recovered from her illness, wrote us at some length concerning the incident:

> "At the time of this particular incident I was quite ill with a bad case of strep throat . . . I had put off going to the doctor. On this day, however, I realized I was desperately in need of medical attention. I was frightened, despondent, and in a nightmare of pain. I tried several times to reach the telephone operator. We are on a rural line and at times we have difficulty doing this. I realized that if I could talk to my mother it would help me a great deal. At my fourth or fifth attempt to put through a call the operator came in on the line with the information that Bigfork (the town where my mother lives) was calling. Then, due to weakness and emotional shock, all I could do was sob out that I had wanted to call her. My husband had to finish the conversasion. Because of the expense incurred, we phone only in the event of family parties or for holiday greetings. This was not

the first indication of a close mental relationship between my mother and myself, but it was the most significant. Edith Grife, Ball Club, Minnesota."

The second case in this category is reported by a clergyman's wife. It occurred 20 years ago, but it seems to have left considerable impression on both the percipient and her husband.

12. Mrs. H. R. Bennett: While at the movies with her husband, percipient had a sudden hunch that she would find a purse at the head of the aisle in the gallery where she was sitting. She went to this spot, but was rewarded with only a torn bit of paper. After the show was over the hunch was still strong, so she again went to the spot and found a purse containing considerable cash and some rings. The owner was found and it was established that at the time Mrs. Bennett first left her seat the owner was in a state of great concern lest she lose her purse, which contained all her available cash. She left the theater before Mrs. Bennett did and dropped her purse.

The Rev. H. R. Bennett corroborates his wife's account as follows:

"Mrs. Bennett and I were seated at a movie. She appeared restless and nudged me, saying 'Let me out; I feel I am going to find something in the front aisle.' 'Oh Pshaw!' I said, 'Watch the movie.' But she insisted and climbed past me and went to the aisle. She returned to her seat, grinning, with a sticky piece of paper from some salt water taffy. Yet she still insisted that there was something she would find. As soon as the show was over, she went to the aisle again and returned triumphantly with the pocket book."

Discussion

Some cases in the tradition of *Phantasms of the Living* have been presented. Although in many respects they fall far short of being of first-class evidential value, they do, in common with many of those in this corner-stone work of psychical research, deal with major issues—life-and-death issues, and in this way they differ rather markedly from the spontaneous cases reported to you by your patients. Our discussion, however, will be severely limited because of lack of appropriate psychological data in connection with each case. In correspondence with those who reported their experiences, the major aim—in fact, the sole aim—was to clarify the *objective* circumstances of each case as far as possible as to dates, times, etc., and to get corroboration when it was available. Since this was so, we were fearful of asking questions which might make the subjects "fall off the hook"—questions of a personal nature about interpersonal relations with the ostensible agent, etc. As it was, and using all the tact which

could be mustered, only about 70 per cent of those to whom personal letters and tailor-made questionnaires were sent actually replied. Any psychodynamic interpretations, therefore, will have to be in the nature of free improvisations on your part.

Thinking over the differences between these cases and those which have been presented by the various members of this group, there seem to be three that stand out most saliently. The first of these we have already referred to: it is the fact that our cases, with few exceptions, seem to deal with issues which are of tremendous conscious-level importance to the percipient; your patients' telepathic experiences, on the other hand, seem at first glance to be quite trivial and to deal with issues which are important neither to the patients nor to yourselves. Dr. Pederson-Krag's patient, for instance, dreams that she (the patient) had company coming for dinner and that her silverware was inadequate for the occasion. At the time of the dream Dr. Pederson-Krag had friends coming to dinner and she was troubled as to whether she had enough silverware for the guests. "I debated whether to buy more and replace those missing from my original set, or to use inferior cutlery."[10] Analysis showed, however, that the theme of "inadequate silverware" was in fact very important, symbolically speaking, to both patient and therapist.

Secondly: In the cases occurring in the psychoanalytic situation where the analyst himself is the ostensible agent, his identity seems to be concealed with almost painful care in the patient's production. Typically, Dr. Ullman's patient dreams most relevantly of an injury to a finger, but it is not Dr. Ullman's finger. Dr. Ehrenwald's patient dreams of an apartment which strikingly resembles his (Dr. Ehrenwald's) new apartment, but for the patient it is her dressmaker's apartment. Similarly for Dr. Pederson-Krag's patients. In every case reported to our group, if memory serves us right, the patient tells his dream to the analyst without the slightest *conscious* recognition that the material relates to the analyst. Apropos of this point, an episode in which the present speaker was personally concerned a few years ago may be illustrative. One night Dr. Ullman's wife was taken ill quite suddenly. Several of his female patients seemed unmistakably to "tune in" on this (to them) interesting fact by way of their dreams, but without Mrs. Ullman being explicitly the sick woman. The speaker had on the same night an unusually vivid dream in which Mrs. Ullman was seen first as sick, and then dead! No doubt the dynamics were the same for all of us, but the speaker, as the sole non-patient in the group of dreamers, was the only one whose dream included an acknowledgment, so to speak, of the source.

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10 "Telepathy and Repression," by Dr. Geraldine Pederson-Krag, *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, Vol. XVI, January, 1947, p. 63.

Why this suppression of the *source* of the paranormally received information in the case of the patients under analysis? For all the world, they put us in mind of children peeking through a latticework of their fingers at a sight they both *want* to see and want *not* to see. There is no dearth of tracer elements, to borrow Dr. Ehrenwald's phrase, in the dreams of the patients—they seem to be just as "gifted" as the percipients in the non-patient group, and it is therefore difficult to account for the phenomenon in terms of "poor aim" or "weakness" of telepathic functioning. Quite the opposite, there would seem to be some teleological principle at work within the unconscious to account for it. Parenthetically, in the group of 65 cases providing the data for this evening's discussion, there is only one where the percipient, as it were, "peeked through her fingers." She dreamed in detail about an automobile accident occurring to her husband when in fact it was her son who was in the accident, not her husband.

Thirdly: The patients' telepathic dreams do not seem to differ in affective tone from their "ordinary" dreams. They do not report them as being more vivid than ordinary, nor do they seem to have any subjective conviction of having received a "message." There seems to be no *sense of communication.* In the non-patient dreams (and waking experiences), on the other hand, there seems to be a tremendous sense of urgency. There is often a conviction, before the fulfilling event becomes normally known to them, that the dream is truth-telling. They relate the details to their family or friends, although it is not usually their custom to talk about their dreams. Not infrequently, because of the impression, they alter their usual behavior patterns, as in the case of the man who refused to mount the 75-foot ladder. Is this lack of an inner feeling of having been in communication on the part of the patients just another aspect of the "peeking through the fingers" technique? This, as well as the reasons for other apparent differences, will have to be left up to you to decide.

Self-Experimentation in Water Divining

C. M. COOPER, M.B., CH.B.

My interest in dowsing began when I chanced to visit a brother at a time when he was using a forked twig to determine the place on his property where he should sink a well. I had heard of witching for water but had never witnessed an exhibition of it, and when suddenly, and evidently without his having intended to make it move, the stem of the twig shot skyward I became greatly interested.

Taking the twig from him, I traversed the same path as he had, and to my astonishment the twig in my hands abruptly dipped at approximately the same spot.

Wondering whether this were an instance of a hidden perception and a consequent compelled motor action, I made myself familiar with quite a little of the literature on dowsing. I found that Professor (afterwards Sir) William Barrett, who had investigated the phenomenon, had expressed such a viewpoint, and that this theory was given prominence in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and, differently worded, was advanced in the *Encyclopedia Americana* as the only explanation offered by scientific men. On the other hand, Harold H. H. Cross in his book, *A Cavalcade of the Supernatural*, fully accepting the genuineness of the dowsing phenomenon and using it to argue by analogy in favor of his views on reputed supernatural occurrences, holds that the causal undetermined force acts on the rod and not on the hand that holds the rod. And such appears to be the belief of the majority of professional dowsers. The further evidence I gathered from my reading compelled me, as it had done others, to accept:

1. That there are many individuals in whose hands a divining rod undergoes extensive movements independent of their volition.

2. That the honest attempts of these individuals to stop the movement of the rod once it has begun are futile even though they may grip the prongs with a force that injures the epithelium of their hands or perhaps loosens the bark from the underlying fiber.

3. That in the hands of a percentage of these dowsers the implement used moves in contrary directions according to whether they walk up or down a slope or, as they express it, "up or down stream."

I found it impossible, however, to reach a conclusion concerning the water-finding value of the procedure, so opposing were the opinions expressed.

Thus, the *Encyclopedia Americana* tells us that in France an extensive series of tests was made in January and February, 1913, with three noted diviners. The results, as far as they could be verified, showed a complete failure to discover underground water. On the other hand, in Germany in the same year, at a convention of three hundred and forty-five members of a society for the study of the divining rod, the consensus of the meeting was that the scientific value of the rod had been thoroughly established. I also found the same discrepancy of viewpoint among those of my friends and acquaintances who had employed professional dowsers to locate water on their lands. Where failure had resulted there was disbelief; where success had been achieved, belief in the procedure.

Intrigued by the problem, I procured a forked twig and proceeded to experiment with it. To my surprise I found that it behaved in my hands as it had behaved in the hands of the most ardent and gifted dowsers. Thus it sporadically moved without my intending to move it. Once it had begun to move, my efforts to prevent it from completing the instigated movement were futile; and further, if I walked from the rim of a circle toward its center, the twig repeatedly dipped at approximately the same spot, and that even when I walked with eyes closed. In no instance, however, did I become conscious that I had acquired any item of information, nor did I feel, after the rod had completed the movement, that I had been compelled to move it; and further, directly the rod had begun to move, I was able to try, though unsuccessfully, to prevent the movement from continuing, which I had never been able to do in other automatic acts I had been motivated to perform.

My curiosity being aroused, I became bent on trying to discover why the twig behaved in my hands as and when it did, if I could find a way to prevent the movement from beginning and to annul it once it had begun, and why the twig in my brother's hands shot skyward and in my hands dipped toward the ground. With this in mind, I commenced to toy with the twig, and to try to make it behave as it seemingly behaved of itself. This I soon succeeded in doing.

With elbows at my sides, I took a snug grip of the prongs with my fingers and thumbs, the palms of the hands facing downward and inward. Keeping the wrists and elbows slack, I separated the ends of the prongs sufficiently to produce a decided tension where they join. I then with the fingers and forearms rotated the prongs downward and inward. At once the stem began to dip. As I continued to rotate the prongs, the twig dipped more and more, and then quite suddenly the rod itself took command and jerked my hands downward, stretching the wrists. If in rotating the prongs I gripped each one sufficiently tight with my thumb and forefinger,

I realized that I was also exerting a directional force that would tend to separate the bark of the prongs from the underlying fiber.

The next step was for me to determine whether I had unintentionally made such movements when the rod dipped seemingly of itself. It happens that as I walk with twig in hand it is natural for me to hold it in the way I have described. I am sway-backed, and as I walk I project my body forward and brace back my shoulders. This carries my elbows backward, upward, and outward. As this occurs, my forearms pronate. The result of these movements is that I produce a decided tension where the prongs join, and also rotate them. This causes the stem of the rod to begin to dip. I grip tighter to stop the movement, but in so doing I automatically further pronate and hence, without realizing it, increase the force that is causing the movement. I thus engender more and more tension in the twig until it reaches such a pitch that the rod moves the hands, and not the hands the rod.

I next took hold of the prongs as my brother did, with the palms of the hands upward, each prong passing from the little finger side across and outward under the thumb close to its web. Again, in walking, I thrust forward my lower torso and brace backward my shoulders. This movement separates the prongs, thus producing a decided tension where they join, but with this grip my forearms supinate, thus producing a downward and outward pressure upon the prongs. Up goes the stem of the twig and instinctively I grip the prongs tighter. Further supination occurs. This serves to intensify the force which is causing it to rise and to increase its ever growing tension until the rod again takes command and jerks the hands, this time upward. It will now be apparent why in walking from the rim of a circle toward its center the rod moved repeatedly at approximately the same spot inasmuch as the necessary separation of the prongs, etc., would be attained after I had taken approximately the same number of steps, and why with a change of grip, according to whether one walked up or down stream, the twig would dip or rise.

It now remained for me to determine whether I could prevent the movement from occurring and annul it when once it had begun. I found all I had to do to prevent it was for me to keep all my muscles slack, or to carry my elbows in front of my body and my hands so close together that no pulling apart of the prongs occurred. To annul it once it had started all I had to do was to thrust my arms forward, making rigid my elbows and wrists, or to let all my muscles go completely limp. This, however, I must do before I had engendered in the twig sufficient tension to make it the controlling factor in the movement.

In experimenting with other dowsing implements I found that they also moved in my hands without my intending to move them.

In using them an additional factor came into play. If whilst holding vertically a pencil between a finger and thumb I grip it tightly when my forearm is pronated, my forearm further pronates; if my forearm is supinated, further supination occurs. This anatomical peculiarity which I found present in about five per cent of the students whom I tested for it, has always been a bugbear to me on the golf course as it has rendered it difficult for me to bring the club head square to the ball.

Seymour Dunn, in his admirable book *Golf Fundamentals* alludes to this difficulty. He ascribes it to a lack of balance between the pronating and supinating groups of muscles, and advocates a special grip for those who are afflicted with this anomaly. It may be, however, that it is occasioned, or at least influenced, by an unusual set of the elbow articular structures. Be that as it may, it was in part responsible for my involuntarily initiating and increasing movements of implements which seemingly moved independent of me. The net result of my inquiry was that I was driven to conclude:

1. That I, myself, unwittingly initiated the moving of the dowsing implements and engendered within them the forces which completed their movement.

2. That the method of gripping the prongs determined whether the stem of the rod would dip or rise.

3. It, too, had seemed to indicate that my natural way of carrying the rod, my anatomical build, and my method of walking, determined when the movement of the rod would begin, that therefore I could not expect to register a higher percentage of dowsing successes than chance would warrant.

A further series of experiments, however, showed that another factor played quite a modifying part in this regard. I placed a pail of water at various distances from a starting point and walked toward it, twig in hand. To my surprise, the twig did not dip or rise, no matter how long the intervening distances, until I reached the pail.

This puzzled me until I discovered that knowing where the water was, and accepting that there was none between me and the pail, I had held the prongs very slackly until in each instance I had approached to approximately the same distance from the pail. I then had subconsciously tightened my grip, thus alerting my muscles, so to speak, so that they could raise or dip the rod over the water. This finding suggested that when I carried the rod, my judgment as to where underground water would be apt to be found would determine where I would alert my gripping muscles, and thus, indirectly, where the stem of the rod would rise or dip.

It further made evident to me why a dowser may walk a considerable distance over a barren-looking terrain without the rod moving, and then have it suddenly twist and turn in his hands over a fertile spot. As when water-witching I would naturally pick out only what appeared to me to be propitious areas, it would seem as though my percentage of successes in witching for water would depend upon my ability to read terrain, and that those professional dowsers who possess a marked flair in this direction would achieve a correspondingly high percentage of dowsing successes, and that from that standpoint they are worthy of their hire. My inquiry had sufficed to satisfy me that the phenomenon in my case was not occasioned by my having registered either extrasensorially or subconsciously through the known special senses any mysterious message which came from nearby underground water, and that I, myself, had unwittingly, but not under compulsion, initiated the movements which caused the rod to dip or rise.

Also wondering whether my more than normal subjection to automatisms extended into the field of automatic writing, I decided to test myself out in regard to it.

From my preliminary reading I learnt:

1. That there were a considerable number of individuals who in the quiet of their daily lives made use of it.

2. That in the hands of the genuine automatic writer the pen or pencil moved independently of the volition of the writer.

3. That the handwriting might be quite unlike the same person's "conscious" writing, and that, indeed, the same person might on different occasions use different styles of handwriting.

4. That the writer might be totally unaware of what he was writing, or a word or phrase might enter consciousness as it was being written, though the writer had not consciously had it in mind prior to his writing of it.

5. That it could occur whilst an exponent of it was in a trance or semitrance state.

6. That its product, like the product of conscious writing, was of a very uneven quality.

7. That in this product there was much that had considerable literary merit.

8. That some of it was on a high ethical or spiritual plane, and this to a degree that the term "inspirational writing" had been applied to it.

9. That in numerous instances the subject matter had been of a higher quality than one would have expected its writer unaided to have produced.

10. That in certain instances disclosures of matters had been made, in automatic writing, for the writer's knowledge of which it was difficult to account.

I also found that there was evidence to the effect that information conveyed in an hypnotic trance could be later expressed by the hypnotized subject in automatic writing, and that the method had in it, from the psychoanalytical side, both diagnostic and therapeutic possibilities.

Having arrived so far, I decided to lend myself to a manifestation of it. So, relaxing my muscles and blanking my mind, I put pencil to paper. In a relatively short time my right shoulder muscles began to jerk and I commenced to write. I was not aware of what I was writing, nor did I seem to be able to stop the movements until I had finished writing what I had been motivated to begin. I wrote not with the fingers, as I usually do, but with the whole arm from the shoulder joint. As I wrote, the clonic spasms spread to the upper arm muscles, and to the muscles between the right shoulder blade and the spine; and then to my surprise, and somewhat to my alarm, to the muscles between the spine and the left shoulder blade.

In some other attempts the clonic jerks either started in, or mainly involved, the upper arm or the forearm muscles rather than the shoulder muscles. The spread of the clonic spasms that occurred on my first attempt from the muscles between the right shoulder blade and the spine to the corresponding ones on the opposite side is, I may add for the benefit of the lay reader, a most unusual method of progression, inasmuch as the muscles of the two sides are activated by nerve cells which are located in widely separated brain areas. However, in certain cases of Jacksonian epilepsy bilateral muscles that are accustomed to act together may be automatically affected in this way, and in so-called myoclonic epilepsy bilateral jerkings occur.

The experience put me somewhat on edge and I came to feel that if I continued the experiments they might induce unpleasant consequences, and perhaps prevent me from obtaining the conscious muscle control that I was seeking. Hence I decided to forego them. They had served, however, to give me a better understanding than I would otherwise have had of the muscle movements that might be involved in automatic writing, and had enabled me to appreciate to the full the difference between these genuine automatic muscle movements and the more normal muscle movements that had occurred in my experiments with the water-witching wand.

As it happened, I had written in a handwriting very unlike my usual handwriting, which was, of course, to be expected since I had used a different set of muscles to those I employ in my ordinary

writing, and inasmuch as my experiments had indicated that different sets of muscles might be primarily, or mainly, involved on different occasions, I could readily see why the same individual might write in a number of different styles.

For my own benefit, I jotted down what I considered it would be possible for an individual to write in this manner. It ran as follows:

1. Anything that he had consciously registered through the senses.
2. Anything he could consciously deduce from what he had consciously registered.
3. Anything he could dream, imagine, lower himself or aspire to say.
4. Anything that he might be inhibited from consciously writing.
5. Anything that he had subconsciously registered.

Further, if he had the gift of perceiving the seemingly imperceptible, i.e., the faculty of subconsciously deducing from impressions subconsciously registered (intuiting), it would be possible for him to reveal in automatic writing what it seemed he could not know, and *what* he would not know how he knew unless he had succeeded in uncovering the mechanism at work and, of course, if he possessed any form of cryptesthesia he could also make known anything he had through it come to know.

In considering the unexpected high literary or spiritual value of some of the output it is to be remembered that history has time and again evidenced the potentialities that have long lain dormant and unrecognized in a Cromwell and, to come down to the present era, in the one who cast his menacing shadow athwart so many lands. Similarly, in the most humdrum of us, there are lesser possibilities which under favoring circumstances can come to light. This, indeed, we recognize in saying that we "did not think that he had it in him," or that "she had it in her," when an acquaintance rises to unexpected heights. It should not then occasion amazement if an automatic writer, drawing as he can upon his known capacities, and also upon those which may be lying dormant in him, produces at times work of high literary or spiritual worth.

The Prophet as a Subject for Psychical Research

WILLIAM E. HULME

We have seen that the religious prophet of antiquity had experiences which were strikingly similar to the extrasensory perceptions of telepathy, clairvoyance and precognition.[1] More is required to substantiate the hypothesis that these prophets had extrasensory perceptions than to illustrate these similarities. Modern psychical research has done more than test for extrasensory perception. The experiments have developed into a science. The conditions involved in the experiment, together with the personality traits, attitudes, and motives of the subject have been investigated for their possible relationship to positive scoring. To study prophetic activity in the light of parapsychology means that we make use also of these data — factors which have been shown to be conducive to extrasensory perception. It is the purpose of this study to compare the prophet's personality and the conditions under which he functioned, with these data.

The Prophet's Attitude Toward His Office

The prophet was continually conscious of communion with the deity. His entire task was a cooperation with God. This rapport was developed to the extent that the prophet often spoke as though he were God. The oracles of Malachi contain several debates between Yahweh and His people in which the prophet takes Yahweh's part in the first person singular. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings."[2] Cooperation between the subject and the experimenter is favorable for the occurrence of extrasensory perception in the laboratory. This rapport of the prophet with his God is comparable to the subject's rapport with the experimenter in psychical research. Cooperation between the prophet and the object to which his psychical powers are directed, by this same principle, would stimulate the operation of those powers.

A condition recognized as favorable to the occurrence of extrasensory perception in the laboratory is the subject's belief in his ability. For this reason children make very good subjects. They do not doubt their abilities in extrasensory perception when told they have them. The "sheep" are almost certain to score higher than the

[1] "Parapsychological Experiences of the Prophets," by W. E. Hulme, JOURNAL A.S.P.R., Vol. XLIV, April, 1950, pp. 70-73.
[2] Malachi 3:8.

"goats."[3] It is doubtful if anyone has ever possessed more confidence in his psychical powers than the prophet. There is no evidence that either he or his society ever questioned his abilities in extrasensory perception. The prophet was the perfect specimen of the "sheep." When the son of the Shunammite had died, she journeyed to the prophet Elisha in Mount Carmel. As she approached him she fell at his feet in agony. Gehazi, the servant, attempted to push her aside, but Elisha forbade him, saying, ". . . her soul is vexed within her: and the Lord hath hid it from me, and hath not told me."[4] The inference is that Elisha had been accustomed to receiving information extrasensorially, and his ignorance in this particular instance caused him concern.

A skilled operator encourages his subject; he inspires in him confidence that he can do well. He makes him feel that the tests are important, and arouses in him an ambition to try to further scientific knowledge by obtaining positive results. He keeps the experiment novel by varying the procedure. He gives rewards for good scoring as does Rhine, or inspires competition between his subjects. The prophet had his motivation. He believed he was executing the will of God. He felt he had experienced a call from God to function as a channel for revelation to mankind. A sense of a divine calling to an office is one of the strongest motivations for the able execution of that office. The emphasis on the will of Allah in Mohammedanism had its beginnings in the prophet's conviction that his entire mission was obedience to the call of Allah to be the greatest of the prophets. The prophet's attitude toward his office was one of fervor and passionate zeal. This zeal, as in the case of Mohammed, was difficult to distinguish from fanaticism. The prophet's more phlegmatic contemporaries often mistook the prophetic fervor for madness. He had the enthusiasm that the subject in the laboratory needs to favor his possibility of scoring positively.

The Prophet's Personality Traits

The personality conducive to positive extrasensory scoring in laboratory tests is one that is well adjusted. The prophet was outstanding for his well-adjusted personality. His honesty with his God released him from repression. His guilt feelings having been resolved, he was free from obsessions and phobias. Any fear he might have had was quickly counteracted by his strong trust in his God. Focusing his attention on his divine mission for his God and

[3] "Sheep" are those subjects who accept the possibility of paranormal experience in the experimental situation; "goats" are the subjects who reject that possibility. See "Progress Report on Further Sheep-Goat Series," by Gertrude R. Schmeidler, JOURNAL A.S.P.R., Vol. XL, 1946, pp. 34-35.

[4] II Kings 4:27.

his people prevented a self-centered attitude. His purpose in life was altruistic.

An unaffectable person scores on the whole higher than the suggestible individual. The nature of the prophet's mission necessitated his unaffectable character. He often had to denounce his countrymen, condemn national policies, threaten disaster. Amos left his herd in the hill country of Judah to travel to Bethel in the northern Kingdom of Israel to preach his oracle of condemnation. His message made enemies. He was reported to the king as an enemy conspirator and seditionist. In the midst of this increasing tension Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, suggested to Amos that he escape while he could and return to his homeland. There he could make a comfortable living through his prophesying. A rugged shepherd was out of place in the king's chapel. The prophet's reply was another oracle predicting captivity for Israel. The suggestion and threat appear never to have received a moment's consideration. Like his predecessors and successors, Amos was certain of a divine direction, and no threat or suggestion of any kind could disturb this assurance.

Subjects who have difficulty in overcoming self-consciousness rarely do well in tests for extrasensory perception. A continual awareness of oneself is disruptive to concentration. The attention is divided between passivity and active awareness — a frame of mind hindering perception which is extrasensory. A study of the writings of the prophets discloses that these men were so rapt in their psychical experiences or their oracles that they rarely had occasion to be conscious of their own persons. This lack of self-consciousness is shown in their frequent assumption of the first person singular in their references to God. The prophet's own personality had receded into the background and only God and the people occupied the focus of his attention. He was conscious of himself only as a mouthpiece of God. Isaiah wrote, "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them."[5] The prophet has relegated his own personality to the background.

The prophet is a good subject for extrasensory research because he practiced the mystical formula which prepares the way for the occurrence of this perception. Mental concentration and relaxation may occur simultaneously in what can best be described as a relaxed concentration. A relaxed concentration is conducive to extrasensory perception. The mind must be quiescent and unaffected by the surroundings. The subject's mind is relaxed by focusing it upon a blank — by concentrating on nothing. The prophet observed a regulated devotional life. He had his times when he meditated upon

[5] Isaiah 41:17.

spiritual truths, worshipped his God, and prayed. During these periods his mind was in that condition of relaxed concentration so conducive to the entry of psychical phenomena.

That which furnished his enemies with an opportunity against the prophet Daniel was his devotional life. Three times a day he went to his house, opened his windows toward Jerusalem, and knelt in prayer to his God. The direct connection of this devotional habit with the prophet's psychical experiences is shown in his following description of the situation which preceded a prophetic vision.

> And whiles I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God; Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation.[6]

When the enemy was at the gates of the city, Isaiah, the prophet, and Hezekiah, the king, "prayed and cried unto heaven."[7] The prophecy of Jeremiah is interspersed with the prophet's prayers of intercession for his people or petitions for his own personal strengthening.

These devotional practices were the prophet's preparation for his inspiration. These were the maturing influences which developed the prophet's constitutional capacity for his reception of "revelation." These periods of preparation were necessary for the psychical phenomena of the prophetic function. These were the practices that made his mind receptive to the sensitive impressions which composed his oracle.

That the prophet was accustomed to the use of mental imagery and symbolism is evident throughout his oracles. It is quite likely that this use of images and symbols was characteristic of his devotional periods. Concentration on religious images and spiritual symbols is, according to Swami Akhilananda, the ideal condition for perceiving the impressions of other minds.

The Prophet's Working Atmosphere

The surrounding conditions the prophet chose for his devotional activities which led to his experiences of revelation were those especially favorable to the occurrence of extrasensory perception. His was an atmosphere without distraction. The mere distraction of some one entering the testing room sometimes markedly lowers the scoring of the subject in psychical research. The prophet eliminated distrac-

[6] Daniel 9:20-21.
[7] II Chronicles 32:20.

tion by the use of music and by a resort to solitude. When the campaign which the kingdoms of Judah, Israel, and Edom were planning against the kingdom of Moab was threatened with disaster due to a water shortage, the kings of Israel and Judah went to the prophet Elisha for an oracle from Yahweh. Elisha asked for a minstrel, and "it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him."[8] The sons of the prophets and the tabernacle musicians are described as prophesying with musical instruments.

Music has a relaxing effect on the mind. It reduced the activity of the prophet's mind to the condition of relaxed concentration which prepares the way for extrasensory experiences. The frequent association of rivers with prophetic vision has a similar explanation. The sound of the river current would have the same relaxing effect, reducing distraction, as would music. "The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel . . . by the river Chebar."[9] ". . . as I [Daniel] was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel: Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold . . . the vision."[10]

The prophets also reduced distraction by meditating in "the night season," or resorting to the surrounding deserts and river banks. It was at night, after he and his three companions had prayed intensely for a revelation, when the city of Babylon was asleep, that Daniel experienced his "night vision" of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. Mohammed had the habit of retiring to a cave in the slope of Mount Hira near Mecca. It was a lonely barren place. The stillness and harmony of the setting stimulated the prophet to extreme emotional excitement and he uttered incoherent oaths and wild rhapsodical language. It was here that he received many of his revelations.

The prophet's atmosphere was one without restraints. The work of Stuart has shown that restraining the subject's freedom of response in extrasensory experimentation is detrimental to high scoring.[11] The prophet's only superior was his God. The methods he used, though adapted to the beliefs of his culture, were ultimately the methods of his own choosing. He "spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance."[12] Even in New Testament times he was allowed complete freedom of expression in assembly. When he was asked for an oracle, there was no time limit involved, and whatever he spoke was accepted as the desired oracle. Jeremiah waited ten days for an oracle which would answer the question of the Hebrew survivors of the Babylonian

[8] II Kings 3:15.
[9] Ezekiel 1:3.
[10] Daniel 10:4-5.
[11] "The Effect of Rate of Movement in Card Matching Tests of Extra-Sensory Perception," by Charles E. Stuart, *Journal of Parapsychology*, Vol. 2, September, 1938, pp. 171-183.
[12] Acts 2:4.

conquest concerning their future plans. Freedom in choice of conditions and freedom in response are as important to the prophetic function as they are to the positive scoring in psychical research.

Religious prophecy is distinguished by the extrasensory character of its function. The prophet's attitude toward his office was the ideal for a laboratory subject in experimentation for extrasensory perception. He was passionate in zeal, confident of his authority, assured of his "paranormal" powers, and in rapport with his deity. His personality had the qualities naturally conducive to the operation of extrasensory perception. It was unaffectable and trended toward mystical contemplation. The revelation experience which authenticated his office usually occurred in an atmosphere which encouraged extrasensory perception. It was one without distraction. The prophet had freedom of response and was without unnatural restraints. In the light of this knowledge it would seem that a reasonable hypothesis, if not the most reasonable, would be that the prophet experienced the powers of extrasensory perception in varying degrees in his function as a mediator for the deity to the people.

The Medical Section: The First Three Years
A Summary of the Sessions of the Medical Section of the A.S.P.R.

GERALDINE PEDERSON-KRAG, M.D.

The medical section of the A.S.P.R., a group of some 6-19 physicians interested in paranormal phenomena, first met on March 4, 1948. This report contains the gist of the papers read and the discussions held during the twenty-five sessions that have taken place since that time.

The papers have dealt principally with occurrences observed by the members in their daily work. Most of these were telepathic or precognitive dreams, where unwittingly the doctor acted as agent and the patient as percipient. Drs. Jan Ehrenwald, Jule Eisenbud, and Montague Ullman each had one or more patients especially gifted in producing such manifestations of psi, while the same ability appeared more sporadically and less frequently in the practices of other physicians.

Other manifestations reported were actions which appeared pointless and faulty until interpreted as expressions of impulses seen or conveyed telepathically. One of these was told by Dr. Yella Lowenfeld and six by Dr. Eisenbud. As a background for his personal observations Dr. Eisenbud described the mistake made by a coachman in response to rejected wishes of his passenger, Sigmund Freud.

Dr. Eisenbud and Dr. Geraldine Pederson-Krag described cases in which physical and emotional symptoms were produced in one individual in response to emotions felt by another. Dr. Wayne Barker also read a paper on a similar occurrence of a non-analytic nature, the apparent alteration of brain waves by means of telepathy. Dr. Ehrenwald described repeated telepathic incidents in a compulsive neurotic and an apparently precognitive dream in a case of anxiety hysteria.

However, the interest of the group lay less in offering examples of the accepted fact of psi phenomena than in considering the circumstances under which such phenomena may be noted.

Dr. Ehrenwald pointed out the strong telepathic factor in mother-child relationships. Dr. Eisenbud observed that unconscious telepathic perception, and unconscious reactions to it, may well be one of the codeterminants of faulty behaviour too commonplace to excite remark. This he illustrated by means of a simple act of forgetting, which acquired meaning when psychoanalytic investigation showed it to

be the telepathic projection of a guilty impulse felt by another person than the forgetful one.

Dr. Pederson-Krag showed how telepathy may often serve as a defense against anxiety, especially in cases where the anxiety is due to a conflict around exhibitionism.

Dr. Eisenbud pointed out how psi phenomena are connected with occurrences that we wish to forget. Thus one patient in analysis utilized a telepathically perceived event to bring about exposure and punishment for something for which she felt, but would not admit, guilt. On one occasion both father and daughter fulfilled their oedipal wishes by an error apparently chance determined. In a third, a patient had a premonition of a most unlikely happening which would, if experienced, nullify symbolically his repressed fear of the loss of a mother. The patient's premonition was fulfilled.

From a neuro-biological angle Dr. Ehrenwald demonstrated how psi abilities often develop in connection with some other faulty performance, which he termed a minus function. The group received interesting confirmation of their ideas in a paper read by a guest, Dr. John R. Mattingly of Hamilton College, on dreams of his own, showing how anxiety about death was connected with telepathic perception.

Of especial interest to the practising analysts was an attempt to evaluate the part that paranormal phenomena play in psychotherapy. Dr. Ehrenwald stressed the need for their recognition.

Dr. Eisenbud demonstrated how telepathic elements in patients' dreams could easily be uncovered by the standard analytic technique, showing a high degree of correlation between the analyst's current conflict and that of the patients.

An interesting link between these commonplace paranormal phenomena and the spectacular occurrences described in *Phantasms of the Living* and similar reports was given by Mrs. L. A. Dale in an excellent report of the recent investigation of spontaneous paranormal occurrences in the general population.

Reviews

PSYCHICAL PHYSICS. By S. W. Tromp. 534 pp. Elsevier Publishing Co., Amsterdam and New York, 1950. $8.00.

It is now many years since Sir William Barrett published his paper on dowsing in the *Proceedings* of the S.P.R.; Barrett was a Professor of Physics, and could not come to the conclusion that a physical cause was involved; this may partly be due to a natural tendency to "pass the buck." He reached the conclusion that divining takes place by a combination of clairvoyance followed by subconscious muscular action. According to this view the dowsing rod is only an instrument whereby the clairvoyant can subconsciously indicate the information which has been psychically obtained.

Barrett's ideas have been strongly opposed by many writers — notably Maby and Franklin. Their viewpoint, which demands some consideration, is that to label such a phenomenon as "psychic" is merely another way of saying "we do not know." Maby and Franklin, after some experiments, suggested a possible manner in which purely physical and physiological processes could combine to produce divining phenomena. Their views have not received much attention, because their theories are somewhat sketchy and seem to be inadequate in some details.

These errors have to some extent been avoided by Professor Tromp in his recent book *Psychical Physics*. He endeavors to correlate the accepted physical and physiological processes occurring in and around human beings with divining phenomena. The first two chapters (287 pages) of his book are a summary of such of these processes as Tromp thinks are relevant to the study of divining; it is interesting to note here that he describes effects of chemicals on photographic plates (the Russell effect) which have been observed by experimenters in the field and falsely attributed to psychic processes.

The first two chapters are well supplemented by 700 references to literature; two opposing criticisms can, however, be made. It is impossible for a specialist in other scientific fields to read these chapters and quickly grasp the main features; Tromp has made the error here of including too much material. Yet when one tries to cut out some of the matter, there is so little that we know about dowsing that everything seems relevant and one feels that Tromp has erred by including too little. This difficulty seems unavoidable in a study of such a difficult subject.

But it is the third chapter of the book that is the most important part; here the divining phenomena themselves are discussed. The

treatment is entirely different from that of Barrett; whereas Barrett described in detail certain cases of dowsing which are well established, and investigated the veracity of the stories, Tromp merely refers to the cases, leaving the reader to find out these points from the original sources. There are 700 such references, some of which admittedly refer to cases not well established or of interest for historical reasons only. This collation of references is in itself a great asset to any student of the subject.

I have one criticism to make of this feature of the book; Professor Tromp mentions, in passing, the work of Dr. Walters who thought he had some photographs, taken with a Wilson Cloud Chamber of the ionization produced by the "aura" of a mouse at the moment of death; yet Professor Tromp does not mention the careful repetition of this work by Dr. Hopper who showed that the effects observed by Dr. Walters were almost certainly spurious and due to a gas leak between the lethal chamber and the cloud chamber. This omission may be symptomatic of other omissions throughout the book, but if so, I have not yet found them.

Also in this third chapter is a long discussion of some of Professor Tromp's own experiments. Like many another before him, he was not at first satisfied that divining phenomena were a reality. The ingenious experiments he has devised to prove the reality are, to the best of the reviewer's belief, the first of their type to be recorded. These experiments were carried out in the Physical and Physiological Laboratories at Leiden and in the Laboratory of Technical Physics at Delft (Holland). A preliminary account had previously been published (in Tijdochr w. Parapsychologie, Jan. 1947) but this only seemed to whet the appetite for the complete results to come.

The main feature of the experiments was the measurement of the dowser's reaction by the measurement of skin potentials and by changes in the electrocardiograms. These seem to be definitely correlated with the rod reaction. Tromp showed that when a dowser approaches a magnetic field anomaly, and ordinary dowsing reaction occurs accompanied by a change in skin potential, similar changes occur if the dowser stays still and the field is changed. The change in skin potential is too small to be attributed directly to electromagnetic effects and Tromp attributes the change to a muscular action caused by an electromagnetic effect on the nervous system. This muscular action is presumably the same muscular action that causes the rotation of a divining rod. By experiments with externally applied potentials, Tromp showed that a sufficient response could be produced by a small stimulus. All this is not to imply that magnetic fields are the sole cause of dowsing reactions, indeed Tromp suggests many other effects that could produce the required stimulus.

The reviewer is not sufficiently acquainted with physiology to comment in detail upon the processes suggested; but from a physicist's point of view there is nothing that is unreasonable, which is more than can be said for any other proposed mechanism. This is not to suggest that the results of Tromp should be accepted without further experimentation: far from it. These results should be taken by someone — preferably in the physiological field — for repetition and further experimentation. Fortunately for any such, Tromp has described his experiments in a sufficiently detailed way that anyone with sufficient interest and ability can duplicate the important features or criticize the experiments. It is rare for an investigator of dowsing to do this, but it is, of course, necessary to good scientific work.

Some interesting general points arise in summarizing the impressions left by this book. If the main contention is correct, that the divining phenomena are expressions of changes in magnetic and other fields known to the geologist, it appears that the faculty is of little practical use in the modern age of scientific instrumentation. There exist very sensitive instruments for detecting these field changes, and moreover for separating all the different types of field which a dowser cannot normally do. This is related to the problem posed by F. W. H. Myers in a discussion of telepathy; is it a faculty which is receding as racial development proceeds, or is it increasing? Or put into his concise way, is it a faculty stretching back to the amoeba or reaching forward to the angels? Although everyone is reluctant to endorse unequivocally an age of scientific instrumentation as a fit place for angels, nevertheless it seems that the faculty of dowsing was of more utility in the days of the amoeba when it was merely used and no one tried to understand it.

Another thought occurs perhaps more strongly than the first. If, and when, these claims are substantiated, most of this field is seen to be the proper study of the geologist and physiologist and not of the psychical researcher. The only feature about this that need worry us is that these two branches of science are not yet normally studied by the same people.

It has often been said that psychical research consists of studying phenomena rejected by all established sciences. As soon as the reality of a phenomenon has been established one of the sciences will claim it; this is right and proper; the establishment of a phenomenon *automatically* entails finding out a little about its laws and how the phenomenon dovetails into accepted knowledge. If we can, at some date in the future, say goodbye to water divining as a branch of our study we shall have done our job as psychical researchers. Professor Tromp's book is the first landmark in this

direction; even if water divining is eventually to leave our domain forever, the book should be on the bookshelves of every psychical researcher as a reminder of how seemingly unrelated phenomena can be correlated and used to explain one another.

RICHARD WILSON

HARRY PRICE: The Biography of a Ghost Hunter. By Paul Tabori. VIII, 316 pp. Athenaeum Press, London, 1950. 15*s*.

Harry Price — whose name is well known to readers of this JOURNAL as for some time Foreign Research Officer of the A.S.P.R. and as author of *Confessions of a Ghost Hunter, Fifty Years of Psychical Research, The Most Haunted House in England, Poltergeist over England*, etc. — was born at Shrewsbury in 1881 and died in 1948. He was the son of a paper manufacturer, and his father's part-ownership of the business, which Price inherited, provided him throughout his life with a substantial income. This, and the returns from his books, gave him the means to carry on the psychical research to which his life was chiefly devoted, to finance the laboratory he equipped for the purpose, and to accumulate a large library of books on psychic and allied subjects. The collection of books on conjuring in particular, which he amassed, is said to be the most complete in existence.

His interest in the latter subject was aroused in childhood by the performance of a magician on the public square. He began to cultivate the art assiduously and became in time an able practitioner of it and a member and officer of several societies of magicians. In the early 1920's he was especially interested in reproducing, by the conjurer's art, the tricks of fraudulent mediums.

His interest in psychical research also awakened early and kept growing. His experiments with Willi Schneider and with Stella C. completely convinced him that some of the phenomena produced by mediums are genuinely paranormal. From that time, his attitude towards mediums came to be one of open-mindedness combined with keen vigilance. He knew that many mediums were deliberate tricksters, whose tricks he understood and in many cases exposed. He knew also that some mediums had genuinely paranormal powers. And he knew further that even mediums who had such powers sometimes cheated whether consciously or unconsciously in trance. Even after he had obtained photographic evidence that Rudi Schneider had managed to free one arm from control during a séance, Price's assurance never wavered that on other occasions Rudi had produced genuine phenomena under rigorous control.

Price's critical hard-headedness in these matters — his insistence on establishing fraud or delusion where it existed, and equally on

establishing the genuineness of such paranormal phenomena as were genuine — involved him throughout his life in many controversies, some of them acrimonious. Some were with conjurers who maintained that everything was fraud, some with spiritualists whose beliefs outran the solidity of their evidence, some with other psychical researchers whose methods or conclusions he criticized, and some with persons skeptical *a priori* in or out of the ranks of science. His independence, and his forthrightness in stating his conclusions irrespective of whose cherished beliefs or disbeliefs they might hurt, were of course not likely to pour oil on the waters of this troubled subject.

Price, moreover, had a gift for showmanship, to which he allowed full play in the publicizing of some of his experiments. His declared object in this was to arouse wide interest in paranormal phenomena, and there is no doubt that he succeeded in doing so. On the other hand, such headline-hunting, and in particular the ridiculous "experiment" at the summit of the Brocken — to test whether, as an old German manuscript asserted, a white goat would, by a ritual performed there, be changed into a young man — repelled persons of a scientific turn of mind that were interested in psychical research, as tending to discredit the whole subject.

All in all, however, it seems to this reviewer that Harry Price's services to psychical research greatly outweigh such disservice as resulted from some aspects of his personality or from some of his publicity-stunts. The sincerity of his interest in the subject and the whole-heartedness of his devotion to the task of detecting equally what was truth and what was trick or delusion in the phenomena reported in this field, can hardly be questioned.

Mr. Tabori's book has a chapter on Price as conjurer and on his friendships among, and controversies with, professional conjurers. There is a chapter similarly treating of his relations with the spiritualists. Two chapters are given to some of his investigations of famous mediums, some of whom he detected in trickery, and others of whom he found able to produce paranormal phenomena under trick-proof control. There are chapters on Price's psychic adventures in England and on the continent, on his relations with the A.S.P.R., and on his attempts to establish cooperation between his own organization — The National Laboratory of Psychical Research — and other organizations dedicated to research in this field in England and abroad. There is a chapter dealing with Price's investigations of poltergeists and ghosts, and one on his study of the famous Borley rectory. The final chapter consists of personal statements about Price, by six friends or associates of his, among whom may be mentioned, besides his secretary, such well-known

men as Professor Joad, Dr. Hereward Carrington, and the French investigator, René Sudre.

In the writing of this book, Mr. Tabori had access to Price's many albums of press clippings, and to the more than twenty thousand letters in his files, connected with psychical research. Much of this correspondence, interesting as it would be, is, Mr. Tabori states, "unpublished and unpublishable" — partly, one gathers, because in private letters it was possible for Price and his correspondents to say things which, although true, would if published have constituted grounds for libel action under English law. Mr. Tabori's biography of Price is an informing and fascinating book, well worth reading.

C. J. Ducasse

Brown University

HENRY GROSS AND HIS DOWSING ROD. By Kenneth Roberts. 310 pp. Doubleday and Co., Garden City, New York, 1951. $3.00.

This account by an author of many historical novels purports to describe the "amazing record of the exploits of one phenomenal dowser," Henry Gross. Henry Gross, a "game warden neighbor" of Kenneth Roberts, located the first of a series of wells on the Roberts' Kennebunkport, Maine farm during the drought and forest fires of 1947. The culmination was a trip to Bermuda late in 1949, during which three wells were dug on the basis of dowsing that Henry Gross had done over a map of Bermuda in Kennebunkport.

Included in the book are two chapters by other authorities. One, a chapter by Charles Richet, is a short history of dowsing phenomena. The other is an account of Evelyn M. Penrose, "the best-known of modern English dowsers," of her adventures as an official water-diviner for the Government of British Columbia.

In many respects this is an exceedingly irritating book for the individual who is interested in the problem of whether genuine dowsing occurs. Mr. Roberts has written this account with great conviction, but this is also a characteristic of his historical novels. He promises in the initial pages to "document everything I say." The documentation consists of a few supporting letters, a few newspaper clippings, and considerable amounts of quoted dialogue. The ability to remember verbatim so much conversation is not the least of Mr. Roberts' talents!

The keynote to the approach taken in this book is exemplified in the following passages. "From the viewpoint of American scientists who have labored unsuccessfully to find out whether or not there is such a force, phenomenon, gift or talent, this is not a scientific book.

It accepts without question, as did Nobel prize winner Charles Richet, outstanding French scientist, the singular powers of experienced dowsers" (p. 1). And further: "A good water dowser cannot afford 'negative' results. If his rod says that there is water in a certain spot, and at a certain distance underground, and in certain quantities, the water is there . . . ." (pp. 2-3).

Mr. Roberts is impatient with the restrictions that scientists place on the dowser and with the questions they ask. He considers that many of their experiments are petty and irrelevant, but one is left with the impression that this is frequently the case because such experiments yield negative results which "a good water dowser cannot afford."

Although when considered individually such undocumented statements, of which the following are examples, are trivial, the total impression created by them is unfavorable:

"For a time we experimented on foods and drinks.

"When Henry's rod was touched to rye whiskey, it would work only on the rye: not on bourbon, scotch, blended whiskey, or any other liquor.

"When touched to bourbon, it would work only on bourbon" (p. 64).

"Over a man's hand, he [Gross] explained, the pendulum moved in circles. Over a woman's hand it worked back and forth, in a straight line" (pp. 66-67).

But "We later found that this was not necessarily so. Over a woman whose blood tests Rh negative, the pendulum may reverse itself and work in a circle . . . ." (p. 67, footnote).

"Meanwhile, two amateur dowsers, *whose rods worked on seepage water but not on veins* [italics ours], appeared and assured the club officials that there had never been water at the spot indicated by Henry" (p. 136).

There are literally scores of such statements throughout the book. The difficulty lies in the fact that they are largely undocumented and, more crucially, do not deal with the question of the dowser's conscious knowledge. A point which will occur to the careful reader over and over again is not adequately dealt with. When Henry Gross locates water on the Roberts' farm does he demonstrate a genuine gift or can his success be interpreted in terms of the widespread incidence of underground water in that particular locality of Maine?

On the positive side there is much to be said for the book. Of first importance is the fact that it may provide the impetus for further study in this area. A number of the achievements of Henry Gross as described and partially documented are extremely impressive. The

writing is interesting, stimulating, almost fictional in style. Mr. Roberts has described instances of Henry Gross' success in great detail so that further documentation would seem to be feasible. The clear descriptions should provide information for repetition of some of the tests described. And finally, it vividly makes the point that there's an awful lot of water under Kenneth Roberts' Kennebunkport farm.

JOSEPH L. WOODRUFF

IN MY MIND'S EYE. By Frederick Marion. With Foreword by R. H. Thouless and B. P. Wiesner. 315 pp. E. P. Dutton & Co., New York, 1950. $3.75.

In collaboration with Peter O'Donnell, Frederick Marion, an Austrian mentalist, has written a readable and unusual book. In addition to the facts of his life, he offers his theories of extrasensory perception, outlines a training program for would-be psychics, and summarizes his experiments with British parapsychologists. He also relates some interesting anecdotes concerning such exotic people as Anita Berber, an early strip-teaser; Erik Jan Hannusen, Nazi occultist; and Frau Maria Silbert, an Austrian physical medium. All of this contributes little of importance to the study of paranormal perception. And, considered as a whole, the book does not qualify as a full-fledged autobiography.

The son of a businessman, Frederick Marion was born in Prague, amid sober and prosaic surroundings. In early childhood, he displayed an extraordinary intuitive faculty that worried his parents and perplexed his companions at school. At 19, he accepted a challenge to locate by paranormal means an object secretly concealed in the city of Prague. After the successful completion of that test, which was featured by the local press, he began a music-hall career as "The Telepathic Phenomenon." He later abandoned his music-hall presentations in favor of serious lecture-demonstrations, one of which was recently witnessed at the staid Harvard Club in New York City.

Unlike Joseph Dunninger, Sidney Piddington, and other popular mentalists, Marion apparently welcomes examination by psychical research investigators. He claims that he has never shirked a scientific test. This claim is given credence by R. H. Thouless and B. P. Wiesner, parapsychologists, who, in their remarkable Foreword, state: "We can say definitely that we are satisfied that Marion shows paranormal capacities of an unusually high order under strictly controlled experimental conditions." (Translation: Marion's card-guesses were correct more often than chance would allow.) To avoid misinterpretation, they go on to say, "We cannot give any evidence

as to the paranormality of his stage performances or the reality of the accounts he gives of remarkable results in helping those who come to him for help." They also caution the reader that the more philosophical parts of the book appear to them as less valuable than the descriptive parts.

In a chapter entitled "On Trial in England," Marion summarizes his experiments under the direction of Dr. S. G. Soal, Mr. Harry Price, and others at the National Laboratory for Psychical Research.[1] Designed to test the genuineness of his stage performances, these experiments resulted in the conclusion that Marion accomplished his amazing feats by means of an unusual acuity of the senses—not by means of extrasensory perception. Also included in the chapter is a criticism of the Soal report by Edmond P. Gibson, an American investigator formerly associated with the Parapsychology Laboratory at Duke University.

Marion's philosophical views give the impression that he has been an earnest student of mail-order occultism. "Thought," he explains, "is also a matter of vibrations." To illustrate this profundity, he cites an experiment in which he allegedly shatters a wine-glass by projecting thought-waves upon it. The professors of the Foreword, who have elsewhere[2] expounded a general theory of psychokinesis, have no doubt a more cogent explanation for this astonishing feat.

From the evidence available, no final judgment of Marion's paranormal faculties is possible. However, the reservations of Thouless and Wiesner, the negative results obtained by Dr. Soal, and the striking similarity between some of Marion's stage presentations and certain well-known conjuring tricks all point to the probability that Marion's talents are not unlike those of other professional performers who do not claim paranormal powers.

ALAN F. MACROBERT

YOU WILL SURVIVE AFTER DEATH. By Sherwood Eddy. 210 pp. Rinehart & Co., New York, 1950. $2.00.

In this book, the Rev. Dr. Sherwood Eddy, protestant minister, Spiritualist, and author of some 35 volumes on international, social, and religious questions, tells why he believes in survival of personality after death and describes his efforts to obtain empirical evidence

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[1] "Preliminary Studies of a Vaudeville Telepathist," by S. G. Soal, *Bulletin III*, University of London Council for Psychical Investigation, London, 1937, pp. 1-96.

[2] "The Psi Processes in Normal and 'Paranormal' Psychology," by R. H. Thouless and B. P. Wiesner, *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XLVIII, 1947, pp. 177-196. (A digest of the original article was published in the *Journal of Parapsychology*, Vol. 12, September, 1948, pp. 192-212.)

through the phenomena of contemporary Spiritualist mediums. According to the Foreword, in which he declares that "as a matter of faith I have held this belief in eternal life throughout my entire religious experience," the author undertook the investigations of psychic phenomena in 1937 in order that he "might be able to help others who had not sufficient religious faith to believe firmly in personal immortality."

Dr. Eddy begins with a rather undistinguished summary of the familiar ethical arguments, which all boil down to the same point; namely, that there *ought* to be an immortality, therefore, there *must* be. He next discusses the empirical evidence accumulated by the societies for psychical research, emphasizing purported communications from spirits. He then records the evidence of his personal investigations, which include sittings with such dubious mediums as "Margery" Crandon, Arthur Ford, and E. A. MacBeth. At these sittings, he witnessed the full repertoire of modern Spiritualist mediums—direct voice, full-form materializations, independent writing, ectoplasm, and apports. Convinced of the reality of these bitterly disputed phenomena, Dr. Eddy says:

"My first-hand experiences in psychic phenomena have been so repeated, so convincing and so satisfying to me personally, that I now have the same evidence for the existence of the nine members of my family who are now in the spiritual world, that I have for the three members of my family who are still on earth."

You Will Survive After Death will temporarily encourage the bereaved and probably increase the attendance at Spiritualist camps this summer. It will not impress the critical reader, who will find additional evidence for the assumption that grief over the loss of loved ones frequently leads to an irrational acceptance of séance phenomena.

ALAN F. MACROBERT

Correspondence

To the Editor of the JOURNAL:

In *Second Sight in Daily Life* the present writer suggested the following as a provisional definition of precognition: "Perception or awareness, not attributable to information or rational inference, which corresponds to the future sense perception of the subject, or of another person."

When reviewing the book, Professor C. J. Ducasse made the following comment on the above: "This definition, which the author puts forward only as provisional, remains rather ambiguous even after the explanations given by him in the text."[1]

One reason for the admitted ambiguity in the wording is that a definition would tend to get cumbersome if you sought to word it so as to exclude every possibility of ambiguity arising. But while too much should not be made of mere definitions, I think it is quite important that any discussion of precognition should be accompanied by a definition of what the writer considers precognition to be. In a series of books by members of the S.P.R. this definition was offered: "Perception or awareness of future event, apart from information or inference."[2] Similarly, the *Journal of Parapsychology* submits this: "Cognition of a future event which could not be known through rational inference."[3] Personally, I find no reason to relate precognition, as these definitions seem to do, to an objective "future event." If we examine carefully recorded spontaneous cases we may find a preponderance of evidence to show that what is precognized is the effect on the subject of newspaper reports, photographs, rumors, etc., which often are far removed in accuracy from the "event." Therefore, a definition should make clear what we mean by an event. Do we mean a personal event, i.e., a personal experience, or do we mean an objective event? In order to try to respond to the criticism arising from the ambiguity of my own provisional definition, I offer the following expanded version:

"Perception or awareness, not attributable to normal information or to rational inference, which corresponds to the future sense perception of the subject and to mental images or concepts directly arising therefrom, when such future perception follows upon external stimuli normally independent of the subject, and when such correspondence is so precise, or so multiple, or occurs with such frequency as to signify that chance coincidence is a less probable explanation of the correspondence than that the prior awareness or perception is

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[1] JOURNAL A.S.P.R., Vol. XLIV, July, 1950, p. 122.
[2] E.g., H. F. Saltmarsh, *Foreknowledge*, 1938, p. 119.
[3] "Glossary," each number.

due to an extra-normal relationship between it and the corresponding later experience."

The foregoing definition is confined to simple precognition, no allusion being made to precognitive telepathy as in the last four words of the shorter definition quoted at the beginning of these remarks.

W. H. W. SABINE

To the Editor of the JOURNAL:

I am making a collection of spontaneous cases bearing on the question whether animals can be in telepathic communication with men. A substantial number of published cases, often concerned with dogs or cats, point to such a possibility. I would be grateful if members who have personal knowledge of similar incidents would send me an account of them in care of the Society. All information will be regarded as confidential, and neither names nor material will be published without the express permission of the writers.

(MISS) MARGERY HOYT

Notice to Members

The Publications Committee would like to replenish the low reserve stock of the following numbers of the JOURNAL:

January and April, 1942
January and April, 1943
January, 1945
April, 1946

Will members who can spare these copies kindly send them to the Assistant Secretary. In exchange members may select two other numbers of the JOURNAL for each one returned.

HISTORY OF THE SOCIETY

The First American Society for Psychical Research was formed in 1885, in consequence of a visit by Sir W. F. Barrett to this country, and Prof. Simon Newcomb became its President. In 1887 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 very able guidance of Dr. Hodgson until his death in 1905. The American Society for Psychical Research was then re-established with James H. Hyslop, Ph.D., formerly Professor of Logic and Ethics in Columbia University, as its Secretary and Director.

THE ENDOWMENT

The American Society for Psychical Research, Inc., was originally incorporated under the Laws of New York in 1904 under the name of American Institute for Scientific Research, for the purpose of carrying on and endowing investigation in the fields of psychical research and psychotherapeutics. It is supported by contributions from its members and a small endowment fund. The income of the Society pays only for the publications and office expenses, but does not enable the Society to carry on its scientific investigations. A much greater fund is required before this work can be carried forward with the initiative and energy which its importance deserves.

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THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

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THE AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH, Inc.
880 FIFTH AVENUE NEW YORK 21, N. Y.
Single Copy, $1.50 Published Quarterly $5.00 a year

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE SOCIETY

1. The investigation of claims of telepathy, clairvoyance, veridical hallucinations and dreams, psychometry, precognition, dowsing, and other forms of supernormal cognition; of claims of supernormal physical phenomena, such as raps, telekinesis, materialization, levitation, fire-immunity, poltergeists; the study of automatic writing, trance speech, hypnotism, alterations of personality, and other subconscious processes: in short, all types of the phenomena called psychic, mediumistic, supernormal, parapsychological and metapsychic, together with the bordering subjects.

2. The collection, classification, study and publication of reports dealing with the above phenomena. Readers are asked to report incidents and cases. Names must be given, but on request will be treated as confidential.

3. The maintenance of a library on psychical research and related subjects. Contributions of books and periodical files will be welcomed.

4. Cooperating in the above tasks with qualified individuals and groups who will report their work to the Society.

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Members, who receive the Proceedings and the Journal, pay an annual fee of $10. (One may become a Life Member or endow a Memorial Membership on payment of $200.) *Associates*, who receive the Journal only, pay an annual fee of $5. (Life Associate membership, $100.) *Fellows*, who receive all publications of the Society, pay an annual fee of $25. (Life Fellowship, $500.) *Patrons and Founders*: For those who wish to make a still larger contribution to the Society's work, these classes are open at $1000 and $5000, respectively.

It is to be remembered that membership in a scientific society means more than merely a subscription to its publications. The work must be carried on largely through the income from membership fees. Therefore members, old and new, are urged to make their membership class as high as they feel they can. *If a comparatively small proportion of the present members went one class higher, the money available for research would be more than doubled.*

THE JOURNAL of the American Society for Psychical Research is published quarterly by the American Society for Psychical Research, Inc., 880 Fifth Avenue, New York 21, N. Y. "Entered as second-class matter July 15, 1941, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879."

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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Paranormal Phenomena, Nature, and Man

C. J. DUCASSE

The First John William Graham Lecture on Psychic Science[1]

In this first John William Graham Lecture on Psychic Science, it seems most appropriate to aim simply at bringing into the field of view some typical instances of the chief kinds of occurrences called paranormal or psychic rather than to attempt discussing in detail some particular one of the highly interesting but difficult questions to which those occurrences give rise. From ancient times to the present, such happenings have occasionally been reported, but it is only during the last hundred years or so that instances of them have been at all carefully collected and recorded. Because of their extraordinary character, they had until then been and indeed sometimes still are regarded as of supernatural origin and ascribed either to divine intervention, or to the action of good or evil spirits,

[1] This lecture, delivered at Swarthmore College on April 29, 1951, was the first of a projected series of lectures on psychic science, to be known as the John William Graham Lectures.

John William Graham was a leading member and minister of the Religious Society of Friends in England, Principal of Dalton Hall (University of Manchester), Fellow of Woodbrooke, and, during 1925-26, Professor of Quaker Principles and History at Swarthmore College. He was interested in the Society for Psychical Research (London) from the time of its inception, and contributed to its records. Among many discussions of psychical phenomena in his writings, is his presidential address to the Friends Historical Society in 1932, entitled "Psychical Experiences of Quaker Ministers."

or to the practices of witches and sorcerers assumed to possess secret knowledge or special powers conferred on them by the Devil. As we know, many of these unfortunates were imprisoned, tormented, or put to death even in relatively recent times. Today, those among them who were not simply tricksters would be classed under one or another of such headings as hysterics, hypnotics, psychics, sensitives, automatists, or mediums.

I. "Mediums" and "Paranormal" Phenomena

The last of these terms, "mediums," was coined originally to signify that the persons so described are *intermediaries* through whom communication occurs between the living and the spirits of the dead. In present common usage, however, the term is not limited to this meaning, but, according to Webster, denotes any person "supposed to be susceptible to supernatural or supernormal agencies to such an extent as to be able to impart knowledge derived from them or to perform actions impossible without their aid."

Adhering substantially to this broader usage, I propose to say more briefly and even more noncommittally, that a medium is any person in whose presence paranormal phenomena occur and on whose presence their occurrence somehow depends.

By a "paranormal" phenomenon, I shall mean any occurrence whose cause is neither that from which it ordinarily results, nor any other yet known to the natural sciences as capable of causing it. The merely negative character of this definition has a consequence which may be thought a defect but which seems to me rather a virtue. It is that the line which the definition draws between the paranormal on the one hand, and on the other the normal or merely abnormal, will shift with the progress of knowledge. This in turn implies that the paranormal is not supernatural—that is, does not constitute a violation of the laws of nature—but is in itself just as natural and capable of being eventually understood as are those parts of nature whose laws we happen already to have ascertained. Not so long ago, hypnosis, for example, would, under the definition proposed, have had to be called a paranormal phenomenon; whereas, now that its laws and to some extent its nature have come to be fairly well understood, hypnosis would generally be classed only as an abnormal state—that is, as one occurring under conditions different from, but no more supernatural than, those of the ordinary waking state. The term "supernatural" has no place in sciences based on observation, and must therefore be left to such uses as theologians may wish to make of it.

It is to be noted further, that, although the phenomena we have in view are currently called paranormal or psychic more or less

indifferently, these two terms nevertheless are not really equivalent, for the cause of some paranormal phenomenon might not be "psychic," that is, might not be parapsychological, but perhaps instead paraphysiological or paraphysical.

The term "psychic," moreover, is itself currently used in two senses. Sometimes it is meant to refer to occurrences which, although paranormal, nevertheless are processes taking place in the mind of a living person. It is in this sense that extrasensory perceptions—that is, perceptions obtained somehow without use of the sense organs—are termed psychic experiences.

In its other current sense, the adjective "psychic" is applied to certain *objective* phenomena and is meant to signify that their cause consists in some activity of a mind that is neither the normal mind of the medium, nor that of the investigator, nor in most cases that of any other living person. In other words, the phenomena referred to as "psychic" in this sense occur more or less as they would if they were caused or directed by an intelligent but invisible person aware of the investigator's presence, capable of understanding his words, and attempting to make its existence and identity manifest. That such is indeed the cause of these occurrences may turn out to be the case; but of course we must not let ourselves be committed automatically to this conclusion by the fact that the two terms, "psychic" and "paranormal," are currently used more or less interchangeably.

II. General Classification of Paranormal Phenomena

Having now made clear the senses in which we shall use the terms "medium," "paranormal," and "psychic," we must next say a few words as to the main categories of phenomena which appear to be paranormal, and of which circumstantial reports exist.

These phenomena, and the mediums that are somehow instrumental in their occurrence, may be divided into two classes, namely, *physical* and *mental*, each of these in turn having two subclasses. As will appear, the four resulting categories are not as sharply separate as might be wished, and the placing of a given phenomenon under one of them rather than under some other is sometimes a bit arbitrary. Nonetheless, the classification now about to be described is convenient.

The first of its categories is that of phenomena that are *physical* and in addition *extrasomatic* in the sense of external to the bodies of the persons present; for example, paranormal raps on tables, walls, or other things; motion of objects without contact or other normal cause; paranormal sharp decreases in the temperature of a room; or again, strangest of all, materialization, apparently out of

nothing, of human hands or even whole human bodies, or of flowers, plants, or other objects.

The second category is that of *physical* phenomena that are *somatic* in the sense of taking place in or occurring to the body of the medium or of some other person present. Examples would be levitation of the body—that is, the rising of it in the air and floating or moving there unsupported; or again, temporary immunity of the body to fire; or paranormally sudden healing of wounds or diseases; and so on.

The phenomena classed as *mental,* on the other hand, consist in a person's acquisition or communication of knowledge that he did not obtain in any of the normal ways. Here again, we may distinguish two subclasses.

One of them comprises the various forms of *extrasensory perception,* whether occurring spontaneously or under laboratory conditions. Examples would be *Precognition,* that is, veridical perception of events that have not yet occurred; *Telepathy,* that is, communication between minds independently of the channels of sense and irrespective of distance; *Clairvoyance,* that is, perception of objective events or things that are not at the time accessible to observation by the organs of sense.

The fourth category comprises communications received in one manner or another through the instrumentality of a medium, and containing information which turns out to be veridical but which was not obtained by the medium in any of the normal ways. Indeed, in some cases the information imparted appears not to be possessed at the time by any living person, or to be on record anywhere. The communications usually purport to come from spirits of persons that have died, who claim to be occupying temporarily the organism of the entranced medium, or to be causing raps, or motions of objects, which, according to some arranged code, answer questions and spell sentences.

The varieties of phenomena I have mentioned under each of the four headings are but a few of those on record; and the brief characterizations I have given of the nature of some of them are not to be taken as firm definitions but only as rough *prima facie* descriptions. Indeed, even the very names, such as "Telepathy," "Clairvoyance," "Hyperaesthesia," by which we refer to the phenomena may, if we are not wary, commit us automatically to acceptance from the start of what in fact may be but one of several possible theoretical explanations of the phenomena concerned. This has become very evident in recent years in connection with attempts to devise tests that would decide whether a given instance of extrasensory perception comes under the category of telepathy, or of clairvoyance, or of precognition. As Whewell pointed out long ago in his *Novum*

Organon Renovatum, the name originally given to certain observed facts often connotes what actually is but a surmised and sometimes wrong interpretation of them. He gives as an instance the word "melancholia," in which is etymologically imbedded the early but erroneous theory that the mental condition so named is caused by black bile. Terminologies truly scientific are similarly loaded with theory, but with theory that has been carefully tested. Hence one cannot have a really scientific terminology at the start in a new field of inquiry. Rather, it is the kind of terminology one hopes to achieve in the end—constructing and revising it gradually in the light of one's growing understanding of the facts one observes.

III. Is Any Phenomenon Really Paranormal?

The descriptions given up to this point of some of the chief varieties of reported paranormal phenomena were only general and abstract, and, because of this, they invite doubt as to whether any reported instances of the phenomena mentioned were really paranormal.

We all know well that emotion, excitement, bias, dishonesty, incompetence to discriminate, and other factors, may invalidate the testimony of a witness. We know also that there are such things as illusions of perception and of memory, hallucinations, malobservations, and misconstructions of one's observations; and that ourselves, like other persons, are not immune to these sources of error. May it not be, then, that all reports and even all personal observations of supposedly paranormal phenomena represent nothing but either frauds or honest errors of one or another of those kinds?

This hypothesis, which if correct would free us from the painful necessity of revising our conceptions of what is and is not possible in Nature, is especially tempting to intellectual conservatism because the conditions under which the phenomena concerned are witnessed are often such as to make accurate observation difficult, and therefore such as to make easily possible various forms of trickery similar to those employed by conjurers or mind-readers on the stage. These can be very ingenious, and one may come to believe that there are no limits to the possibility of deception.

But notwithstanding all these inducements to radical skepticism, there can ultimately be no doubt that, under ordinarily favorable conditions, or when special precautions called for by unfavorable conditions are taken, human beings that are intelligent, alert, and experienced *can* perceive correctly and report accurately the occurrences they witness. Indeed, were it not so, no errors or deceptions could ever have been detected; for an error or deception can have become known to be such only because one was able somehow to

ascertain what really were the facts. If there were no limits to what illusion or trickery can cause us to perceive, then we would be sure of nothing whatever—not even that we are at this moment assembled in this room and that these words are now being spoken.

Many of the investigators of paranormal phenomena have been perfectly familiar with the various possible sources of error of perception, of memory, and of testimony; and familiar also, from extensive first-hand experience, with the tricks of fraudulent mediums. Indeed, some of the investigators have themselves been able conjurers, who had first assumed that all supposedly paranormal phenomena were really spurious. These qualifications on their part entail that the conclusions they eventually reached, that some of the phenomena they observed were truly paranormal, cannot be casually dismissed but deserve serious attention.

IV. Some Concrete Instances of Paranormal Physical Phenomena

Let us, however, now turn from general remarks and consider a few of the concrete instances of paranormal occurrences on record.

Among the physical phenomena, hardly any is more difficult to credit than that of levitation. Yet, it has often been reported of saints and mystics. To take first a picturesque illustration of it from such quarters, I shall cite the case of St. Joseph of Copertino, a Franciscan friar who lived through the first half of the seventeenth century. That he was frequently levitated was attested by numerous witnesses, among them distinguished travellers and other persons of eminence, who had heard the reports and had been curious to see for themselves.

In a recent book which quotes from the documents of the period, we read, for example, that on one occasion a priest, Antonio Chiarello, who was walking with Joseph in the garden, "remarked how beautiful was the heaven which God had made. Thereupon Joseph, as if these words were an invitation to him from above, uttered a shriek, sprang from the ground and flew into the air, only coming to rest on the top of an olive tree where he remained in a kneeling position for half an hour. . . . It appears that in this case Joseph came to his senses whilst still on the tree, as the Rev. Antonio had to go to fetch a ladder to get him down."[2]

Again, we read that once, at a festival in the Church of Santa Chiara in Copertino, "Joseph was present, and was on his knees in a corner of the church, when the words *Veni Sponsa Cristi* were being intoned. Giving his accustomed cry, he ran towards the con-

[2] E. J. Dingwall, *Some Human Oddities*, Home and Van Thal, London, 1947, pp. 16-17.

vent's father confessor . . . who was attending the service and, seizing him, grasped him by the hand and . . . 'in a joyous rapture began to whirl round and round just as David did before the Ark of the Lord. Finally both rose into the air in an ecstasy, the one borne aloft by Joseph and the other by God Himself, . . . the one being beside himself with fear but the other with sanctity.' "[3]

Now I venture to say that my hearers, like myself, find the two reports just quoted hard indeed to believe, for the fact reported departs too radically from our personal experience of the way in which bodies behave. Moreover, we all know that, under the influence of religious emotion and of devotion to religious beliefs, human beings become unreliable observers, easy prey to suggestion, or even prone to stretch the truth if need be for the greater glory of God. We know also that love of the marvellous is strong in many persons and predisposes them to believe anything that caters to it. Hence, rather than to believe Joseph was actually levitated, it is much easier for us to assume that delusion or deception is the true explanation of the two reports just quoted.

It will be recalled that the philosopher David Hume proposed to dispose *a priori* in this way of all reports of paranormal events.[4] Intellectual conservatism is a human trait understandably and in general quite properly stronger and even more widespread than is love of the marvellous. The idea of the familiar and well understood caters to one's habits of thought and to one's pride of knowledge, and gives one a pleasing sense of control over events. Moreover, as Charles Peirce has pointed out,[5] belief and disbelief are comfortable and therefore stable states of mind; whereas doubt—here the suspicion that we may be ignorant of important possibilities—is highly disturbing. The discomfort of it predisposes us to reject without adequate examination of its merits any idea that would demand radical revisions of our horizons of belief and disbelief.

Nevertheless, and however upsetting this may be, there is for the fact that levitation sometimes occurs testimony far stronger than any we have in the case of St. Joseph of Copertino—testimony which cannot be dismissed on the ground of religious bias, or of love of the marvellous, or of suggestibility, or of inadequate opportunity to observe; testimony, indeed, which is about as strong as human testimony ever gets. I have in mind particularly, although far from uniquely, the testimony of the distinguished chemist and physicist, Sir William Crookes, who for several years in the early 1870's

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[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 17-18.

[4] *An Inquiry concerning Human Understanding*, 1748, Sec. 10, "Of Miracles."

[5] In his essay entitled "The Fixation of Belief" reprinted in *Chance, Love and Logic*, ed. by Morris Cohen, Harcourt Brace, New York, 1923.

observed with great care the variety of extraordinary phenomena, including levitations, which occurred in the presence of the famous medium D. D. Home. The facts Crookes witnessed were reported by him in several articles in the *Quarterly Journal of Science;* and when some 30 years later he included some reference to them in his presidential address to the British Association, he stated that he had nothing to retract and that he might indeed add much to what he had published earlier. The extract I am about to quote refers only to levitation.

He prefaces his account of it and of other phenomena by the following statement:

> "My readers will remember that, with the exception of cases specially mentioned, the occurrences have taken place *in my own house, in the light, and with only private friends present* besides the medium."

Then he writes as follows concerning levitation:

> "On one occasion I witnessed a chair, with a lady sitting on it, rise several inches from the ground. On another occasion, to avoid the suspicion of this being in some way performed by herself, the lady knelt on the chair in such manner that its four feet were visible to us. It then rose about three inches, remained suspended for about ten seconds, and then slowly descended. At another time two children, on separate occasions, rose from the floor with their chairs, in full daylight, under (to me) most satisfactory conditions; for I was kneeling and keeping close watch upon the feet of the chair, and observing that no one might touch them.
>
> "The most striking cases of levitation which I have witnessed have been with Mr. Home. On three separate occasions I have seen him raised completely from the floor of the room. Once sitting in an easy chair, once kneeling on his chair, and once standing up. On each occasion I had full opportunity of watching the occurrence as it was taking place.
>
> "There are at least a hundred recorded instances of Mr. Home's rising from the ground, in the presence of as many separate persons, and I have heard from the lips of the three witnesses to the most striking occurrence of this kind—the Earl of Dunraven, Lord Lindsay, and Captain C. Wynne—their own most minute accounts of what took place. To reject the recorded evidence on this subject is to reject all human testimony whatever; for no fact in sacred or profane history is supported by a stronger array of proofs.
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> "The accumulated testimony establishing Mr. Home's levitations is overwhelming."[6]

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[6] *Quarterly Journal of Science*, January, 1874.

Now, when in the past I have had occasion to quote these words of Sir William Crookes as to the reality of levitation, the question often asked has been "But do you really believe it?" This question, however, is quite irrelevant since any answer I might make would be merely autobiographical. The relevant question is only whether any person that owns allegiance to the recognized criteria of dependable evidence has any rational right *not* to believe Crookes' report. For note that his report is detailed and specific; that it states the conditions of observation, and that these were good; that the fact reported, namely, motion of a physical object, is of a kind Crookes was perfectly competent to observe; that he and others observed it not once but repeatedly; that the forces known to science, by which physical objects can be lifted, were familiar to him and were not being employed, since the events reported took place in his own dining room under conditions provided by him, which afforded no opportunity for the slender steel wires or other apparatus, and the confederates, by means of which, on the stage, it would be possible to simulate levitation; and finally that the personal honesty, intelligence, and scientific responsibility of Crookes are beyond question.

In the face of this, I submit that if, as indeed is the case, I still find psychological difficulty in believing that the levitations reported occurred, then there is for me only to confess that my psychological reluctance to follow where the evidence leads means that I am not as rational as I should be.

The hypothesis of collective hallucination, sometimes advanced to explain away the testimony of Crookes, of the friends who were with him in the room, and of all the other groups that reported having witnessed levitations or other equally strange occurrences in the presence of D. D. Home, is untenable for at least two reasons. One is that although collective hallucinations can be produced under hypnosis, the conditions under which this is alone possible are known and are radically different from those which existed in the gathering of Crookes and his family and friends at home. More specifically, no way is yet known to hypnotize together half a dozen persons that have not been hypnotized before and that are all the time carrying on ordinary conversation among themselves and with the supposed hypnotist. Collective hypnotic hallucination under *those* circumstances is pure myth invented *ad hoc*.

The other and equally decisive reason, which invalidates the hypothesis of hallucination, is that Crookes and others found it possible to obtain photographic or other objective records of various paranormal physical phenomena.

I may add that the incapacity of the rational part of my mind to dismiss lightly Crookes' statement that he repeatedly observed levita-

tions is made the greater by the fact that no reason is known to regard levitation as impossible. What we know is only that, under the circumstances which existed in Crookes' dining room, it is not possible to cause levitation of a human body by magnetic or electrical force, nor by any of the other forces opposable to gravity that are known to physicists at present. As David Hume has emphasized, experience and only experience can reveal to us what is possible, and under what conditions.

Remarks similar to those just made apply to certain other paranormal physical phenomena, of which, for lack of time, I can only cite briefly one or two examples.

One of them concerns the movement of a stool without contact and was related to me by one of the members of the Committee of the Society for Psychical Research which in 1908 investigated the famous medium Eusapia Palladino in Naples. He stated that on one occasion, she had been holding her hand some distance above a small stool, and that, as she moved her hand about, the stool on the floor followed the motions of the hand. Then she turned to him and said, "Now *you* do it," and she placed her hand on his shoulder. Whereupon, as he waved *his* hand above the stool, the stool followed the motions of it as before it had followed those of hers. I may add that this man, who is an experienced conjurer and is familiar with all the tricks of fraudulent mediums, states that his Naples séances with Palladino were "the *first* case of genuine physical mediumship [he] had ever seen during ten years' continuous investigation."[7]

Sir William Crookes employed the name "Psychic Force" for the unknown agency operative in the production of paranormal physical phenomena. Today, the term used would more commonly be "Psychokinetic Energy." That such a force exists, and that many of us probably possess it, although only in very feeble degree, seems to be the upshot of the many years of patient experiments initiated by Professor J. B. Rhine at Duke University, and now carried on there and in other laboratories. I am referring in particular to experiments in the casting of dice to test the possibility of psychokinesis, that is, the possibility of influencing directly by an act of will the behavior of a physical object. What these experiments appear to have established is that, in some persons, volition that the dice shall turn up a specified number is capable of bringing about that, in the long run, that number will turn up significantly more often than pure chance would account for. The influence of the volition is slight, however, and statistical treatment of the recorded results of a large number of throws is necessary to reveal it. One feature of the results, which

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[7] Hereward Carrington, *Eusapia Palladino and her Phenomena*, B. W. Dodge Co., New York, 1909, pp. IX, X.

is perhaps the most interesting because most evidential of the reality of the volition's influence, is that in series of experiments carried on in sets of three consecutive runs of 24 single-die-readings (for example, 12 throws of two dice), the first run of each set generally shows a definitely higher number of hits above chance than does the second run or the third; and this irrespective of whether the dice are thrown by hand, or from a cup, or by a wholly mechanical apparatus.[8] This suggests that the efficacy of the experimenter's volition depends somehow on his freshness or on the keenness of his interest, since this ordinarily would be greatest at first and would taper down as the experiment was prolonged.

The idea that motion of material objects can be caused, or their behavior or state affected, directly by the volitions of a mind — that is, without intervention of the muscular activity of a living body — is startling indeed at first sight, and just as much so if the mind concerned is supposed to be that of a discarnate spirit as if it is that of a living person. But it is well to note that if, as Descartes believed, and as I have argued at length elsewhere, the relation between the mind and the body of man is one of causal interaction, then causation of some molecular changes in the tissues of the brain directly by some mental events, such as volitions, is something occurring every time we perform a voluntary act, and constitutes an instance of psychokinesis just as truly as where dice, instead of molecules in the brain, are the physical objects directly affected by the volition.

It may be objected that such action is incomprehensible in both cases equally. But this objection is based on neglect of the fact that to ask *how* one event causes another is to ask what intermediary causal steps connect the two; and therefore that, when *direct* causation is concerned, instead of causation through intermediaries, the question as to *how* the one event causes the other automatically loses the only meaning it ever has.

V. Some Concrete Instances of Extrasensory Perception

From paranormal physical phenomena, we may now pass to those classified as mental and say a few words first as to the ones grouped nowadays under the heading of Extrasensory Perception — that is, chiefly telepathy, clairvoyance, and precognition. These, like psychokinesis, have been studied at Duke University and elsewhere by various experimental methods, and notably by that of guessing, under conditions excluding use of the senses, the designs printed on cards.

Statistical treatment of the records of long series of such guesses has pretty definitely established that the proportion of successes

[8] J. B. Rhine, *The Reach of the Mind*, William Sloane Associates, Inc., New York, 1947, p. 101, and Chs. 6 and 7, passim.

scored by certain individuals under psychologically favorable circumstances greatly exceeds what chance would account for. This fact, of course, is much less dramatic than are some of the spontaneous cases of clairvoyance, telepathy, or precognition. It does not strike the popular imagination as forcibly. But its essential meaning is exactly the same, and its scientific importance is in some ways greater, because the method used makes these phenomena to some extent repeatable at will in the laboratory. This opens a way to discovery of some of their laws, since it then becomes possible to vary, one at a time, certain of the conditions under which they occur and to note how the results are affected thereby.

But discovery of the factors, such as fatigue or freshness, indifference or interest, narcotics or stimulants, etc., which affect the percentage of successes scored by a person in such experiments, does not automatically explain how these paranormal perceptions are possible at all either in the spontaneous or the experimental instances.

That a great deal remains to be explained even if one has discovered the psychological, physiological, or physical factors favorable or unfavorable to veridical extrasensory perception becomes evident if one considers in particular what is perhaps the most puzzling of the varieties of such perception, namely, Precognition. For note well that "precognition," as the word is used here, means the veridical *perception* of events that have not yet occurred, not the *prediction* of them based on facts and laws known, nor the *preordination* of them by present resolve to cause them to occur.

As an illustration, I shall cite a case of spontaneous precognition which, because it is well attested and is of a striking character, has frequently been mentioned in discussions of this type of paranormal phenomenon. It was investigated and originally reported by the late F. W. H. Myers in the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research.[9] The person concerned was Mrs. Atlay, wife of the Bishop of Hereford. She wrote to Myers, describing the incident as follows:

> "I dreamt that the Bishop being from home, we were unable to have family prayers as usual in the chapel, but that I read them in the large hall of the Palace, out of which, on one side, a door opens into the dining room. In my dream, prayers being ended, I left the hall, opened the dining room door, and there saw, to my horror, standing between the table and the sideboard, an enormous pig. The dream was very vivid and amused me much. The Bishop being from home, when dressed I went down into the hall to read prayers. The servants had not come in, so I told my governess and children, who were already there, about my dream, which amused them as much as it had done me. The servants came in and I read prayers, after which the

[9] Vol. XI, 1895, pp. 487-8.

> party dispersed. I opened the dining room door, where, to my amazement, stood the pig in the very spot in which I had seen him in my dream."

The governess added her own written statement that Mrs. Atlay had related the dream when she came into the hall before prayers; and inquiries by Myers disclosed that the pig escaped from its sty only while prayers were being read. Its escape was made possible by the fact that the gardener, who was then cleaning the sty, had left the gate imperfectly closed; and its entry into the Palace, by the fact that the servants had left the doors open.

Of course, the veridicality of some dreams of external events as yet future is usually explicable simply as coincidence, because the events dreamed—such perhaps as the unexpected arrival of some friend—are of frequent occurrence anyway. But the presence of a large pig between the table and sideboard of the dining room of an episcopal palace immediately after morning prayers is altogether in another category. It is not only a highly specific sort of event, but is one so out of the ordinary as to be probably unique in the history of the earth. Coincidence is therefore not a plausible explanation, especially if we keep in mind both the numerousness of equally extraordinary but well-attested cases of veridical precognition on record, and also the fact that experiments on card-guessing have pretty well proved that veridical guessing of the next card that will be drawn at random from a pack does, with certain individuals, occur with a frequency significantly higher in the long run than pure chance would account for.

But that it should be possible at all to perceive in its full particularity—that is, to *see*, not infer or preordain—an event that has not yet occurred seems absolutely paradoxical. It clashes radically with our normal assumption that the time at which one witnesses an event cannot possibly be earlier than the time at which the event actually occurs. Yet, in cases of precognition such as that just cited, this is precisely what we have. It would seem, then, that our notions of the nature of time, or of the relation in time between events and the possibility of observing them, are somewhat provincial after all and need to be revised at the root in some way. However satisfactory a physical or philosophical theory of the nature of time may be as regards ordinary events, it cannot claim ultimate validity if it fails to explain how precognition, which sometimes occurs, is possible.

VI. Communications by Mediums, Purportedly from Spirits of the Dead

I now turn at the last to the type of paranormal phenomenon which, because of its *prima facie* implications as regards the nature

of man and the destiny of the individual, is perhaps the most interesting of all. It is that of mediumistic communications purporting to emanate from surviving spirits of the dead. That this is indeed their origin is of course not to be assumed without examination of the alternative possible explanations, but it is what the communications themselves assert in most cases.

The externally observable facts in this phenomenon are that a medium, sometimes in trance, sometimes in the waking state, gives out certain statements automatically; that is, not consciously and purposively as in ordinary expression. Such mediums are therefore often called *automatists*. The statements may be spelled out letter by letter—a pointer, on which the medium's hand rests, moving automatically to the appropriate letters printed on a chart. Or the letters may be indicated in some other way, as by paranormal raps, or by movements of a table when the alphabet is recited and the proper letter reached. Or again, the communications may be written automatically by the medium's hand; or spoken either by the vocal organs of the medium in trance, or, in some mysterious way, independently of those organs. But, whichever one of these various means is used, the appearances are that the medium's own intelligence and will are for the time being in abeyance, and that a quite different personality assumes control of the medium's organs of expression. The handwriting or the voice, and the locutions, the tricks of speech, and the stock of information manifested, are notably different from those of the medium in the normal state. Indeed, they are often typical instead of some friend or relative of the person who is sitting with the medium—usually, of a friend or relative that has died, but sometimes of one still living.

The process of communication sometimes appears to be direct, but more often indirect. In the latter case, the intelligence directly in command of the medium purports to be that of some discarnate person more expert than others at the difficult task of using the medium's organs of expression. This intelligence, which generally remains the same at many sittings, is known as the medium's "control," and appears to function in two ways. Sometimes it expresses through the medium's organs statements which it purports to hear being made by the sitter's discarnate friend or relative. At other times, when the relative or friend seems to be directly in possession of the medium's organs, the "control" apparently functions as helper and supervisor of the communicator's attempt to express himself through those organs; for example, by preventing other discarnate spirits that also desire to use the medium from interfering with the communication going on. It is as if the medium were a telephone line with the sitter at one end, and at the other a discarnate switch-

board operator that either repeats into the telephone messages dictated by some discarnate person standing there, or else lets the latter use the telephone directly, and prevents interference by others who also desire to use the line.

The communications vary widely in form and content. Some are clear and others vague; some are coherent and others more or less incoherent. It is as if some other spirit that is waiting to use the line managed now and then to speak into the transmitter, or as if bits of conversation between the switchboard operator and some waiting spirit were being overheard. But, in general, the communications consist of, or include, statements apparently designed to establish the identity of the communicating personality and thus to show that it has survived death.

Only a direct examination of the verbatim reports of the communications can give an idea of how strongly their form often suggests the telephone situation just described. Unfortunately, for lack of time, none of these verbatim reports can be introduced here. But as regards the content of the communications and the sort of evidence it provides as to the identity of the communicator, it is possible to give briefly some concrete illustrations.

The medium of whom alone I shall speak for this purpose is Mrs. Piper of Boston, who died a few months ago at an advanced age, and who was investigated by men of science perhaps for more years, and more systematically and minutely, than any other mental medium. The first of them to study her was Professor William James of Harvard. He published a first report about her in 1886;[10] and, in 1887, Dr. Richard Hodgson, who was secretary of the American Society for Psychical Research and was an experienced and highly critical investigator, undertook and carried on for eighteen years an intensive study of her mediumship. In the course of time, she made three trips to England, where she was studied by Sir Oliver Lodge, F. W. H. Myers, Henry Sidgwick, and other distinguished investigators. Later, she gave occasional sittings until about 1927.

Professor James H. Hyslop, of Columbia University, was one of the many persons who had sittings with Mrs. Piper during the years in which Dr. Hodgson was supervising the exercise of her mediumship. In 1901 Professor Hyslop published a long and admirably lucid, circumspect, and detailed report of his sittings with her.[11] For lack of time, reference will be made only to these, and in them only to the communications which purported to establish the identity

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[10] William James, "Report of the Committee on Mediumistic Phenomena," *Proc.* A.S.P.R., Vol. 1, No. 2, 1886, pp. 102-106.

[11] James H. Hyslop, "A Further Record of Observations of Certain Trance Phenomena," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XVI, 1901, pp. 1-649.

and survival of Professor Hyslop's father. The father, it should be mentioned, had been in no way a public character but had lived a very ordinary and retired life on his farm.

A word must be said first of all as to the physical manner in which the communications were being delivered by Mrs. Piper at that period of her mediumship. She sat in a chair before a table on which were two pillows. After a few minutes she would go into a trance and lean forward. Her left hand, palm upwards, was then placed on the pillow, her right cheek resting on the palm, so that she was facing left. Her right arm was then placed on another table to the right, on which there was a writing pad. A pencil was then put in her hand, which then began to write.

The communications so received purported to come from several of Professor Hyslop's dead relatives, and in particular from his father. Their content included a statement of Professor Hyslop's name, James; of his father's name, and of the names of three others of his father's children. Also, references to a number of particular conversations the father had had with Professor Hyslop, and to many special incidents and facts, and to family matters. Examples would be that the father had trouble with his left eye, that he had a mark behind the ear, that he used to wear a thin coat or dressing gown mornings and that he once wore a black skull cap at night, that he used to have one round and one square bottle on his desk and carried a brown-handled penknife with which he used to pare his nails, that he had a horse called Tom, that he used to write with quill pens which he trimmed himself; and so on. A number of these facts were unknown to Professor Hyslop, but were found to be true after inquiry. The communications also contained favorite pieces of advice, which the father had been in the habit of uttering, and these worded in ways characteristic of his modes of speech.

The communications which purported to come from other dead relatives, and indeed those given by Mrs. Piper to scores and scores of other sitters over the years, were often similarly of facts or incidents too trivial to have become matters of public knowledge, or indeed to have been ascertainable by a stranger without elaborate inquiries, if at all. Facts of this kind are therefore all the more significant as *prima facie* evidences of identity. It is interesting to note in this connection that if one had a brother in another city, with whom one was able to communicate only through a third party, and if the brother doubted the identity of the sender of the messages, then trivial and intimate facts such as those cited—some of them preferably known only to one's brother and oneself— would be the very kind one would naturally mention to establish one's identity.

The question now arises, however, whether the imparting of such facts by a medium is explicable on some other hypothesis than that

of communication with the dead. So far as I know, only three other explanations—one normal and the other two paranormal—have ever been advanced.

The first is, of course, that the medium obtained antecedently in some perfectly normal manner the information communicated. One of the reasons why I chose Mrs. Piper's mediumship as example is that in her case this explanation is completely ruled out by the rigorous and elaborate precautions which were taken to exclude that possibility. For one thing, Dr. Hodgson had both Mrs. Piper and her husband watched for weeks by detectives, to find out whether they went about making inquiries concerning the relatives and family history of persons they might have expected to come for sittings. Nothing in the slightest degree suspicious was ever found. Moreover, sitters were always introduced by Dr. Hodgson under assumed names. Sometimes, they did not come into the room until after Mrs. Piper was in trance, and then remained behind her where she could not have seen them even if her eyes had been open. On her first trip to England, Mrs. Piper stayed in the houses of Sidgwick, Myers, or Lodge, or in lodgings selected by them. The few letters she received were examined and most of them read, with her permission, by Sidgwick, Myers, or Lodge. Many of the facts she gave out could not have been learned even by a skilled detective; and to learn such others as could have been so learned would have required a vast expenditure of time and money, which Mrs. Piper did not have. William James summed up the case against the fraud explanation in the statement that "not only has there not been one single suspicious circumstance remarked" during the many years in which she and her mode of life were under close observation, "but not one suggestion has ever been made from any quarter which might tend to explain how the medium, living the apparent life she leads, could possibly collect information about so many sitters by natural means." Thus, because we do not merely believe but positively know that the information she gave was not obtained by her in any of the normal manners, there is in her case no escape from the fact that it had some paranormal source.

The two paranormal explanations which have been advanced as alternative to the survival hypothesis are, one of them, that in the trance condition Mrs. Piper possesses clairvoyant powers that somehow enable her to observe directly and in detail the past acts and incidents of the life on earth of a person now dead; and the other, that she has in trance telepathic powers which obtain the information she gives from the minds of persons who happen to have it, even if it is at the time buried in their subconsciousness, and no matter whether such persons be at the time with Mrs. Piper or anywhere else on earth. In either case, the paranormal powers postulated are

remarkable enough; but to explain the form of the communications, we have to suppose in addition that the spirits purportedly communicating are in reality dissociated secondary personalities of Mrs. Piper's, which, on the basis of the information clairvoyantly or telepathically obtained, then impersonate, whether automatically or deliberately but often with notable verisimilitude, the dead friend or relative of the sitter.

Although the hypnotic trance is apparently not the same as the mediumistic, the hypothesis of such impersonation receives some support from what is known of the remarkable histrionic capacities of persons under hypnosis. The hypnotized subject enacts with surprising convincingness the role of any character which, as a result of suggestion, he imagines himself to be. This would account for the fact that, in some instances, communications have been received from characters out of fiction, such as Adam Bede; and that, on one occasion, Professor G. Stanley Hall, had, through Mrs. Piper, communications from a girl, Bessie Beals, who was a purely fictitious niece of his invented by him for the purpose of the experiment. Again, there are cases on record where the communications have asserted things that were in fact false, but that were believed to be true by the sitter or by some living third person. This, and a good deal of other evidence, shows that the trance personality of the medium does possess extensive telepathic and clairvoyant powers, and that these do, in some cases at least, play a part in the communications. It must not be forgotten that, whatever may be the correct explanation of the mediumistic communications, the explanation must account for such spurious communicators as just mentioned, no less than for those where, as in the case of Professor Hyslop's father and many others, the communicator gives impressive evidence of his identity. In my opinion, we are not so much faced by a choice between the survival hypothesis and the telepathy hypothesis, as probably by the task of combining them in some way that will do full justice both to the evidence for, and to the difficulties of, each of them.

The case for the telepathy hypothesis and against survival has been strongly presented by, for instance, Professor E. R. Dodds.[12] On the other hand, Professor Hyslop, after considering in detail the content and form of the communications he obtained, declared that, whatever supernormal powers one may be pleased to attribute to Mrs. Piper's secondary personalities, it would be difficult to make him believe that they could have thus completely reconstituted the mental personality of his dead relatives. To admit it, he stated, "would involve me in too many improbabilities. I prefer to believe that I have been talking to my dead relatives in person; it is simpler."

[12] *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XLII, 1934, 147-172.

When one reads, not mere summaries or samples of the evidence such as I have given, but the original full reports of the sittings, with all the detail of the conversation between the sitter and the communicators and between one communicator and another, one realizes why the impersonation hypothesis seems in some cases so very implausible in the concrete. Others besides Professor Hyslop have felt this. Some of the keenest-minded and best informed persons, who approached these phenomena with complete initial skepticism and studied them over many years in the most acutely critical spirit, eventually came to the conclusion that, in some of the cases at least, only the survival hypothesis remained plausible. Among such persons may be mentioned Alfred Russel Wallace, Sir William Crookes, Cesar Lombroso, Camille Flammarion, Sir Oliver Lodge, F. W. H. Myers, Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, and Dr. Richard Hodgson, to name only a few of the most eminent.

Professor Hyslop believed that the general reluctance of scientists to accept the survival hypothesis is not due to any theoretical difficulty in it not matched and more than matched by those of the telepathy hypothesis, but rather to a consciousness of—in his own words—"the tremendous consequences, philosophical, moral, religious, and political, that must follow anything like scientific proof of a future life." It is these consequences, he says, which "make it necessary that we should not be fooled in so important a matter as this."[13]

Many persons, however, who have been educated in the natural sciences, sincerely believe that the possibility of survival is definitely ruled out by a variety of well-established facts, which appear to show that mind or consciousness is wholly dependent on the presence of a functioning nervous system.[14] To discuss this contention with the care needed for disentangling what, in it, is known fact from what is but one among other possible interpretations of the known facts, is a task far too lengthy to undertake here.[15] I can say only that the particular interpretation of the known facts, on which is based the contention that survival is impossible, is itself tacitly based on a certain metaphysical assumption which is quite arbitrary and which automatically begs the whole question.

It can be shown, I believe, that the supposition that individual conscious life continues in some form after death is not inconsistent

[13] Hyslop, *op. cit.*, p. 289.

[14] One of the best presentations of the case against the possibility of survival is the book *The Illusion of Immortality*, by Corliss Lamont, Philosophical Library, New York, 1950.

[15] I addressed myself to it in a lecture "Is a Life after Death Possible?" delivered at the University of California as the 1947 Foerster Lecture on the Immortality of the Soul (Univ. of Calif. Press, 1948, 30 pp.); and, at greater length, and more technically in Parts III and IV of a recent work, *Nature, Mind, and Death* (Open Court Pub. Co., La Salle, 1951).

with anything that can be said to have been really established either by the natural sciences or by philosophy. And further, as we have just seen, there is a certain amount of empirical evidence—which some of the persons familiar with it would insist is abundant and clear enough to be demonstrative—that the individual's mind does survive death and that it occasionally manages to communicate with the living.

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We have now considered various kinds of paranormal phenomena for the genuineness of which there exists either definite proof or very strong evidence. The rarity of occurrence of these phenomena does not in any way diminish their theoretical importance, nor the possibility that they may some time acquire practical importance also, if we manage finally to understand and control the as yet hidden processes of which they are manifestations. It is well in this connection to remember that, in a number of instances in the past, the discovering of new horizons of knowledge, as distinguished from the accumulating of more knowledge within familiar horizons, has been due to some singular fact, which had attracted little attention but could not be denied, and which stubbornly resisted explanation in terms of the theories accepted by science at the time. The facts we have considered appear to fall in this category. They indicate that the universe has another dimension, besides the material dimension which the natural sciences have explored with so much skill and success.

The facts cited also show that certain extraordinary faculties, which transcend the limitations ordinarily imposed on us by time and distance, and which at present are perhaps no less rare than is genius, are nevertheless among the potentialities of man.

And lastly, some of the facts we have considered suggest that the belief in a life after death, which so many persons have found no particular difficulty in accepting as an article of religious faith, may well be capable of empirical proof.

That the occurrence of paranormal phenomena does appear to have such implication is, I submit, sufficient reason to give them far more attention and study than they have commonly received in the past. It cannot be too much emphasized that, in the presence of novel facts, the truly scientific attitude is neither the will to believe nor the will to disbelieve, but the will to investigate.

Hypnosis and Psychic Phenomena

HEREWARD CARRINGTON

It is now some time since hypnotism and hypnotic phenomena have been dealt with in our Society's publications. Perhaps this has been due, in large part, to the fact that hypnotism is now so well understood (relatively) and has passed into the therapeutic field so definitely that experimental work in the psychological domain has been neglected, and it is no longer regarded as a fit subject for "psychical research," in the sense that it falls within the realm of the "supernormal." Whether this attitude is the correct one must now be considered.

The ultra-modern view, if I may so express it, is perhaps well stated in Andrew Salter's little book, *What is Hypnosis?* Here we read:

> "Hypnosis involves nothing but a conditioning process. Other factors being equal, intelligence facilitates it, and the 'trance' is nothing but a pattern of specific conditionings."[1]

This reminds one, surely, of behavioristic psychology which ended on the same note, attempting to eliminate consciousness altogether—reducing man to a complex system of "conditioned reflexes." This school, however, has had its day, and is now no longer accepted by leading psychologists. Its purview was too narrow, and it failed to include many accredited phenomena of the mental life. If the study of hypnosis be limited to a certain narrow field, based largely upon abnormal cases and work in therapeutics, such a conclusion might perhaps be justified; but if other well-attested phenomena associated with hypnosis be taken into consideration, it is doubtful if such is the case. One is reminded of Charcot's contention that hypnosis and hysteria were definitely connected—until it was pointed out that he worked almost exclusively with hysterical subjects, and consequently his conclusions were invalid, though natural enough under the circumstances. When others experimented with normal subjects, this was shown not to be the case, and no such connection was found to exist. Any definition of hypnosis based upon a certain set of facts, while ignoring other facts, is bound to be erroneous; and Salter's definition, and others akin to it, certainly ignores psychological phenomena which seem to be well verified—quite aside from psychic phenomena, many of which have in the past been associated with this state.

[1] Andrew Salter, *What is Hypnosis?* Richard R. Smith, New York, 1944, p. 17.

My attention was originally drawn to this problem by the fact that, in a number of instances which came under my observation, automatic writing (often veridical), psychic phenomena of various categories, and "mediumship" were seemingly developed under the influence of hypnotism. Now mediumship is not mere automatism, nor can clairvoyance be accounted for by a system of conditioned reflexes. Something more is involved; some "door" seems to have been opened which facilitates or renders possible these higher phenomena. Nor is it necessary that my word alone should be taken in proof of this: the early records of "mesmerism" are filled with accounts of such experiments, many of them being most carefully conducted. It was indeed the relative frequency of such cases which forced both Gurney and Myers to contend that there might be, after all, marked inner differences between the hypnotic and the "mesmeric" state; that there might be more than a grain of truth in the "fluidic" theory, and that the interior psychic states were in fact dissimilar, though often dove-tailing one into the other. My own experiences with Eusapia Palladino fully convinced me of the actuality of some such "fluid," quite aside from any mesmeric phenomena. And if such a "fluid" is actual, and is operative in the production of telekinesis and other physical phenomena, why should it not also exert an influence upon living bodies whose life-response must *a priori* be more closely associated with it than with so-called inanimate matter? It surely involves no stretch of the imagination to believe that such may well be the case; that the mechanism involved is indeed dissimilar; and if this be so, the resultant states may be dissimilar also—in this agreeing with the views of many of the earlier "mesmeric" operators as well as with the subjective impressions of the subjects themselves.

However, I do not wish to labor this point unduly—important as I believe it to be. I wish to call attention to another aspect of this problem which seems to have been overlooked by most writers on hypnosis. Aside from the conscious mind—which is eliminated as effectually as possible in hypnotic practice—the only "mind" dealt with and discussed by most writers is the subconscious mind, the powers of which are thought to be responsible for the results obtained. But what sort of results? The inhibition of pain, curative action in certain diseases, relaxation, the cure of certain habits, the appreciation of time, and so forth; in short, the very things which a subconscious mind might well be expected to do when subjected to forcible suggestions. So far, so good. But what about the "higher aspects" which Gurney and Myers wrote of in their essay, "Some Higher Aspects of Mesmerism"?[2] What of the cases of clairvoyance

[2] *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. III, 1885, pp. 401-423.

and telepathy which they mentioned, to say nothing of the cases of prognostication and the development of mediumship above alluded to? Are these also attributable to the subconscious or to a "pattern of specific conditionings"? It would be hard indeed to believe so. Does the normal subconscious mind possess this curious and paradoxical makeup, "half lumber-room and half divine," as I believe Myers somewhere expressed it? Where, aside from these phenomena, is there evidence for that belief?

There is an escape from this dilemma, which however involves an assumption that orthodox psychologists have thus far been unwilling to make, but which certainly clarifies the situation and has been defended by a number of serious students of our subject. I refer to the theory of a "superconscious" mind. Mrs. Edith Lyttelton, for example, in her book, *Our Superconscious Mind,* defends this possibility as follows:

> ". . . The ultra-marginal I have divided into subconscious and superconscious, not because I think there are two other and separate minds, but because the subconscious, and with it the broader term the unconscious, has, owing to the work of certain psychologists, become largely identified with the physical desires and passions of our nature and with individual and collective memory. It seems to me that the word superconscious may be used to define enlarged faculties of intellect, perception, and intuition, of which the ordinary conscious mind is not aware. . . . All that can be done is to examine in turn different manifestations of heightened faculty which seem, at least to the writer, to reveal the existence of a superconsciousness as well as a subconsciousness."[3]

(It is interesting to note that this idea is in complete harmony with the old Polynesian idea of a Higher Self, a Middle Self, and a Lower Self—the three being quite distinct. Of these, the Higher Self is responsible for all psychic phenomena, the Lower Self corresponds to the subconscious, and the Middle Self to the ordinary wake-a-day consciousness.)[4]

Let us assume for the moment, and for the sake of argument, that such a superconscious mind exists, representing a "higher" self as opposed to a "lower." Let us assume that it is in this realm that psychic phenomena occur. How might this conception be thought to affect current hypnotic procedure? Would such an idea help us to understand the relative infrequency of psychic phenomena in the

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[3] Edith Lyttelton, D.B.E., *Our Superconscious Mind,* D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1931, pp. 4-6.

[4] See Max Freedom Long, *The Secret Science Behind Miracles,* Kosmon Press, Los Angeles, 1948.

ordinary hypnotic trance? An analysis of the current procedure will show, I believe, that such might well be the case.

What are the typical suggestions given by an operator to his subject? Usually they are somewhat like these:

> "You are becoming more and more drowsy as you sink down deeper and deeper into a quiet, restful sleep . . . Your nervous system is relaxed, and you are becoming sleepier and sleepier as you go deeper and deeper into a relaxed, peaceful condition . . . Down deeper and deeper . . ." and so on.

All this is calculated to drive the subject into a passive, subconscious condition, which is all very well for therapeutic purposes. But, assuming that a superconscious mind exists, ought not the suggestions to be: "You are rising *higher* and *higher* . . . you are passing into a superconscious realm where it will be possible for you to receive telepathic and clairvoyant impressions . . ." and so on. Such suggestions would assuredly have the effect of imparting to the subject a feeling of exaltation, and would stimulate his inner faculties instead of merely deadening them and making them static and quiescent. If the exercise of supernormal powers be in any way dynamic, this assuredly should be facilitated rather than hindered, which suggestions of the right type might be counted upon to do. The reason this has never been thought of before is probably because only the subconscious mind was taken into consideration, and because the usual hypnotic state was associated with *sleep*. In outward appearances it might well do so, but if the character of the inner mental activity be entirely different, then the states themselves are different, and the methods employed in producing such states should be different also. On the theory of a superconscious, the usual hypnotic procedure would be precisely contrary to the one desired, and one calculated to inhibit more than ever the emergence of supernormal information.

If the above argument be in any sense valid, this would account for the relative scarcity of truly psychic material manifested in the ordinary hypnotic trance. The subconscious *is* reached, and remarkable results are often obtained by this means; but the activities of the superconscious would be cut off completely and prevented from manifesting. It would be because of this that so few hypnotic operators encounter any psychic phenomena in the course of their practice.

It must always be remembered that hypnotic suggestion of any kind merely serves to turn the key in the lock, and that what happens when the door is opened depends upon the inner workings of the subject's deeper self. In the last analysis, every subject really hypnotizes himself. All that the operator does is to divert the physical

and mental energies in this or that direction. Ensuing psycho-physiological results follow. What has happened inwardly to render these possible? In certain cases these results may be relatively clear, but in others—when supernormal phenomena make their appearance—no one has the slightest idea as to what happens to render these possible. The actual mechanism involved in telepathy, clairvoyance, and kindred states is still shrouded in mystery.

But one thing is certain. The hypnotic subject is above all else extremely suggestible, and if suggestions are constantly given him to go down deeper and deeper, and become more and more sleepy, he will certainly tend to do so. Now I have a fairly extensive knowledge of the literature of psychical research and mysticism, and have interrogated scores of individuals who have had visional experiences of various kinds, and I have yet to come across a single case in which the percipient feels that his material comes from "below"; it always comes from "above."[5] It is true that this may be due very largely to suggestion—a hangover from the older belief that Heaven is overhead and Hell is somewhere underfoot, and that anything "spiritual" must necessarily involve elevation, and vice versa. But, even on this basis, that suggestion should be utilized and turned to account. If inspirational and psychic material is desired, the idea of rising from the body should be emphasized rather than the idea of sinking into it. Hence the value of suggestions such as those indicated.

The older mesmeric practice was at least free from these adverse counter-suggestions (of "deeper, deeper, etc."), inasmuch as suggestion played only a minor role in their procedure. A subjective state was indeed induced, as it is in hypnosis; but were the two states similar? Analogous conditions would seem to show us that they probably were not. We know, for example, that the "medium trance" is different from the ordinary hypnotic trance—just as it differs from ordinary psychopathic states—the main observable difference being that in the former, supernormal information is given, while in the latter, it is not.[6] Mrs. Piper, as we know, proved most refractory to hypnosis when Hodgson and James tried to hypnotize her, though her mediumistic trance was easy, spontaneous, and exceptionally deep. Without, at the moment, entering into a discussion as to the possible *modus operandi* involved, the undoubted *fact* remains that despite the outward similarity of the two states, they were inwardly very different, inasmuch as the medium trance is characterized by

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[5] This feeling *does* occur in certain insane delusions and in pathological states; but these undoubtedly rise from the deeper subconscious, or from the vast Unconscious, and this is precisely the end of the "mental spectrum" we wish to avoid.

[6] Cf. William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol. I, p. 396, and my discussion of this point in *The Problems of Psychical Research*, pp. 34-36.

the acquisition of supernormal knowledge, while the ordinary trance state is not.

It may be thought that some of the above is self-contradictory, as I began by saying that I had noted a number of cases in which seemingly psychic and mediumistic material was initiated by hypnosis. I have not forgotten that fact, nor the cases of "telepathic hypnotism" noted by Janet, Richet and others, which were published in the early numbers of S.P.R. *Proceedings* and are of great interest and value. But it is my belief that all this is not as contradictory as might at first appear. These lighter trance states resemble one another, at least superficially, to a great extent; they all involve passivity, the elimination of the active consciousness, lowering of the psychic threshold, suggestibility, and so forth. All these may be insured by various methods and also occur spontaneously. But I must again remind the reader of what I said above, viz., that "hypnotic suggestion of any kind merely serves to turn the key in the lock, and that what happens when the door is opened depends upon the inner workings of the subject's deeper self." The deeper resultant condition which follows may be entirely dissimilar in the two cases. In one, it may continue along a "straight path," so to say, resulting in mere hypnotic trance; in the other, it may take another route, blocking off this subconscious material and landing in the superconscious, from which supernormal phenomena may be elicited. It is my contention that suitable suggestions may help or facilitate this.

My argument thus far may therefore be summarized as follows: There are various types of trance, which differ from one another fundamentally. They are not merely varying degrees of the same state, but different states, possessing essentially different characteristics. Pathological conditions (coma, catalepsy, syncope, suspended animation, etc.) are all indicative of unconsciousness, as are states resultant from certain diseases or the action of drugs. Fainting might also be included in this category. This degree of unconsciousness is certainly far greater than it is, for example, in cases of somnambulism, sleep, and ecstasy. These again differ from the trance state, and here once more, it is my contention that the hypnotic trance and the mediumistic trance essentially differ—the former being a subconscious state, while the latter is a superconscious state. Both of these, though different, may be led up to by the same procedure, viz., quiescence and suggestion. The end products are however dissimilar, and it is only in the latter condition that truly supernormal phenomena are evoked.

It is too often assumed that a trance state *is* a trance state, and "that's all there is to it." However, the depth and character of such states may vary enormously, even when they fall within the same category. Mrs. Piper's trance state, for example, was very deep,

while the following incident may show how light it may be on occasion.

I was having a sitting years ago (1907) with Mrs. Minnie Soule. She was giving me a "reading" and, aside from the fact that she had her eyes closed, appeared to be in every way normal. The hall door was slightly open and a draught was coming into the room. She arose, walked over and closed the door, came back and immediately resumed her reading. Afterwards she had no recollection of having done so. This shows us that, despite the appearance of normality, there was nevertheless a certain degree of dissociation present, as shown by her amnesia. To employ a physical analogy, trance states may be represented by the position they occupy on a sloping board, some of them being near the top and some near the bottom, according to the degree of their depth. There are therefore wide fluctuations in this condition and, assuming a certain degree of "rapport" between the operator and the subject, the operator's inner condition is, at times and to a certain degree, reflected in the condition of the subject. If the operator is impatient or mentally upset in any way, this is frequently "sensed" by the sensitive subject (just as animals sense our emotions).

It is doubtful if the operator ever really imparts anything *to* the subject; all that he does is to remove obstacles and elicit what is already within the subject. The operator assists in the production of a subjective state and lessens natural inhibitions. Mme. Nordica once remarked to the writer that singing consists largely in learning what *not* to do, thereby insuring natural production. No operator can force the production of psychic phenomena; all that he can do is to open the channels for their manifestation. If he has opened the door to the subconscious, he gets subconscious material, while if he has opened the door to the superconscious, he receives supernormal phenomena. Hypnotic practice has nearly always been directed to the former objective, and under the circumstances it is only natural that a minimum of psychic material should have been noted.

The subject can only express what he receives, and (assuming the above theory to be correct) it is impossible to *force* psychic material from the subconscious because it does not possess it. Even if it had telepathic access to other living minds (conscious and subconscious), it could not obtain such information either, with the exception of certain memories and current events. Prognostic material and truly supernormal material could only be obtained by contacting the other's superconscious mind; and this could only be done (on theory) by the superconscious mind of the subject. It is useless, therefore, to submit the subject to a barrage of questions, in the hope of forcing information from him in this way. Such a procedure may have, in fact, a precisely opposite effect. This was

emphasized by Dr. Hodgson in his second report on Mrs. Piper[7] and is applicable to any trance state. The character of the questions asked should vary according to the state itself, and it is no more possible to extract supernormal information from an ordinary trance than it is to "squeeze blood from a turnip." The analogy of dreams should guide us here: most dreams are "what they are"; while the relatively rare supernormal dreams would emanate (on this theory) from the superconscious self.

I cannot do better, perhaps, than to quote in this connection the words of Dr. J. P. Deleuze (*Animal Magnetism*, pp. 245-247). Considering the fact that they were written more than a hundred years ago, they assuredly strike one as showing remarkable penetration of perception. He says:

> "Somnambulists may give erroneous views to those who consult them with too much confidence, not only in regard to the treatment of diseases, but also in regard to things not less important . . . In somnambulists there are developed faculties of which we are deprived in the ordinary state; such as seeing without the aid of the eyes, hearing without the aid of the ears, seeing at a distance, reading the thoughts, appreciating the time with rigorous exactitude, and, what is still more astonishing, having a presage of the future. There is often with somnambulists an extraordinary exaltation of the faculties with which they are endowed. Thus, among them, the imagination may assume a prodigious activity; the memory may recall a thousand ideas which were entirely effaced; the elocution may become so elegant, so pure, so brilliant, as to seem the product of inspiration. But all this does not exclude error. The exercise of the faculties peculiar to somnambulists has need of being attended with certain conditions, in order to give us exact notions . . . We are ignorant of the qualities necessary to the free unfolding of the new faculty of the somnambulist. Further, this faculty acts alone, while the testimony of each of our senses is rectified by that of the others. . . ."

Deleuze here draws the distinction between subconscious and superconscious phenomena, precisely the same sort of differences which we find in mediumistic sittings, where excellent "hits" are often interspersed with much "padding." This fusion or interblending may be due to faulty development, leaving the "channels" partly blocked, or opening *both* of them to a certain extent, so that this admixture of material becomes evident. Greater understanding of the inner mechanism involved would doubtless shut off one of these channels, permitting a far freer flow of desirable material to pass

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[7] Richard Hodgson, "A Further Record of Observations of Certain Phenomena of Trance," *Proc.* S.P.R., Vol. XIII, 1897-98, pp. 332-333.

through the other. But this can only be accomplished, I believe, when the reality of the superconscious mind is recognized.

If such a mind exists, it would assuredly throw light upon the mechanism of "rapport," telepathy, trance revelations, and many other psychic phenomena. It would help us to understand many seeming paradoxes and confusions. I do not feel called upon to explain the spacial "position" of such a superconscious mind (in relation to the brain) because space may be meaningless when we are dealing with clairvoyance and other supernormal phenomena. Nor do I feel it necessary, at this late date, to apologize for introducing this conception, which has met with a certain "resistance," perhaps, because it had not been introduced when Myers contributed his classical papers on the Subliminal Consciousness to S.P.R. *Proceedings*. But it is very evident that he was virtually led to the same conclusion, though couched in other language. Those who desire a more detailed exposition of it may consult Mrs. Lyttelton's book before mentioned. Meanwhile the suggestions contained in the above paper are offered for what they may be worth. It would be interesting to see to what extent experimental investigations (if undertaken) would tend to confirm them.

An Unusual and Recurrent Experience

ESTHER DE LEAU

We are indebted to Mrs. De Leau for the following account of a recurrent and alien "presence," which she experienced repeatedly when fully awake. Her husband, who confirms the report, shared the experience with her on separate occasions. Neither told the other. No contemporary record was made, and the account therefore depends on memory. But the "events" described were of such a nature that the essential features could not easily be forgotten. It is of particular interest to note that the percipients were so strongly affected by their experience, they resorted to drastic action in order to avert what seemed to them a threat to their security.

For family reasons pseudonyms have been used, but the real names of the percipients and the exact locale are known to the Society.—ED.

I have been asked to submit an account of a frightening experience which my husband and I endured in a house for some three or four months, in the winter and spring of 1930. The address of this place was in a very quiet, highly respectable neighborhood.

To build a background for the fact that both my husband and I were aware of these happenings, yet neither told the other, it will be necessary for me to go back briefly into our family history. My husband is a native Tennessean, whose childhood background was one of "old colored mammies" and all the accompanying store of old folklore, tales, spooks, hants, conjurs, and the rest. Psychic manifestation to him is just as natural a part of everyday thinking as living. I was born and reared in Oklahoma of pioneer parents who, while they *told* ghost stories, always did so with the air of "I-don't-really-believe-it-you-know," and to whom it was an indication that one was a bit on the queer side if one admitted believing in such. (Nevertheless, *I* had always known that I was, or could be, decidedly "aware.")

I met my husband while we were both in college. We were married when we were sophomores and continued in school then, for six years, until he was awarded his B.D. degree. Naturally, since we had no income except what he earned as a student minister, those six years saw many, many times of lack—almost actual want—so that when, at his final (third) graduation he was "called" to a church at M——, and rushed ahead to rent a place for us to live,

we were both pretty well tired out and our nerves edgy. The place he had rented was a lovely modern bungalow, quite beyond our means, which, I protested, was much too large for us to furnish, and had a yard utterly devoid of any shade for our five- and three-year-old children, which I pointed out, too. So, we had words. But as child number three was due to arrive in a matter of weeks, we decided not to move until he came and I had regained my strength.

But we kept looking for a "nice place with shade in the yard," for the heat in M—— in summer can hit 110 and not half try. So when son David was about three months old we found this lovely, lovely yard, with a liveable house attached. A big two-storey friendly-looking house, with huge trees all around, a big back porch, and a latticed summerhouse. "Just the place for a playhouse for Dorey and Ernie!" "Um!" said my usually nice husband, "You won't be in it twenty-four hours until you'll be finding a dozen things wrong with it." Hurt, weary with the memory of six poverty-stricken years in school with two babies, and now a third, mad at his maleness, I glared at him and said, "So help me, I'll never say *one* word about this place no matter what may be wrong with it." And I didn't until it almost killed me.

And so, we packed up and moved to L—— Street on a bright, shiny fall day, when the trees were red and yellow and russet. A kindly church woman kept the children until late afternoon, so that I could get somewhat settled for the night. When we brought them home, they were of course thrilled to death over an "upstairs," never having lived in anything but bungalows. They raced upstairs. I showed them their little room across the hall from our big one and went about my work of cleaning. Scrubbing, in fact. I'd scrubbed and scrubbed and scrubbed, in their little room first, and it was all nice and dry and clean except for the darkish, rusty stain splattered on their floor and which no amount of scrubbing had erased. I still wonder about that stain.

I went downstairs, for it was nearing evening. In the stairwell a sort of unease caught me. "Just too tired," I thought, but Ernie, clattering down after me in a rush objected, "I don't *like* that room. There's a 'goat' "—yes, I'm afraid his daddy had been tellin' old mammies' tales to them; if *he* could take them and like them as a child, surely they could too—"there's a 'goat'—Ernie's name for 'ghost'—in that closet." "Phooey," I said, "Don't be silly." Nevertheless, son *never* did like that room and wouldn't go in there alone.

But I said nothing about it to his daddy. "In twenty-four hours you'll find a dozen things wrong." *Not me!* But I felt depressed, oppressed.

As days and weeks went by, the feeling grew. Daytimes were wonderful. But with the coming of evening the whole house took

on an air of waiting expectancy. This was a very old house, yet in all the time we lived there (and we have commented on it many times), after nightfall there was *never* a squeak or a rattle or a creak. Just silence and waiting. Furthermore, we never had a mouse, rat, cockroach, or bug.

My husband was young, active, and very popular. He coached the church's basketball teams, their players' group, had prayer meeting, and so was away from home practically every night as soon as supper was over, leaving me there alone with the three babies. And every night I became more and more afraid until my fear amounted to a positive terror.

From the very first night when Ernie had said he knew there was a "goat" in his closet, I had begun what seemed a silly ritual of prayer over their cribs *after* they were asleep, and, while we are not Catholics, of making the sign of the cross over them before I left the room. Not so long afterwards, I began slipping a small Bible in each little crib. (No one can imagine some of the wild dashes I made to those same cribs every morning to retrieve those same Bibles before the children or their daddy discovered them. My husband collected Bibles. He had dozens of them, luckily.)

In a number of weeks, I became so afraid that evenings I would move the baby's little crib into the study, which was upstairs at the end of the hall and was seemingly *protected* from the "menace," and take Dorey and Ernie in there to play until they became sleepy. Then, when I heard my husband's car drive up, to scramble madly to pop them into their Bible-protected beds in their own room, and greet him with a smiling face—a face which he in time (after being bawled out by a good lady in the church) noticed was getting thinner and thinner and more hollow-eyed.

Was I sick? he asked. "No, I'm not sick, thank you." But finally, he made me go to the doctor. I would give the doctor no satisfaction. All I would say was that I was unable to sleep. "Why?" insisted the doctor. Now *who* was going to tell anyone, even her doctor, that she deliberately refused to go to sleep because she *was afraid to go to sleep?* I certainly wasn't going to tell.

So I took the doctor's medicine home, and when I went into the bathroom each night before retiring, to take it, I poured it down the drain. I knew that I *dared* not go to sleep (certainly not a drugged sleep), for if I did, something would happen. What, I didn't know. But something too terrible to risk. For every night the menace became more real, it came nearer, it became more dangerous. If I slept, something would happen to the children.

This menace started first, the night we moved in, as an uneasiness. From day to day, and week to week, it grew in intensity and awful-

ness. As the evening hours progressed, it grew stronger, until finally, I could time its actual arrival—10 P.M. exactly, it would be in the hall, waiting. And as the intensity of its animosity grew, the more clearly I could "see" it without seeing it—a tall, dark, faceless, shrouded presence, utterly evil, utterly vile. Just waiting and waiting and hating, there in the hall. And I would either sit in the study, or lie wide-eyed in bed also waiting and waiting and *willing* that *I'd not give way to fear,* for I knew if ever I did, all was lost.

Previously, I mentioned the lattice-work summerhouse. After we had been in residence there a few weeks, one morning my husband took a hammer and nails and boarded up the place. To Dorey's howls of woe at losing her playhouse, he merely told her he didn't want her playing over the old cistern below. As a matter of fact, the summerhouse had been newly floored, with only a small trap door opening into the cistern, and as he had *already nailed this down* securely some days before, it dawned on me that he, too, perhaps might be "feeling things." But when I asked him *why* he'd deprived the children of their play place, he tersely answered that he didn't want them in there. Aha, aha, I thought. You, too! But as I'd said I'd never complain about the place, by golly, I wasn't going to. But in following nights I discovered two things: (1) he wasn't sleeping either, although he pretended to; (2) the menace seemed to emanate from the cistern, and come up over the porch roof and into the hall *via* either our window or the bathroom window. But it could not pass the light in the hall into the children's room.

You could feel it creeping in. Later, I could "see" it standing in the hall. Vile. Evil. With a horrible repulsiveness that made your mind crawl. Sometimes, I thought that there was a terrible stench. My husband agrees to this, too. But as long as there was a light, and I did not yield to *fear,* it was helpless. But promptly, and my husband verifies this too, at 2 A.M., with the suddenness of the click of a light switch, it was gone and we could go to sleep. The danger was over until the next night.

This is about the period in our stay there when my husband was to attend a State Convention several hundred miles away. He was reluctant to go. I was more reluctant to have him go. But neither of us said why, stiff-necked and stubborn as we were.

Finally, he suggested that he move the children's beds downstairs, and the baby and I sleep on the divan. I agreed with alacrity. (Maybe it would not come downstairs, I thought.) But about 5 P.M., when winter darkness began to settle down and the house began waiting, I *knew* that it could! What could I do? I hesitated to ask anyone to come stay with me, for we were not too well acquainted.

I thought that I might stay awake *one* night, but *three!* I couldn't do it. (With three small children, mothers don't nap in the daytime.)

It was already dark in the hall and stairwell. I could feel it creeping in. It was coming early tonight. Choking back my near-hysteria, I dashed upstairs to the study, grabbed an armload of Bibles, tossed them down onto the landing, rushed back for another armload, and then, not daring to even *think* what stood there already waiting, I placed one Bible on each stair-step, with a little prayer and the sign of the cross, clear on down to the bottom, some sixteen or eighteen Bibles. Up above there was a sort of quiver in the air, as of amusement, and I "heard," "No matter. I can wait." I placed a Bible at each of the two doors into the downstairs rooms, and closed and locked the doors. For *how* could I explain to two curious children why Daddy's treasured Bibles were all over the stairs and floor? The Bible was God's letter to us, and I had taught them that they must handle it so very carefully. *So*, of course the minute I appeared, they both had to go to the bathroom. Well, they didn't! They used a jar.

As I said, I knew no one well enough to ask them to come stay the night, so, putting the children to bed early, I sat down and began calling their Daddy. No, not by telephone. When I need my family, I don't waste time on phones. Anyway, I didn't know where they'd locate him. "Come home, Daddy. Come home. Come home. Come home"—all night long.

At daybreak the next morning, his car rolled into the drive. I didn't bother to pick up the Bibles. He knew anyway. And he might as well know all, now. And he had known, for weeks, but had hoped that I didn't because I'd said nothing about it, and he was afraid in my run-down condition that it would be too much of a shock for me. He had felt uneasy all day on the trip, he said, but about 5:30 P.M., he had the impulse to turn around and come home. However, being so near the Convention City, and being on an important committee, he kept on. But by the time he had reached the hotel, he knew that he must return. So he reported to the committee, ate supper, and started on the long drive back home, through a blizzard, arriving, as I said, at dawn.

We then compared notes. In every point they agreed. There was a *presence*. It was evil, vile, and increasingly threatening and dangerous. And although our lease stipulated that we'd have to pay a full year's rent if we moved out before the year was up, we agreed that we'd borrow the money, if the real estate company would not cancel the lease. The next day we went to see our doctor, who, shocked by my appearance, advised an immediate move to a house "with no stairs to climb." The real estate people cancelled our lease.

While we were looking for another place, I continued to sleep downstairs, but my husband, who is six feet six inches tall, insisted on sleeping up because of his extra-size bed. But every night I had to go and wake him from nightmares in which he gurgled and groaned and fought, until his covers were all on the floor. After the third night, he came downstairs too. And we left lights burning both at the head and the foot of the stairs.

We found a house in a matter of a few days, and were all packed, ready to move the next day except for my husband's books in the study. He was packing them the last night. I had grown so afraid in the house, I was even afraid for him to be up there alone doing that, and kept an ever apprehensive ear open for his cheery whistling. It grew later and later, and my apprehension grew. His whistling had ceased, but I could hear him moving about. But the silence settled down and the whole house seemed to wait, and horror and terror and danger swept through the house all at once like a tide. There was a crashing rush of feet on the stairs, the door was literally hurled open, and my husband, white and panting, flung into the room. "My God," he gasped, "that damned thing came into the study just now."

I don't remember what we said or did. I know that no more books were packed that night. He didn't go back upstairs until morning. And that day we moved. Four months later, we moved out of the state. Ten years later we moved to another state. And ten years later to another. But no matter where we have lived, we have always burned a night light because of the horror and the terror we experienced at L—— Street.

Until recently, I would not have dared put this on paper. Why I can do so now, I don't know. Perhaps something has ended the menace. Or perhaps it has found rest, or new susceptibles.

But I'd like to know *what* it was. Nothing on this earth, however, no amount of money, could tempt me to risk encountering *it* again. Only, if by so doing I could prevent my husband or children from experiencing it.

I have had psychic experiences since I was a child. I still do. But none so witheringly terrifying as that.

My husband, if he were here, would verify every word I have written. He is now a chaplain with the Marines in Korea, so he is not a "scairdy-cat," whatever *I* may be. He has said in times past he'd be willing to notarize the story if I'd write it, but I've been afraid to until now.

The facts are as related. If I tried to convey the ghastly loathsomeness of the terror, I couldn't. But this is the way it was. My husband

was at this time working on his B.D. thesis on a history of universal funeral rites and burial customs. Could this have been the contact?

* * * * * *

A few weeks after we received Mrs. De Leau's manuscript, she sent us the following corroboratory statement from her husband:

February 5, 1951
Supply Service
Fleet Marine Force
Pacific

To Whomever It May Concern:

I have read Mrs. De Leau's account of our "ghost" experiences in the house on L—— Street in M——, O——. She has stated them exactly as I remember experiencing them.

E. De Leau
Chaplain
——— Combat Service Group
——— Marine Division ———

* * * * * *

Here we have the testimony of two witnesses who report that independently and over a prolonged period they "saw" or were aware of a "presence" of evil character that exerted a frightening influence on their home. No conscious verbal suggestions passed between them since each had good reason for not divulging the matter. However, as in the case of many couples, they might have communicated information to each other by means other than speech. Moreover, it is not unlikely that Mrs. De Leau and the chaplain both reacted to some subliminal (and a few supraliminal) cues from the house; for example, the stain on the floor and the old cistern. The preoccupation with funeral rites and burial customs might also have suggested ominous ideas. Various hypotheses could be entertained as an explanation for the occurrence.

We might suppose that telepathic influence could account for the mutual experience. On this supposition, Mrs. De Leau's initial uneasiness was caused by fatigue, as she herself suggests. Subsequently, she telepathically transferred her anxiety and growing fears to the chaplain. Once the idea of danger was implanted in both their minds, magnified perhaps by the fact that they concealed their emotional disturbance from each other, their following impressions developed along

similar lines until they became externalized as a malign figure in space. Or, if telepathic influence persisted it could have been mutual, Mrs. De Leau and the chaplain acting as both agent and percipient at different times.

The Society for Psychical Research (London) in its early years systematically investigated a large number of cases of alleged haunting. Certain points in Mrs. De Leau's narrative appear in evidential cases of haunting phenomena printed in the S.P.R. *Journal* and *Proceedings,* i.e., cases which indicate a genuine paranormal contact between the percipients who had the unusual experience and some objective fact unknown to them at the time. The De Leau case, while not evidential, shares many of the characteristics of S.P.R. evidential cases classified under "Haunts" as "Tragic Incidents apparently connected with the Phenomena."[1] Points from cases in this classification are given below for comparison with items in Mrs. De Leau's report.

(1) peculiar stains on the floor; (2) the house was neither lonely nor gloomy looking; (3) I was not aware upon taking possession that any history attached to the house; (4) nor did I ever attempt to communicate with what I considered to be an evil power; (5) with more terror than I had ever felt before; (6) I never *saw* anything there myself though I have constantly had the feeling of someone being in the room with me; (7) he was fully awake and became vividly conscious of some evil presence close to him; (8) we had a peculiar feeling that someone was in the room with us; (9) gradually the "feeling" came over me that I was not alone in the room and that I was being watched; (10) I was perfectly frozen with horror; (11) the feeling was distinctly attached to certain portions of the house; (12) I "felt" long before I "saw"; (13) the feeling of gloom and oppression was appalling; (14) the village clock struck three again [the manifestations centered on the same hour]; (15) the appearances were always at about the same time; (16) the ghosts were improving in their practice; (17) —it is only the ghosts. They can do us no harm while we trust in God; (18) each one of us saw this figure without telling the other; (19) ghostly disturbances became worse, extending themselves; (20) curious coincidence of two persons seeing and describing the same thing, unknown to each other; (21) percipients now always keep a light burning all night and since say they see nothing; (22) another such visitation would cause me to migrate elsewhere.

L. W. A.

[1] See *Journal* references in S.P.R. Combined Index, Part 1, p. 114.

Review

BORDERLANDS OF SCIENCE. By Alfred Still. Pp. IX + 424. Philosophical Library, New York, 1950. $3.75.

This book, to quote its first page, "is an attempt to evaluate the influence on civilization of both science and superstition—knowledge and belief, and to consider critically those 'borderland' phenomena which the scientist rarely investigates notwithstanding that they occur in the natural world which he shares with the unreasoning multitude."

The scope of the earlier chapters is indicated by their titles: "Magic and the Mystic," "Science from Magic," "Magic and Science of the Seventeenth Century," and "Witchcraft and the New Science." Mr. Still has read widely, and his survey of the personalities and events during the ages when magic and witchcraft flourished makes both interesting and profitable reading. He does not hide his dislike of both the Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches; but in wondering (p. 124) why the Puritans should have imitated the Roman Catholics in persecuting witches, he has momentarily forgotten that the Puritans based their cruel practice in this respect directly on Old Testament injunctions.

In the later and larger part of the book, Mr. Still endeavors to cover the whole field of psi phenomena: "The Divining Rod," "Levitation," "Poltergeist Phenomena and Telekinesis," "Body, Mind and Memory," "Hypnotism and Clairvoyance," "Telepathy," and "Time and Precognition." There is, once again, a great deal of curious historical matter in these chapters, each of which, like the earlier ones, is equipped with a bibliography. But the references are mainly to the older literature, and one cannot but be taken aback by such a passage as this: "The members of the London Society for Psychical Research believe that the power of thought transmission has been conclusively demonstrated and that it is possessed by many" (p. 322). No one has the right to say that "the members" of the S.P.R. believe in that or in any other view of thought transmission, since it is stated in all the Society's publications that the views expressed therein are those of the writers alone. Similar misgivings arise when, in the chapter on "Time and Precognition," we find Mr. Still speaking in one place of prophecy, in another of premonition, then of prevision, and again of foresight; while he hardly uses the now currently accepted label "precognition" except in his chapter heading. It was in 1895 that F. W. H. Myers discarded "premonition," "prevision," and so forth, as scientific terms, and substituted "precognition," with the object of freeing the subject as

much as possible from traditional notions. Precognition is a study which calls for wary precision, and the avoidance, in an actual discussion, of terms which, because of their previous associations, may suggest unwarranted explanations. On the fact or otherwise of precognition the author quotes an opinion of Rhine's (pp. 379-380), given in *New Frontiers of the Mind*[1], but as to Saltmarsh, Thouless, Soal, Murphy, and others who have written on precognition, both spontaneous and experimental, they are not mentioned by Mr. Still. The bibliography to this chapter cites little of later date than 1937.

Mr. Still has produced a readable book, and one which will challenge the general reader who can think for himself. It leaves him in no doubt that psychical research and parapsychology are rational studies, that they demand indeed above everything a logical mind. The author's apparent unfamiliarity with the most recent work need not, for the above purpose, be regarded as a serious blemish. One cannot, however, but regret the tone of acrimony in which Mr. Still frequently refers to those with whom he is in disagreement. He says, for example, "Both the smooth-speaking scientist and the raucous champion of 'common-sense' are strongly opposed to the belief that there may be sources of knowledge other than what is conveyed to the mind *via* the recognized bodily senses" (p. 401). Most of us will concur in the implied condemnation of the closed mind; but why does Mr. Still throw in "smooth-speaking" and "raucous," epithets which are not particularly apt in their application to the two types he names? In the same taunting manner, alluding to spiritualism, Mr. Still says, "This business of seeking proof of survival after death appeals powerfully to temperamental people of peculiar mentality" (p. 398). That sort of comment is more reminiscent of mid-nineteenth century religious bickering than of the objective type of discussion which we prefer nowadays, at any rate in organized research work.

The great deal of work which Mr. Still must have put into *Borderlands of Science* has resulted in a book which, on balance, can be commended as a valuable contribution towards informing the general public about the kind of phenomena which the American Society for Psychical Research exists to investigate. The author's rugged rationalism may also win him a hearing from the still too common type of scientist who regards psychical research with disdain, and who, in this connection, must be classified with the uninformed general public. For readers of this JOURNAL, however, the chief value of Mr. Still's book lies in its wealth of historical data.

W. H. W. SABINE

[1] Farrar and Rinehart, New York, 1937.

Lecture Series, 1951-1952

Dr. Gardner Murphy will open a series of lectures, to be given for members of the Society during the current season, on Monday evening, October 29th, at the National Republican Club for Women, 3 West 51st Street, at 8:15 P.M. Dr. Murphy's subject will be:

"Current Developments in Psychical Research."

The courtesy of the dining room of the Club has been extended to members of the Society for the evening of the lecture, provided reservations are made in advance. Dinner will be served from 6:00 P.M. Members who wish to bring guests to the lecture or dine at the Club are requested please to notify the secretary of the Society at 880 Fifth Avenue not later than Thursday, October 25th.

Use of the Membership List

In a special "Notice to Members" inserted in the April, 1950, issue of the JOURNAL, it was proposed to distribute a privately printed list giving the names and addresses of all the members of the Society. Except for a few members who objected, and whose names were therefore not included, the proposal was favorably received by the membership. The list was prepared and distributed in the spring of 1951.

The use of this list is restricted to providing members with information that will enable them to make individual contacts with other members on matters of mutual interest in psychical research. It is ***not to be used*** for circularization of our membership in connection with interests which lie outside the aims and purposes of the Society.

GEORGE H. HYSLOP, *President*

Notice

Members who come across reports of interest to psychical research in their local newspapers would render a valuable service to the Society if they clipped the items and sent them with name of paper and date of publication to Mrs. L. A. Dale, Research Associate.

HISTORY OF THE SOCIETY

The First American Society for Psychical Research was formed in 1885, in consequence of a visit by Sir W. F. Barrett to this country, and Prof. Simon Newcomb became its President. In 1887 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 very able guidance of Dr. Hodgson until his death in 1905. The American Society for Psychical Research was then re-established with James H. Hyslop, Ph.D., formerly Professor of Logic and Ethics in Columbia University, as its Secretary and Director.

THE ENDOWMENT

The American Society for Psychical Research, Inc., was originally incorporated under the Laws of New York in 1904 under the name of American Institute for Scientific Research, for the purpose of carrying on and endowing investigation in the fields of psychical research and psychotherapeutics. It is supported by contributions from its members and a small endowment fund. The income of the Society pays only for the publications and office expenses, but does not enable the Society to carry on its scientific investigations. A much greater fund is required before this work can be carried forward with the initiative and energy which its importance deserves.

The endowment funds are dedicated strictly to the uses set forth in the deed of gift and are under control of the Board of Trustees, the character and qualifications of whom are safeguarded, as with other scientific institutions.

Moneys and property dedicated by will or gift to the purposes of the American Society for Psychical Research, Inc., whether to the uses of psychical research or psychotherapeutics, are earnestly solicited. The form which such dedication should take when made by will is indicated in the following:

"I give, devise and bequeath to the American Society for Psychical Research, Inc., a corporation organized under the laws of the State of New York, the sum of ..... dollars (or if the bequest is real estate, or other specific items of property, these should be sufficiently described for identification), in trust for the corporate purposes of said Society."

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